

The Origin and Descent
of an
AMERICAN
VAN METRE FAMILY

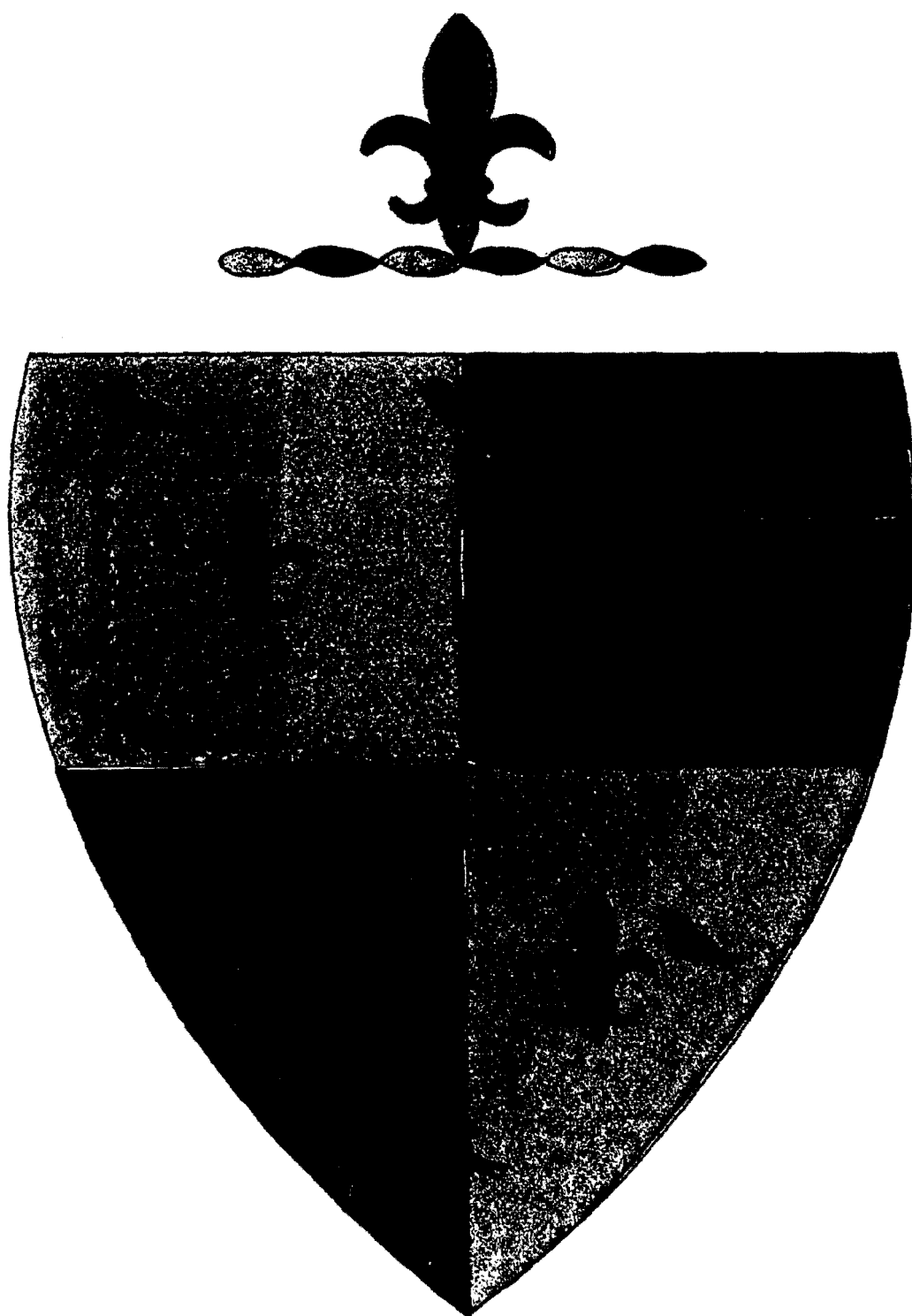
Collated from
Civil, Church, Military and Family
Records

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FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION



ARMS OF THE VAN METERENS OF HOLLAND

FOREWORD

This little booklet—a tribute to an honored name—endeavors to present some fragments and parts of history relating to the origin, descent and sundry migrations of a branch of the VAN METEREN family, from its habitat in Holland to its beginnings in America.

It treats, in particular, of the ancestry and descendants of JOHN VAN METRE who lived in the Valley of Virginia between 1730 and 1745, and who left a numerous and worthy progeny.

Woven into the story is something from the annals of early days—tracing the movements and reciting the experiences, adventures, hardships and perils of an heroic life spent along the border by this people during the pioneering period.

The lives of these forefathers is noteworthy for the influence and progressiveness which they exercised in the communities where they dwelt, and upon the conditions of the times in which they lived—which was in that Spartanic formative epoch that has no parallel in the history of any country at any time. And from such as these—whose perseverance, courage and daring contributed much—has been evolved this wonderful American nation.

The compiler has made extensive research among various original and official records, consulted family documents and analyzed a mass of correspondence from which he has eliminated the traditional element, and has left for your consideration only such facts as are really believed to be accurate and conclusive.

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RYLMONT, WEST CONSHOHOCKEN, PA.

