

VIRGINIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

QUARTERLY BULLETIN

James McCreery Baylor, Editor

Published each January, April, July and October

Vol. IV, No. 2

Box 53 - Richmond, Va. 23201

April 1966

THE EARLY ZOLLMAN FAMILY IN VIRGINIA
and some collateral lines

by
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An address given at the Zollman Family Reunion, August 22, 1965, in Buffalo Creek Park, near Lexington, Virginia.

On Oct. 23, 1754, the ship "Good Intent", with Capt. John Lasly as its captain, cast anchor in the port of Philadelphia, completing its voyage from Amsterdam. The journey had been broken by a stop at Gosport, England, for the final clearance papers. The Seventy-seven passengers on board were from Hesse, Hanau, The Palatinate, with a few from Switzerland. Seven of them were listed as Catholics - the others were of the Lutheran and the German Reformed faith. Among the later were Anthon and Johann Adam Zollman. It is interesting to note that two other passengers were Andreas and Johann Jacob Schaeffer, of the same Germanic stock as the Shafers (Shavers, Shaffers, or Schaeffers) who came more than a decade later to America and the Valley of Virginia, settling in Rockbridge County.²

This westward movement of German people had been in progress for more than a half century. The cruelty of despotic rulers, a curse to their subjects, had devastated the once flourishing Palatinate, repeated wars had taken their tragic toll, extravagant princes had become oppressive in their demands for money, and hateful, bitter competition for supremacy on the part of Christian confessions had contributed to the desire of the people for a better way of life.

The coming of Queen Ann to the throne of England in 1702 opened the door of opportunity. By the end of 1709, 32, 500 Germans had found a refuge in England.³ This exodus from the Vaterland was due not only to the generosity of the Queen and Parliament, but also to the effective advertising of William Penn, who, with the excellent aid of his close friend and counsellor, Benjamin Furley, had sounded the virtues of Pennsylvania over the Rhineland and beyond.⁴

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1. Dr. George West Diehl, "Dundee Plantation", Route 3, Lexington, Virginia 24450. Member, Bulletin Committee.
 2. Daniel Rupp: A Collection of 30, 000 Names (Philadelphia, 1876) pp. 343, 344.
 3. E. B. Greene: Provincial America, 1690-1740 (New York, 1905) p. 230.
W. A. Kittle: Early XVIII the Century Palatine Emigration (Baltimore, 1965); originally published, Philadelphia, 1937. Chapter V.
 4. J. F. Sachse: Curieuse Nachricht von Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, privately ed., 1905) p. 8.

Some of the German migrants, in 1710, had landed in Virginia⁵ and, in 1743, forty survivors of 200 passengers had arrived safely in Hampton Roads.⁶ But most of the German element in the Valley of Virginia came from Pennsylvania and Delaware about two decades later. In this southward movement, newly arrived immigrants were joined by some of the disenchanting Germans who had moved down into Pennsylvania from the Mohawk Valley of New York.⁷

The cause of this population movement was the feeling of frustration and disappointment over the failure of the colonial government to provide needed protection against the Indians. This feeling was, furthermore, intensified by the religious situation of the colony. Because of its laws and policies of religious toleration, Pennsylvania had become seated by various religious sects and confessions among which there came deep cleavages, stinging hatreds, and mutual jealousies, with the Germans suffering most on account of the language barrier.⁸ Hence, the migration across the Potomac and up the Valley of Virginia.

One of the Zollman who landed in Philadelphia, Oct. 23, 1754, perhaps Johann Adam, was the forebear of the William Zollman, ancestor of the Rockbridge clan, who came to this section at the close of the American Revolution. No other Zollmans were imported into the colonies until after 1800. This Johann Adam Zollman is sited because of the prevalence of the name Adam in the Virginia family through the years, a characteristic of the German clans.

