

A RECORD  
OF THE  
DESCENDANTS  
OF  
JOHN ALEXANDER,  
OF LANARKSHIRE, SCOTLAND,  
AND HIS WIFE,  
MARGARET GLASSON,  
WHO EMIGRATED FROM COUNTY ARMAGH, IRELAND,  
TO  
CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA,  
A. D. 1736.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### THE FAMILY AND DESCENDANTS OF WILLIAM BROWN ALEXANDER, OF CLEARFIELD CO., PA.

WILLIAM BROWN ALEXANDER, ninth child of James and Rosey Reed Alexander, was born in Kishacoquillas Valley, March 27, 1782.

He was named after the early and life-long friend of his father, Judge William Brown. In consideration of his having been a very early and prominent settler of Clearfield County, and of his having spent a long life there as a well known and highly respected citizen, we give a brief statement of circumstances connected with his removal to and establishment in that region, from materials furnished by his grandson, Mr. Joseph Alexander of Madera, Clearfield Co., Pa.

James Alexander, in 1784, when his son William B. was yet a child only two years old, having heard a favorable report of lands lying on Clearfield Creek, from an old hunter and trapper named John Reed, went and laid warrants on four tracts on the Big Clearfield Creek. The first tract, which he warranted in his own name, cornered on the creek bank at what was then a small, but now a large *ash tree*, on which are still legible the letters "J. A." and "J. R." which were then cut as the initials of his own name and that of his friend John Reed.

This ash tree is the oldest land mark on the creek,

and has had an important part in court trials concerning lands in that region, because the James Alexander warrant, being the oldest, is the starting point to determine other surveys of warrants.

This tract begins at the head of the "narrows," and lies mostly on the north-east side of the creek.

On the opposite side he located the John McConnell tract, and farther up the creek he located the John McGill and the Cullen tracts.

His friend William Brown located six other tracts still farther up the stream, extending to what is called "The Crab Orchard."

About midsummer of the next year, .1785, James Alexander returned again to his lands on Clearfield Creek, accompanied by his eldest son Robert. They went by the way of Lock Haven on the Susquehanna. Here they procured a flat-bottomed boat, which they dragged by means of a horse, all the way to the mouth of Muddy Run, a tributary of Clearfield Creek. With them they took provisions for a somewhat protracted stay. The exposure endured on this trip is said to have had a serious effect upon the health of James Alexander, though he did not die until six years later, in 1791.

John Reed the hunter was in company at least in a part of the journey, having probably crossed the mountains by some Indian path to meet James Alexander, at a point on the Susquehanna River. For while ascending the Clearfield Creek, at a certain place, John Reed and Robert Alexander crossed over a hill, while James Alexander kept the stream with the horse and boat.

In crossing the hill they discovered a shining ore, some pieces of which John Reed put into his shot pouch. He afterwards reported that having sent this ore to Philadelphia, the Mint had returned a silver

coin. Many persons saw this coin which he alleged had been made from the discovered ore, and hundreds of treasure seekers, "with silver on the brain," sought diligently but vainly for the spot where the ore was found.

When dividing his lands, James Alexander gave to his four younger sons, Hugh, Reed, Joseph and William B., the four tracts on Clearfield Creek. Three of them sold their claims to Sir Henry Phillips, a gentleman from England. But William B. not only refused to sell what his father had left to him, but he even secreted himself for two days, that he might not be solicited to sign the papers needed to legalize his brothers' sales. They finally induced him to do so by promising him his choice of the four tracts of land.

In the year 1800, when 18 years of age, he visited the lands and made choice of the tract which his father had entered in his own name.

It is worth recording that on this journey to Clearfield, he took with him *a pint of apple seed* from Kishacoquillas, which he gave for planting to an old man who lived nine miles from his lands. Nine years after, when he came to settle on his tract, he planted an orchard of trees grown from that seed, well known as "the old Alexander orchard."

After making his choice and before settling, he made a long journey westward, on horseback, visiting West Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky. On his return he stated, that two hundred acres of land, where Wheeling City now stands, were offered him for the horse which he rode.

So valuable was a horse—so cheap were city lots!

Soon after he married Miss Nancy Davis, daughter of John Davis of Kishacoquillas, April 23d, 1806.

He then rented a farm and remained in that valley

three years longer, when, in 1809, he emigrated by an Indian path across the Allegheny mountains to Clearfield, conveying his wife with two young children and all his effects on pack-horses. He then settled upon the premises which he continued to occupy until within a few months of his death.

To illustrate the inconveniences and discomforts of that early settlement, we need only state the fact, that for many years he was obliged to go forty miles across the mountains on horseback, along Indian paths to reach a mill.

William B. Alexander died at the residence of his son William B., on the 30th day of March, 1862, aged 80 years and 3 days.

His wife Nancy D. Alexander died April 1st, 1861, at the old homestead, aged 73 years and 6 months. They were the parents of eleven children, all of whom, excepting two, lived until after the death of their father.