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ORIGIN AND DESCENT OF AN AMERICAN VAN METRE FAMILY

In the narrative which follows we will have to go back to a remote period in the history of Holland and her people to find the gradual emergence of the Van Metre family into the light of revealed fact; going back then to A.D. 1250, or thereabout, we begin to pick them out of records in old illuminated parchment; the civic registers; Court documents; the chronological annals of a race of hardy men, and the heraldic visitations of the pursuivants-at-arms held for the "Ridderedels," or knighthood rolls of the nobility, which flourished and has partly vanished—down to the date, and much later, when the first Van Metre ancestor of whom we know appeared in this country and became a progenitor of a numerous and worthy family.

The writer, some years ago, had researches made among the records of the old towns in Holland which represented the environment, life and activities of the Van Meteren family of the olden times, and thus gathered a fair, but not altogether satisfactory, exemplification of their status as a group of men of prominence and gentility. Without assuming it to be anything more than a recital of some of the results attained, it is given here in the hope that, after all, it may prove more valuable than tentative in leading us to establish some connection between these ancient fathers of the dim feudal days along the lower Rhine, and the same stock—of which they undoubtedly were—that had its beginning in the New Netherland about the middle of the seventeenth century; and in this sketch the writer has endeavored to give a comprehensive and consecutive story, through progressive stages, of the prestige and the eventful lives of the Van Metre posterity.

The first mention of Meteren is in a deed dated September, 1253, in which Otto, Count of Bentheim, transfers to Otto, Count of Gelre, his alodium, Malsen, along the Earldom of Bevan-Asperen. . . . It belonged to the ancient family and estates of the Cuicks as recited in a certain deed of 1265, etc.

Meeteren, also called Meteren, is a village in the Tielerwaard. It belonged to the community of Geldermalsen, of which it constitutes the southernmost section. Meteren was formerly a manor

in the province of Tiesterband, apparently, a possession of the counts who were placed over the section where Meteren was situated . . . and belonged to the estate which the family Van Cuick Van Meteren possessed between the Rhine and the Waal.

Almost one and a half centuries elapse before one again finds mention made of Meteren and then it was under the direction of Willem, Duke of Gelre and Cuick. After the death of Jan V, Lord of Cuick, who had been at odds with his father, the succession to Cuick fell to his sister Johanna. In 1394, Johanna became Lady of Cuick and Grave. When she took possession of the manor, or about that time, she was given in marriage to Willem, son of the Duke of Mechteld. The marriage agreement was concluded at Grave, October 3, 1394, and the wedding held at the same place December 24, 1394.

Johann van Meteren, at Meteren, appears on the knighthood of 1548, and on the list of 1555 "dead" is written after his name. He and Otto van Haeften, heirs of Johanna van Cuick van Meteren, had a suit against the Count van Buuren, on account of a flood in the Waal, as appears in letters of the Count of Gelre from 1546 to 1547.

Jasper van Meteren appears in the "Ridderschap" [book of the knighthood, or, nobility] of 1563 and 1578; at the later date the word "dead" is written before his name. In the same list is mentioned Willem van Metere and Johan Cuick van Metere; and Aert van Metere in the Bommelwaard. Jasper van Metere, in the knighthood of 1570, had five sons and one daughter.

- I. Cornelius van Meteren; living 1581.
- II. Jan van Meteren; living 1613.
- III. Jr. Jasper van Meteren; justice at Deijl 1610; "well-to-do."
- IV. Johan van Meteren; living 1625.
- V. William van Meteren-van Meteren, lord of Meteren, living 1624.
- VI. Marie van Meteren.
- VII. Cornelia van Meteren.

I. Cornelius van Meteren, above, of the Bommelwaard, appears in the chivalry [Knighthood] of 1578. He had four children: 1. Captain Johan van Meteren, 2. Roelof, 3. Barbara, and 4. Gertruida van Metere; living 1624.

IV. John van Cuick van Meteren and Willem van Cuick van Meteren (V.) are mentioned in the list of the nobility for the years 1600, 1610-12, 1605, 1614, 1615-18, and in roll for 1619-21, as "dead."

V. Willem van Cuick van Meteren appears in the Knighthood of 1598 and same continues to 1618. In the records of Deijl, Willem is mentioned as Lord of Meteren; justice 1620. He makes his will dated August 9, 1624, and names the son of his brother Cornelius I., Captain Johan van Meteren, as heir to the manor of Meteren, with his nephew Roelof and the latter's sisters, Marie, Barbara and Gertruida, joint heirs, otherwise. Exlm. 29, July, 1629. Capt. Johan van Cuick van Meteren also inherits from his uncle, Willem (V.), certain legacies as recorded in a deed dated 12 November, 1652, and in it are mentioned Capt. Johan's children—*A.* Melchoir, in Knighthood of 1615-24; *B.* Anneken, who married Maas Janzoon; *C.* Balthaser; *D.* Adriaan; *E.* Johanna, who married Jr. du Bois van Houten; *F.* Joan, her will in 1641; and *G.* Hendrix van Cuick van Meterem, married in 1624.