On the upper reaches of the main James River and near the confluence of the Cowpasture and the Jackson's Rivers which formed the James, there were some excellent bottom-lands. As early as 1753, Patrick Sharkey and his wife were in this vicinity, living on the Bhurman Bottom where he erected a mill. He had purchased his farm from the James Patton estate - the grant to it had been made, Nov. 3, 1750. Just above the Sharkey homestead was the fertile section known as Locust Bottom. On Aug. 6, 1782, Sharkey and his wife Ann sold 220 acres of this tract to their son Nicholas and the remaining 334 acres were sold to their son James.⁹

Michael Carnes and his wife Catherine became owners of the tract and, on July 10, 1783, they sold Jacob Moyers three tracts of land, totaling 269 acres; the land was on the north bank of the river. Moyers, a recent arrival from Pennsylvania, was a man of some family. In February, 1785, he was listed by Martin McFerran as having a family of eleven, his own dwelling, and three other buildings. He and his wife Sarah gave an acre of their ground to be the site of a church and burial-ground. The deed was made to "the community of Dutch Calvinists and Lutherians" and the location was "near the head of the James River."¹⁰

The Rev. Edward Crawford, who had been pastor of the Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church since 1778, discontinued his work there to take up the pastorate of the Locust Bottom Church in 1782. It was a successful ministry and the congregation grew, making necessary the erection of a sanctuary, if one did not already exist. So, now

5. E. Williard: History of the United States (New York & Chicago, 1871) pp. 134, 135.

6. Max Eickhoff: In der Neuen Heimath (New York, 1884) p. 202.

7. Kittle: op. cit., pps. 189, 205-207.

8. Herrman Schurich: German Element in Virginia, Vol. I (issued by Society for the History of Germans in Maryland, 1897-1898) p. 85 ff.

9. F. B. Kegley: Virginia Frontier (Roanoke, Va., 1938) p. 442.

10. Kegley: op. cit., p. 450; Botetourt Co., Va., Deed Book 3, p. 384.

after four years of work, a site was given and the probability is that a building was already on the gift and that the church graveyard had a number of graves. Here Crawford continued his ministry, adding the pastoral services of the Oxford Presbyterian Church, just across the dividing-ridge to the North. On Oct. 16, 1794, he was dismissed by Lexington Presbytery to become a member of Abingdon Presbytery in Southwest Virginia. Crawford often signed his name, adding to the signature the letters "V. D. M.", meaning "Verbi Dei Minister" (Preacher of the Word of God).¹¹

Since Crawford, a Presbyterian minister, served the Locust Bottom congregation, it is evident that the people were of the "Dutch Calvinist" group, a pietistic segment of the Calvinistic interpretation of theology, and were, for this reason, favorable to Presbyterian leadership. Since William Zollman died prior to March 22, 1794, when his widow became the wife of Peter Dagger, and was buried in the Locust Bottom Church graveyard, he was undoubtedly a "Dutch Calvinist" and the Rev. Mr. Crawford was his pastor.

William and Mary Zollman were the parents of a son to whom the name of his father was given, William Zollman, Jr. Evidently the lad was born in the Locust Bottom community and, after his father's death and his mother's re-marriage, he came down the James River to the area known as the "Forks of James". Here lived a certain Peter Solmon, maybe a kinsman since the name Zollman is often spelled Solmon in the frontier records. It could have been that William had come to make his home with this relative of his father. The name appeared early in Botetourt County when, on May 8, 1792, Henry Solmon was granted a license to keep an ordinary in his house.¹² But be that as it may, here in the "Fork of James", William Zollman, Jr., spent the rest of his life and lies buried.

Into the Natural Bridge community, which was in the "Fork of James" section, after the close of the Revolutionary War - a period in which there was the migration of restless people, came Matthias Ripley and his wife Barbara and here, on Feb. 27, 1788, they bought 100 acres of land from Dennis and Jimima Hanty, for which they paid 100 pounds. To this tract they added another 100 acres when they paid 150 pounds to John Croddy and his wife Margaret for such a boundary. Then, Henry Solmon and his wife Magdaleny, who had removed over into Botetourt County, sold their little farm on Cedar Creek to David and John Hack, Sept. 3, 1793, and Matthias Ripley was able to buy it from the Hacks, April 1, 1805, paying twenty-five pounds, just one-fourth of what the Hacks had paid for it. Thus, according to the deeds, Matthias Ripley now had as his neighbors such men as Robert Miller, William Miller, Robert Gutherie, and Samuel Braford, all heads of founding families of the section.¹³

On Jan. 5, 1812, Matthias Ripley made his will - it was probated on Sept. 4, 1814 - making his widow and his son John the executors. After ample provision for his wife, he directed that all his real estate and personal property were to be sold after his widow's death and the proceeds to be divided his nine children, Jacob the oldest of the family had received forty pounds as his share; the nine were Betsy, John, Polly, Catherine, Ann, Sally, Peggy, William and Valentine. William and Valentine each