A. Among the children of Melchoir, who married Anneke Ariens in 1630, Justice 1640, deceased 1650, is eldest son Goosen [Jooste ?] van Meteren van Cuick. Anna, Melchoir's widow, records deed May 12, 1660; makes her will September 7, 1656; and names heirs Jans Derick Olie, Gertje van Beest, and Anneken van Beest. She was a widow when she married Melchoir van Meteren and the van Beest children were by her first husband. Goosen and Gertyje were children by Melchoir's first marriage.

1. Capt. Johan van Cuick van Meteren, son of Cornelius (I.), married Diske van Meteren, and their son Melchoir married Anneken Arience and had son, Goosen, who was admitted to the Ridderschap of Neijmegen, June 26, 1651. The above Melchoir was presented June 10, 1612; appeared 1615 and admitted—as he had left the military service—and filled the office of Tielerwaard, September, 1630; appears again in 1633 and 1649, signs "van Meteren" and is called in the Book of Heraldry "van Meteren van Cuick."

Among the names noted as inhabitants in the vicinity of Meteren may be mentioned these:

1540. Jacob van Meteren married with . . . van Boxmeer;

1541. 10 Dec., Jan van Meteren, justice at Meteren;

- 1541. Melchoir van Meteren, justice in 1560 and 1663;
- 1544. Gysbert van Meteren;
- 1645. Gysbert van Meteren married Jutten van Heruijnen;
- 1565. Willem van Meteren, justice;
- 1567. Cornelius van Meteren at Deijl;
- 1634. Johan van Meteren master of horse at Tielerwaard, etc.

A.D. 1500, Cornelia van Cuick van Meteren was married to Otto van Beeste.

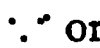

7 June, 1571, in the General State Archives the seals of Arnt and Jan van Meteren can be found.

A.D. 1600, Waalberg van Meteren was married with Otto van Haeften in the county of Nymegen.

20 November, 1634, Johann van Meteren was sergeant-major of cavalry in the county of Tiel (Thielerwaardt).

27 December, 1646, Michael Jordaen de Cahiliser and Lady Josina van Cuick van Meteren were married at Hertogenbosch, the capital of the province of North Brabant.

20 October, 1671, Maximilliaen van Meteren "is considered as absolutely knightly."

Riestap, in his "Armorial Generale," describes the Cuicks van Meterens as follows: "The armorial bearings of the Cuick van Metere were: shield gules, with two fesses argent, accompanied by three martlets of the same, arranged two and one," or, in plain English, the shield has a red ground with two horizontal bands, silver and white, and three martlets [in heraldry, a sort of swallow without feet, denoting cadency—a younger son] arranged two and one, thus  or . The coat-of-arms of the van Metere family of Holland are "quartered, first and fourth of silver, with a fleur de lis, gules; with second and third of gold, with two fesses, gules, accompanied with eight martlets of same color arranged in orle," that is to say, around the outer rim of the shield. The crest, a fleur de lis [the royal emblem of France]. The title here, "Jr.," is synonymous with *Jonkvrouw*, young woman, feminine, and *Jonkheer*, young man, masculine. "Ridderschap" and "Ridderedel" signifies either nobility or knighthood, as used in the text.

A son of Jan van Cuick van Meteren, Lord of Meteren and a member of the Riddersedel of 1555, Adriaan by name, became Lord

of Meteren and Kerkwick, colonial governor of Woudricken and Lovenstein; married, and wedding published in the Hague, December 15, 1636, to Emerentia van Aerssen, daughter of Jacques, Lord of Triangel, president of the Council of Brabant, and Marie van der Vecken. Adriaan was buried at Meteren, with eight quarterings.

EMMANUEL VAN METEREN AND CAPT. HENDRICK HUDSON

The annals of any country do not possess such an example of the blending of racial elements as can be found in cosmopolitan America; all this assimilation and the developments up to this time are the results of four hundred and more years of the fusing of these elements in the "melting pot" of the nations. The western world's wonderful progress and its dominant civilization springs, primarily, from its discovery by the Genoese navigator, Columbus, in 1492; and then after some of the leading powers of the then Europe, stimulated and spurred on by the success of Spain and eager to emulate her enterprise, began to rival each other in exploration and territorial aggrandizement, found compensating rewards in later discoveries; hence we find France, England, Sweden and the Netherlands striving to achieve supremacy in the new world. And in relation to the latter country's adventurous undertakings we come into touch with a Dutch family whose antecedents and influence made possible the founding of one of the great commonwealths of the United States.

The English under Sir Walter Raleigh and Captain John Smith had already reached the southern shores of Virginia years before they had gained a foothold in the present state of New York, but here the Dutch had preceded them and carefully explored and taken possession of a vast realm; and was rapidly planting her sons upon a province that extended from the Connecticut River on the east, crossed the Delaware, and stopped at the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay, before the English were aware of the significance and extent of the Dutch policy of "peaceful penetration." Upon this magnificent territory they bestowed the name of New Netherland in honor of the fatherland. Her great day dawned in 1609 when Captain Henry Hudson, in his famous ship "The Half-Moon," ploughed the waters of the North River which now bears his name. From before that eventful day down to the present time, the impress of the Dutch influence is ineradicably stamped upon the land and its inhabitants.

The exploring expedition of Captain Hudson had for its objective—when he ascended the North River—the attempt to find the traditional and long-sought passage to the western sea; and al-



EMMANUEL VAN METEREN

though he failed in his purpose, it marked an epoch in the romance of western civilization. In this historic event one of its most interesting features is the fact that it was brought about, mainly, through the prestige and influence of the family *van Meteren* of Holland. We are told by the late Professor Fiske, in his "Dutch and Quaker Colonies,"¹ that "the moment that history first actually knows him [Henry Hudson] is the first day of May, 1607, when he sailed from Greenwich in command of an Arctic expedition; but we also know that he was a citizen of London; and the Dutch historian *Van Meteren* tells us that there was a warm friendship between Henry Hudson, the navigator, and Captain John Smith." Again: in a reference to the Dutch East-India Company, Fiske says: "Their offers were probably made through Henry Hudson's friend, the Dutch consul *van Meteren*." Then again: "It was Hudson's friend *Van Meteren* who declared that English was only 'broken Dutch'"; and still again: "Hudson, in 1608, knew scarcely a word of Dutch." Emmanuel Van Meteren wrote an account of Hudson's Voyage of Discovery.²

Let us consider, for a moment, who this potential Emmanuel Van Meteren was. Reliable authorities rank him as one of the most learned and prominent of Hollanders. As a youth starting in life as a student—but all the while being trained in the business house of Sebāstian Dankhearts at Antwerp, and passing beyond this—to become a scholar, historian, statesman and philosopher. These represent some of the degrees of progression in his career. He was the author of "A History of The Netherlands," a book that has been translated and published in several languages; and all these accomplishments were being acquired while continuing his business, and serving his country as Dutch consul, at London, during the reigns of Edward VI. and his sister Mary, of England. Emmanuel was the grandson of Cornelius van Meteren, and the son of Jacob Van Meteren, of Breda—who was a printer, a linguist and a scientist. This Jacob, in association with Miles Coverdale, was the translator, printer and publisher, at Antwerp, of the first English version of the Bible—a work that is, today, in its original edition, worth its weight in gold. The mother of Emmanuel, Jacob's wife, was Ortilia Ortels, the daughter of William Ortels

¹ Fiske, "Dutch and Quaker Colonies," I., pp. 70, etc.

² "Narrative and Critical History of America." Houghton, Mifflin & Co., p. 7.

of Augsburg, and a granddaughter of Abraham Ortels, the famous geographer. It will thus be readily seen that the lineage of Emmanuel Van Meteren was of the most worthy and auspicious character, which was reflected in the qualities of their gifted son.

Emmanuel Van Meteren married first, in 1562, Miss Von Loo-beck, who had been imprisoned at Antwerp for her religious convictions. Both she and Emmanuel were of the Reformed Faith. The wife, however, died within a year after their marriage, and Emmanuel married again, in 1564, Esther van der Corput, daughter of Nicholas van der Corput, who was secretary of Breda; and granddaughter of Johannes van der Corput, a former mayor of Breda.¹ The Van Meterens then went to London to reside—to which place he had been appointed consul.

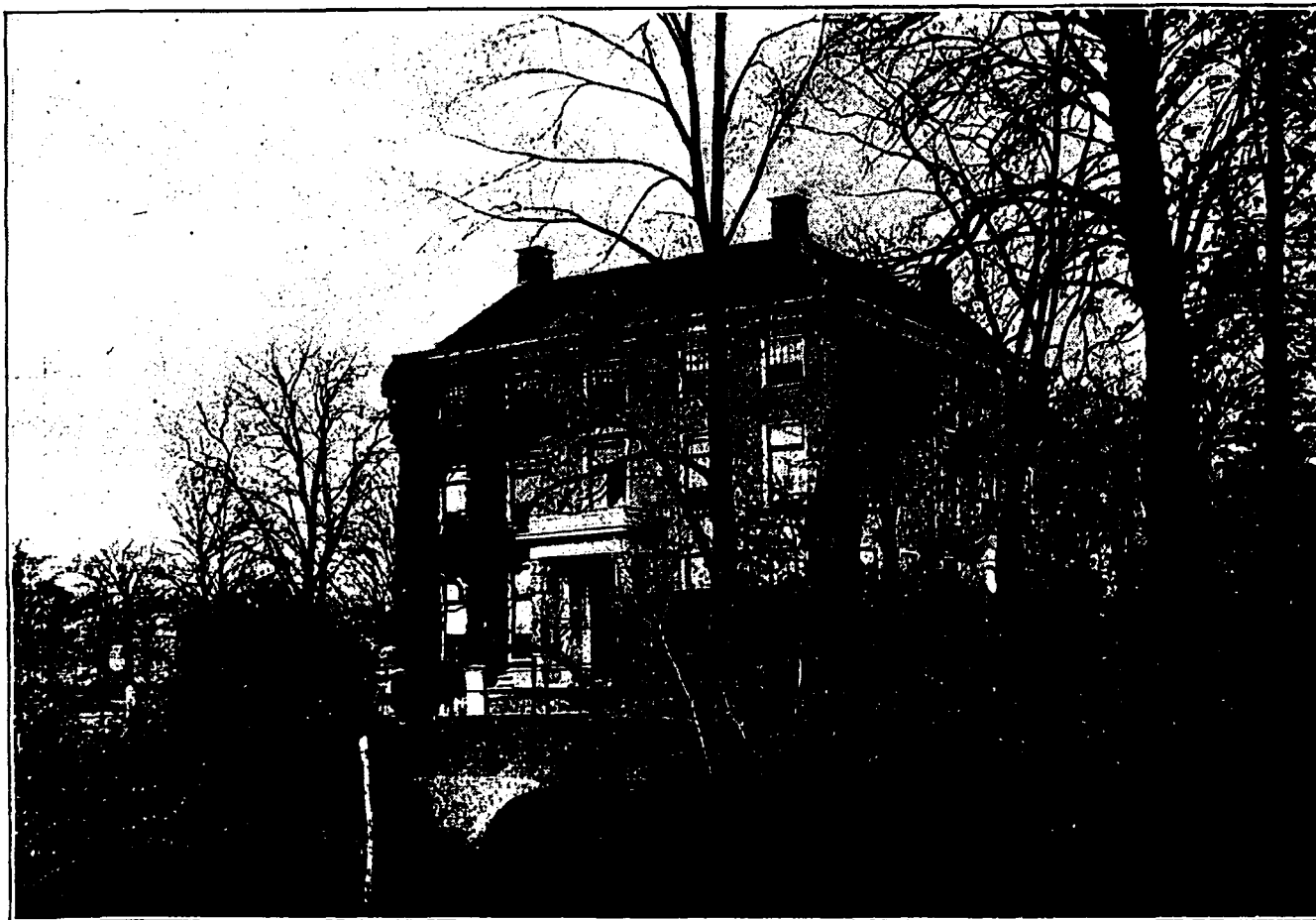
In 1583 he was chosen to be Chief of Council of the "College of Dutch Merchants," of London; meanwhile carrying on his business and attending to his duties as Consul until his death, in his 77th year, April 8, 1612. He was buried at St. Denis' Church, in London, where a monument was erected by "his widow and nine children."²