11. R. D. Stoner: A Seed-Bed of the Republic - Early Botetourt (Roanoke, Va., 1962) pp. 355, 360.

12. L. P. Summers: Annals of Southwest Virginia, 1789-1800 (Abingdon, Va., 1929) p. 448.

13. Rockbridge Co., Va., Deed Book "A", p. 690.
Rockbridge Co., Va., Deed Book "C", pp. 22, 164.
Rockbridge Co., Va., Deed Book "E", p. 374.

received ten pounds which was to be spent on their education before they were put to the learning of a trade, which the father thought should be at the age of sixteen years. The executors were his widow Barbara and their son John. Witnesses to the signing of the will were Robert Irvin, Jacob Vasser, John Shafer, and Samuel C. McMurry. 14

Three of the children married into the Wasky family. On Oct. 29, 1801, Betsy married John Wasky; on April 3, 1802, John married Mary Wasky; on Sept. 24, 1807, there was a double wedding - Polly married Christian Wasky and Catherine married George Barger. Sally became the wife of Hugh Irvine on March 2, 1818. The Rev. Samuel Houston, pastor of High Bridge Presbyterian Church and head of his Rural Valley Academy, was the officiating minister at all of these marriages. 15

On Dec. 12, 1809, Ann Ripley became the wife of William Zollman, the rites being performed in Fincastle, the county-seat of Botetourt. The young bridal pair returned to the Natural Bridge community and settled down on the John Gailbreath farm, where they lived until about 1816, engaged in farming and rearing their little family. But, having become interested in an opening on Buffalo Creek, at the north end of the Short Hill (a landmark in Rockbridge County), Zollman began making purchases of land and property in that neighborhood. The grist-mill and the saw-mill of Thomas Houston and Jesse Matthews afforded him the opportunity for which he was looking. After he purchased the properties, he developed a very fine gun-smith shop, a carding-mill, and a distillery. 16 The name "Zollman Mill" became a place-name in the county.

Just a few miles west of this industrial center, near where Buffalo Creek breaks through the foothill of the Short Hill in a canyon, John Clarkson, known by the self-given appellation of "Old Bolivar", had established his mill and developed his distillery. Clarkson, who had come from east of the Blue Ridge, made his home at the confluence of Spring Valley and Buffalo. He and his successors became intense rivals of William Zollman.

William Zollman died Aug. 9, 1834, and was laid to rest in the new cemetery atop a hill on his extensive farm. His widow renounced her late husband's will and the provisions made for her and married Madison Kenny, on May 28, 1835, the rites being performed by the Rev. A. B. Davidson, pastor of Oxford Presbyterian Church, whose large farm was adjacent to the northern border of Zollman's land. 17

In the Natural Bridge community, where William and Ann Zollman began their first home, was another family that was to write its name into the Zollman history. In the late autumn of 1797, John Shaver (or Shafer), of Rockingham County, arrived on Cedar Creek, between the James River and the Natural Bridge. Of sturdy German stock which had been resident in the Valley of Virginia for more than fifty years, he and his brother Jacob left the family acres on the Shenandoah for the upland of the Fork of James. Jonathan Shafer, born Nov. 5, 1774, who came to Rockbridge County later than John and Jacob, was perhaps a cousin, but he, like the two brothers, settled in the Fork of James.

On Jan. 2, 1798, John Shafer paid 330 pounds to John Booker for a tract of land "containing by survey 103 acres, 1 rod, and 13 perches", a plot of land surveyed and

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14. Rockbridge Co., Va., Will Book 4, pp. 57, 58.
 15. Rockbridge Co., Va., Marriage Book 1 (gathered data)
 16. Rockbridge Co., Va., Will Book 7, p. 269.
Rockbridge Co., Va., Deed Book "J", pp. 407, 411, 475.
 17. Rockbridge Co., Va., Deed Book "S", pp. 453, 515.

ready for delivery to a purchaser. As the deed presents no corner to another's property nor a "running with So-and-So's line", it is apparent the tract was isolated and of virgin soil. Then, on Aug. 6, 1803, Shafer bought 13 acres and 1 rod of land from George Crawford; this tract lay adjacent to the lands of Matthias Ripley and Jacob Derr.