There is but little available concerning the residences of the Van Meterens in Holland; one sketch, however, has been obtained which refers to the "Huise Van Meteren" situate in the Heerlykheid Metere, in Geldermalsen, as shown in the picture. It was a stately structure, and the home, for many years and generations, of one of the branches of the Van Metre family, and subsequently of others, probably strangers to the blood. This mansion stood in a beautiful park of magnificent trees, some of which were of great height and dimensions. The house was rebuilt in 1768-9, but it has at last served its day; it was sold in December, 1906, and has since been torn down.

If one examines the map of Holland it will be found that the Rhine, flowing down from Germany, enters the Netherlands; and, as it approaches the sea, divides into several branches. Upon one of these is Arnheim, the chief town in Gelderland, some fifteen and odd miles from Amsterdam. Utrecht is on another estuary that empties into the Zuyder Zee. The Waal, the principal branch of the Rhine, takes its course westerly until it unites with the Meuse, and its waters, from that point to the sea, are called the

¹ Genealogies and Biographies. B. F. Van Metre, p. 159.

² Letters of Mrs. C. C. Foster.



THE "HUISE" VAN METEREN

River Merwe. On the right bank of the Waal, as it nears the Meuse, is situated the pretty little town of Thiel; one of the fortifications of Holland, 22 miles west-southwest of Arnheim; and farther down, on the left bank, where the waters of the two rivers join, is the island of Bommel, on the west side of which stands the castle of Loevenstein made famous in 1619 as the prison of Grotius, the father of international law, and author of "*Belli et Pacis*," or War and Peace. Thus, within the radius of a few miles, lies the fatherland of the Van Meterens.

JAN JOOSTEN'S FAMILY

The branch of the family with whom we are concerned came to America in 1662, as revealed in the papers of the ship "Vos" [Fox], arriving at New Amsterdam on the 12th of September of that year,¹ though there is some evidence that leads us to suppose that the emigrant ancestor was here at least a year before this date.² At the time of their landing on these shores they found conditions vastly improved over the primitive wilds which existed when the immediate followers of Capt. Hudson ventured upon these unknown shores. The emigrants of 1662 found a quasi-civilization awaiting them. There were snug harbors and havens about New Amsterdam so like those they left beyond the sea, and the conditions were much more promising in freedom and prosperity than those they had ever before known; for here were a numerous and flourishing people who made them welcome. The tide of their advance had met the flow of Puritan colonists who came down the coast from the bleak, rock-bound shores of Massachusetts Bay. Meanwhile the Dutch had spread over the southern end of Long Island, where they had founded the villages of New Utrecht, Flatbush and Breucklyn, and extended their settlements until these communities interlaced. Across the North River nestled the villages of Bergen, Communipaw and Hoboken, and the fishing hamlets on Staten Island. Most of the inhabitants along shore were rivermen; but many were prosperous burghers in the busy marts of Manhattan, and lived in the tidy boweries that stretched along the south shores of the Kill-von-Kull, or mingled on the mainland with the Scotch and English settlers about Perth; and when mere village limitations no longer marked their bounds, they passed on, and with the traders and peltry hunters sought more remote conquests. Grants of land, some of them of princely size, were made on the upper reaches of the Hudson; and their acreage extended far into the wilderness until the realms claimed from it by the invading Dutchmen reached unto the northern lakes. It was then that the patroonships were introduced, and witnessed

¹ "Documentary History of New York," III., pp. 52, 63.

² *New Netherland Register*, February, 1911, p. 26.

the translation of that feudalism, patterned upon the baronies abroad, which reached into the primitive wilderness beyond the forest-girt Hudson. The Indians receded into the interior, but in his passing—as in his parting with his possessions—he exacted vengeful recompense; yet, in spite of this, the love of barter was so strong a quality in the Dutch character, so infectuous and relentless, that the influence of it drew largess from the savages to the uttermost parts in the dominion of New Netherland. Here and then were laid the foundations of that spirit of commercialism which long since has made New York dominant in the trade of the western world.

The coming of the Van Metres in the latter part of the seventeenth century to New Netherland was in the period when the colony was progressing under the most favorable conditions and at a time which coincided with the founding of a settlement among the foot-hills of the Catskill Mountains on the west side of the Hudson, in Ulster County, New York, and about sixty miles above the bay. Here a group of Dutch, and another of French Huguenot emigrants, had obtained patents for lands and were already established; and the settlements were constantly being increased by additions from the bay towns below and in a short time the fertile valleys of the Waalkill and the Esopus sheltered a collection of thrifty little communities, thus, in the twenty-odd years between 1660 and the maturity of the Van Metre children, about 1680, the settlements known as New Paltz, Wyltwick, Eusopus, Hurley and Marbletown were founded in close proximity to each other and were finally merged into what has since been called the Kingston country. Behind them rose the bulwark of the Catskills, and beyond these mountains, and out of their western slopes, gushed the head-springs of the Delaware and the Susquehanna rivers, which, in their respective courses, first provided trails for the native tribes, and by which they had intercourse with their southern contemporaries.

Over the three thousand and more acres of the rich meadows watered by these streams and peopled by the refugees from overseas there spread a new Palatinate for the Pilgrims from the Rhine, and where they found that tolerance and sympathy which were denied them in their native land. But even here, as they had escaped from the religious and political persecutions of themselves, and the confiscation of their properties in Europe, so they were

destined to meet new terrors and stranger experiences, in the very sanctuary which Providence seems to have raised for their relief. Suffering and distress in terrible form were inflicted upon them by the Indians, and many there were who were as much real martyrs, for conscience sake, as though they had remained in ravished Europe. These experiences we will relate later.

There was, however, one benignant feature which developed out of their collective communism—for though differing racially and socially, the Dutch and French fraternized and forgot their political antagonisms, their social and religious lines of cleavage—and united in a common bond of sympathy for protection; and this unity was constantly being strengthened by intermarriage and its resultant kinship, so that the time came when the first generation of the original settlers had reached maturity—the social, civic and economic environment had so radically changed that the Dutch tongue was generally used in the domestic circles, while French was the common language in business, civil and ecclesiastical affairs. Then, too, all worshipped together in one church—the Reformed Dutch—which was located at Wyltwick, the present town of Kingston, and in which nearly all the citizens were members; here the banns were published, the marriages performed and most of the children were baptized; in fact, the “Register of the Births and Marriages” of that church¹ were kept by successive pastors with such fidelity and thoroughness, and preserved with such care, that the publication of them in recent years, for the period from about 1660 to a comparatively modern date, form a valuable index of the early inhabitants of that part of Ulster County, New York. Scanning its pages one finds the forebears of families now scattered world-wide. From this place many of the settlers immigrated to Pennsylvania, Maryland, and into Virginia; and were in the forefront of that conquering host of heroic pioneers who carried civilization into the south and west—and so redeemed the wilderness, and forever banished the red scourge of the frontiers.

Coincident with the settlement of New York by the Dutch, the Swedes were colonizing here and there in the domain of New Netherland. A very formidable colony was planted on each side of the Delaware River, and New Sweden flourished, for a time, unmolested; but the aggressive trading propensities of this hardy race, the expansion of their little communities and disputing the

¹ Records of the Reformed Dutch Church of Kingston, N. Y., p. 12.

protests of the Dutch government at New Amsterdam, at last precipitated an open conflict between the rivals, which was suddenly brought to an end in 1655, by the arrival on the Delaware of the formidable and irrepressible Governor Stuyvesant with an armed force, who compelled the surrender of the Swedish pretensions.¹ Stuyvesant then brought some of his people from Manhattan; and directed other colonists upon their arrival in this country to immigrate to the subjugated lands along the Delaware. After this time these river settlements went through the same process of assimilation as was then operating between the Dutch and the French on the upper Hudson.

On the east shore of the Delaware, in south Jersey, the Swedes had located early and fortified their holdings. Between Fort Nassau, which was located nearly opposite the site of Philadelphia, down to Fort Elsinborg, on Penn's Neck, which was across the river from Fort Christiana at the mouth of the Brandywine, were several intervening settlements; so we find them colonized on the Raccoon, Timber, Cohansey, Salem and Maurice creeks; and along a trail which the Van Meterens afterward took, leading southward from the bay at New Amsterdam to New-Amstel, or, as it is now, New Castle, in the state of Delaware. The eastern part of this overland path started from Bergen and ran southwesterly, crossing the Passaic and Raritan rivers, and touching the Delaware at "the Falls," now Trenton, N. J., and there, by fording the shallow rapids to the west side, passed through the old Swedish plantation on the Pennypack, and so on to New Castle. At this point, where the Delaware peninsula is the narrowest, another overland trail led to the head of Elk River, in Maryland; and by that tributary entered Chesapeake Bay; and by it and beyond, passed through the mountain gaps of the Potomac, to distant points in the colony of Virginia.