The third addition John Shafer made to his holdings was the purchase of 202 acres "lying on a small branch of James River on the North side", adjoining the lands of Matthias Ripley and James Harper. This was the tract that, acting as an agent for his brother Issac, who had removed to Washington County, Virginia, John Spratt had sold to Henry Garner and Peter Solmon on Jan. 17, 1792. The Spratt brothers has received from their father by his last will and testament. So, all the Shafer land lay south and south-east of the Natural Bridge and between that natural wonder and the James River, a land of rolling hills sloping down to the fertile bottom-land along the river. ¹⁸

When John Shafer made his will, Sept. 27, 1847, he presented a fair sketch of his family. Besides those mentioned in his will, there may have been other children who were now lying in the family graveyard on the hill, looking across the James River to the Blue Ridge beyond. As his wife is not mentioned in the document, it may be assumed that she was lying there with her children.

The prosperity of the man since coming to Rockbridge County is very well set forth in the will. Almost 500 acres of good farming and grazing land, as shown by the inventory made by his executor, J. D. Davidson, and six negro slaves, with a total value of almost \$3,000, indicates the result of fifty years of persistent and honest labor. Furthermore, the good temper of the man is shown in the statement, "I direct my executor to sell my slaves at private sale, upon credit of six months, to good and humane masters in Rockbridge County, as I have more regard for the comfort of my slaves than the price they might bring in the public market." Two of the slaves, George, aged 50 years and worth \$300, and Jack, aged 18 years and worth \$600, were purchased by George Shafer. ¹⁹

Philip, the first child mentioned in the will, was unmarried in 1847, when the will was made, but, on Dec. 20, 1849, about six weeks after his father's death, he married Margaret C. Zollman, daughter of William Zollman and his wife Ann Ripley. He inherited the Booker place and the adjacent Tarr place, a total of more than 200 acres. When he died, his wife was made administratrix, April 5, 1869, with her brothers Adam and William as her bondsmen for \$5,000.

George Shafer received the Garner tract, about 202 acres, which was adjacent to the Booker place, and fifty acres off the Robert Irvine tract of seventy-three acres. Phoebe, the daughter, who had married Daniel Jenkins, was given the 222 acres on the Short Hill; it joined the properties of Daniel Sink, William Hardy, and others.

Christina had married Thomas Sizer and her sister Rebecca wed David H. Sizer. To each of these girls, the father willed 180 acres in adjoining tracts on Craig's Creek, in Botetourt County. The other six daughters were remembered with cash gifts. Elvira, who married Henry Zollman, son of William and Ann Ripley Zollman, in Lexington, Va., Nov. 16, 1837, with the Rev. A. B. Davidson officiating, received \$1,500. Her sister Lydia, who had married Peter Ackely, received one hundred dollars less. Susanne, wife of Andrew Crawford, was given \$1,100. These gifts of money may seem quite small, but in 1847, they were sizeable amounts. ²⁰

18. Rockbridge Co., Va., Deed Book "C", p. 521.
Rockbridge Co., Va., Deed Book "E", pp. 152, 443.

19. Rockbridge Co., Va., Will Book 11, p. 198.

20. Rockbridge Co., Va., Will Book 11, p. 198.

There is a subtle tenderness in the remembrances made to his two daughters, Polly and Catherine, and for it there must have been a reason. Both had married into the Croddy family, founded in this section by one John Croddy. In 1776, that worthy was living in the Natural Bridge area. With the spreading of the Revolutionary War and the call for men, he was the first man in the entire section to enlist for military service in the Virginia line. After serving for two years and one month, he was given an honorable discharge because of physical disabilities while in camp at Valley Forge. He came back to Rockbridge and, on May 28, 1780, he married Peggy, a daughter of Christopher Vineyard (or Winegar) and his wife Margaret.

To the Croddys were born John, Jr., Christopher, William, Ann (she became the wife of Samuel Ginger), Elizabeth, Achilles, and Margaret, who married Garrett Peck in 1810, and died before her father. John Croddy, Jr., married Polly Shafer, Feb. 15, 1822, the Rev. Samuel Houston officiating. To them were born two children who were made orphans by a fever that raged through the valley before John Shafer's death - the grandfather remember each of these orphans with \$300.