The path from New York to Philadelphia was called "The King's Highway" in 1675, and was then, as it is today, the main artery of travel between the two chief cities of the eastern colonies. Another path followed the eastern shore of the Delaware, intersecting the little Swedish villages that lay along the way between Somerset and Middlesex counties in the province of East Jersey, on down to the vicinity of Fenwick's English colony at Salem, in the province of West Jersey. En route, there was a divergence in

¹ "Dutch and Quaker Colonies," I., pp. 208, 210.

the trail which led to Mattinick Island and Lassa Point, situated about where the city of Burlington now stands. It was by these primitive paths that the various and widely separated settlements in the middle colonies were connected and from which they continually acquired growth from the flow of pioneers that were to pierce the Blue Ridge at the Potomac and absorb the virgin valleys beyond.

The foregoing is thus elaborately set forth that we may the more readily trace and understand the migratory movements of the Van Metre forefathers from Ulster County, New York, to their final abiding place in Virginia.

Jan Joosten Van Meteren, his wife and five children, whose ages ranged from two and a half to fifteen years of age, arrived in the ship "Fox," at New Amsterdam, in New Netherlands, on the 12th of April, 1662.¹ The wife's name was Macyke Hendricksen, and she is supposed to have been the sister of Femmetjen Hendricksen, who married Jooste Adriensen, of Pynnaker, Holland, on the 20th of March, 1663-4. She was of Meppelen, in the province of Dreuth, in Holland; and upon the death of Jooste Ariencesen, of "Boswick," upon Long Island, circa 1685, Jan Joosten Van Meteren was appointed administrator, tutor of decedent's children, and arbitrator in proceedings regarding the sale of some land in Hurley which had been sold to Derick Schepmos by Arience during his lifetime. Jan Joosten's children were: Lysbeth, Cathrin, Geertje, *Jooste Jans*, and Gysbert; Jooste Jans being the eldest son, as appears by the father's records.²

Jan Joosten hailed from the Thielerswaardt, a fortified town in Gelderland, Holland; and his wife was of Meppelen, in the province of Dreuth, in Holland, where they were married and their children born. The family patronymic was derived from Van, "of," and "Meteren," a town in Holland.

Prior to 1662, there is a record that Jan Joosten had been in America at least a year earlier. Evidence shows that he was appointed in 1661, along with Jan Gerrettsen, Roosa Gerrettsen and

¹ "Documentary History of New York," III., pp. 53, 63. Year Book, Hist. Soc'y, N. Y., 1896.

² Probate Records of Ulster Co., N. Y..

Allard Huymans, on a committee to superintend the enclosing of the village of Nieuw Dorp, in Ulster Co., N. Y.

Jan Joosten, with his family, settled in Wyltwick [now Kingston] in the summer of 1662, but he is not noted in the activities of that community until the 7th of June, 1663, the date when the Minnisink Indians made an attack on the village and its vicinity, raiding and burning the settlement and carrying away women and children in captivity. Among the latter were Jan's wife and two of his children, Jooste Jans being one of them. Captain Kreiger's journal, which gives a general account of the expedition of rescue, unfortunately does not name him, but it is elsewhere stated that it was due to Jooste Jan's three months' association with the Indians, during his captivity, that gave him the knowledge of their habits, trails, plans and war feuds with other tribes, and so impressed him with a desire for their adventurous life.

In a list of the inhabitants of Ulster County, New York, who subscribed to the oath of allegiance, due to a change in the sovereignty of the country, between the 21st and 26th of October, 1664, the name of Jan Joosten appears among them. After this date frequent notice of him occurs upon the records of Kingston—as a farmer, and a man of growing importance in civil and religious matters. In 1665 he was appointed referee in a law-suit between two of the citizens; and on August 26, of the same year, he is mentioned as an appraiser of the personal estate of Dr. Gysbert van Imbrock, who was a physician and apothecary of the vicinity. The decedent's inventory included, among other valuable books, a copy of Emmanuel Van Meteren's History; and at a sale of the effects, on the 9th of September, following, Jan was a purchaser to the extent of nearly 100 guilders—two of the items he bought were the "Beehive," by the famous Marnix, Lord of St. Aldegonde, and "The Chronicles of the Kings of England"; and these books aptly showed the character of Jan Joosten's culture.¹ A further appointment came to Jan as "Scheppen," or to a position synonymous to that of the minor judiciary, which, under the laws of the time, gave him jurisdiction in all civil cases under the sum of 100 guilders; but in cases above that amount such action must be referred to the Director-General and the Council. He could pronounce sentence in criminal actions, subject to appeal, so we

¹ New Netherland Register, February, 1911, pp. 25, 26; Hazzards Annals, I., p. 223.

may assume that he enjoyed a position but little removed below the highest court in the province.