There is a sensed heart-appeal in the case of Catherine Shafer, who became the wife of Christopher Croddy, brother of her brother-in-law. In 1842, they migrated to Franklin County, Indiana; it was seven years before her father's death. In his will, that parent left \$900 in trust for her and her children; her brother George was to invest the money and use the income for their benefit. Before the 1850 Census, Catherine was a widow and, in 1870, she was making her home with her son George and his family; she was then sixty-eight years old.²¹

The other daughter of John Shafer was Elizabeth, better known as "Betty". The 1850 Census shows that she was living in Franklin County, Indiana, as a member of the family of Christopher Croddy, Jr., who seems to have gathered into his home his fatherless brothers and sisters. Twenty years pass and, in 1870, Betty is making her home a haven for two of her nephew's family. She was then seventy years of age and unmarried; she was listed as Elizabeth Croddy, perhaps because she was so identified with the family.

The Zollman-Shafer ties were further strengthened by the marriage of Willie Henry Shafer, daughter of John Henry Shafer, to William Zollman, Oct. 30, 1904, to be followed four years later, on Aug. 4, 1908, by the marriage of Maggie, another daughter of John Henry Shafer, to Randolph Tucker Zollman.

Another interlacing of the two clans was the marriage of Henry Zollman, son of William and Ann Ripley Zollman, to Elvira Shafer, daughter of John Shafer, on Nov. 16, 1837, as has been noted. Henry died, Dec. 3, 1896, at the age of eighty-three years, surviving his wife by four years; she died on June 30, 1892. Both of them are buried in the old Zollman burial-ground, on the hill overlooking the Buffalo Valley. To them were born thirteen children, the oldest being Elizabeth Jane, who became the bride of Hortaion Thompson Miller, and the youngest was Graham.²²

Such is the running sketch of the first few generations of the Zollman, the John Shafer, and the William Ripley families on the Virginia frontier. They intermarried and gave a solidarity to their society in the Valley of Virginia and on the mid-western

21. All Croddy material used is based upon data furnished by Franklin Mousley, Havertown P. O., Penna., who was doing research work on the Croddy family and its connections, a task in which the Virginia data was furnished by me from the records in the Rockbridge County Courthouse.
Reference; see my Croddy file.

22. W. B. Zollman: The Zollman Family of Virginia (Roanoke, Va., 1961). This work has been the general background for all the Zollman data used in this article.

line of advance. Most of them were farmers and stockmen, some were industrialists whose mills produced flour, meal, lumber, and woolen yarns, some were artisans and gifted with mechanical skills.

Many of them sleep in unmarked graves because the toll of time has taken away the humble markers; some of them are in the old Zollman and Shafer graveyards; some are in the cemeteries of High Bridge and Oxford Presbyterian Churches. Yet they are all living in the lives of their descendents and many of their contributions have become stepping-stones to greater and fuller living.

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BRUNSWICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Court Order Book No. 1 (1732-1741)

Court third day of May Anno Dom MDCCXXXIX

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John Scott gent came into Court and made oath that it is now three years since his Importation from Great Brittain and that he never before now has received the benefit of the Act of Assembly which allows fifty acres of land for every person imported from Gt. Brittain afsd. which is ordered to be certified.

Also Thomas Avent came into Court made oath that he never yet received his Importation Right and that it is now thirty-eight years since his Importation which is ordered to be certified.

Also Michael Cadet Young came into Court and made oath that he never has yet made use of his Importation Rite and that it was seventeen years since his Importation from Great Brittain which is ordered to be certified.

Also Cornelius Keith came into Court and made oath that he never made use of his Importation Rite and that this is the first time and that it is now thirty years ago since his Importation which is ordered to be certified.

Also Marmaduke Johnson from Ireland about twenty years ago, came into Court and made oath that he never made use of his Importation Rite and that this is the first time which is ordered to be certified.

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John Hopkins came into Court and made oath that he never made use of his Importation Rite and that this is the first time notwithstanding his being imported from Gt. Brittain into this Colony six years ago which is ordered to be certified.

Patrick Dempsey came into Court and made oath that he never made use of his Importation Rite and that this is the first time notwithstanding his being imported into this Colony from Ireland eighteen years ago which is ordered to be certified.

John Jackson came into Court and made oath that he never made use of his Importation Rite and that this is the first time notwithstanding his being imported into this Colony from Gt. Brittain three years ago which is ordered to be certified.

SUBMITTED BY:
MRS. JOHN F. McCURLEY