From about this time Jan Joosten was frequently sought as a witness to various marriages, or as sponsor at the baptisms of children at the homes of relatives and friends. In some instances baptisms were performed "at Jan Joosten's in the presence of the whole consistory"; these distinctions were, no doubt, due to his position in the church, in which he had been elected an elder, in 1667; or, as a civil officer in the community. During the trouble in Wyltwick in the same year, caused by the offensiveness of the soldiers of the English garrison, Jan Joosten, with three other citizens, acted as mediators in the dispute and were able to conciliate the inhabitants and thus prevented violence to lives and property.¹

The first instance of his purchase of land appears in a record which reads: "Jan Joosten had, from Governor Lovelace, a deed for a lot, dated March 20th, 1671, in Marbletown," and "on the 11th. October following—received confirmation of his 30 acre lot in Marbletown."²

Jan Joosten was selected, October 6, 1673, as one of the four magistrates of Hurley and Marbletown—to supervise the merging of the village of Nieu-Dorp into those of Hurley and Marbletown under the English rule. The other magistrates were Jan Broerson, Louis du Bois, and Roelof Hendricksen. And notwithstanding the change of government, Jan was continued in that civil office until the return of Dutch supremacy, in 1675, when Governor Colve reappointed him to serve for another term.³

Jan Joosten is named as justice of the peace for Eusopus and was present at the Court of Assizes, in New York, on October 4, 5, and 6, 1682.³

Macyken, wife of Jan Joosten, is named as a beneficiary in the will of Everdt Pary; dated 26th March, 1675.⁴

With the regaining of the country by the English, the inhabitants were again required to swear allegiance to their new overlords, so it is recorded that Jan Joosten once more performed this act of fealty, 1st Sept., 1689.

We now approach a very interesting phase of Jan Joosten's career, in which he takes on the status of a patroon, or landed

¹ Vide same, p. 27.

² New York Land Papers, I., pp. 37, 42.

³ New York Historical Society Collections, 1912, pp. 25, 26; 1913, p. 18.

⁴ Ulster Co. Probate Records, Vol. ?, p. 37.

proprietor. Aside from what he had acquired in Ulster County—the Wassemaker's land, for instance, and possibly other parcels—he obtained land grants in the province of East Jersey through a period extending from 1689 to the year of his death, in 1706.

In company with his son-in-law, Jan Hamel, who had married his daughter Geertje Crom [sometimes called "Girty Jans"] in 1682,² Jan Joosten appeared in East Jersey, where they jointly bought, on October 18, 1695, from Edward Hunloke, the deputy Governor, of Wingerworth, Burlington County, a plantation of 500 acres located at Lassa, or "Lazy Point," on the Delaware River, opposite the present city of Burlington. This property was on the path much frequented by the Dutch traders passing between the settlements of the upper Hudson and their kindred villagers on the lower Delaware. Lassa Point lay about 23 miles northeast of Philadelphia; and was originally seated by three or four Dutch families "who were there"—said Governor Philip Carteret—"in 1666," and to whom he confirmed patents in 1678. The Mattinick Island, which lay in the river opposite Burlington and Lassa Point, was subsequently the home of Peter Jegue, a noted colonial character and trader. The record of this purchase by Joosten and Hamel reads that title was given "to John Joosten and John Hamel, both now or late of Sopus [Eusopus in the Kingston locality], N. Y., yeomen." At the same time Hunloke gave the grantees a bond guaranteeing them undisputed possession of the premises; and on the following day the grantees executed and delivered to Hunloke their bond and mortgage on the 500 acres.² Later, Jan Joosten, in his own name, granted two hundred acres of this land at Lassa Point, and the title was confirmed by law in 1697.³

Jan Joosten next appears as an individual purchaser of certain lands in Somerset County, East Jersey, as may be seen from the record of a deed passing title from Governor Andrew Hamilton and Agnes, his wife, and under date of September 13, 1700, to "Jane [Jan] Joosten of Marbletown, New York, yeoman." There were four parcels of this land, separately numbered, and designated as unsurveyed and unappropriated lands, lying contiguous on the South Branch of the Raritan River, in the neighborhood of the

¹ Col. Arch. New Jersey, 1st Ser., XXI., p. 464.

² Col. Arch. New Jersey, 1st Ser., XXI., pp. 318, 497, 517.

³ Index to Spicer & Leaming's Laws of New Jersey, p. 24.

present city of Somerville, N. J., the county seat of Somerset. As a whole, the plantation aggregated 1,835 acres. It consisted of broad and fertile meadows on the Raritan; and the locality was already partially seated by groups of Dutch and Scotch people from the Kill-von-Kull and Perth, with a few French from Staten Island, who had come into this region about fifteen or twenty years before. On the above date there is a record of Jan Joosten being at Piscataway [Perth], where he probably went to meet the Governor and obtain his grant.¹ The above seems to be the extent of his purchases. His will was found filed, with an inventory of his personal property, in the Burlington County Surrogate's office. This instrument is endorsed "Will of Jan Joosten of . . . June 13th, 1706," and is further marked "Dutch." His personal estate included six slaves, a negro man, woman and four children. The appraisers were Joris van Neste and Hendrix Reinersen; it was sworn to by "*John Van Mator*." Antedating this document is a "testamentary disposition" signed jointly by Jan Joosten and his wife, Macyke Hendricksen, and dated 16th December, 1681, which reads: "Macyke Hendricksen shall retain full possession of the estate. She consents that the survivor shall possess everything, lands, houses, personal property, money, gold, silver—coined or uncoined. After their decease the property is to be inherited by their children—Jooste to have one-half the entire estate first. Jooste and Gysbert to have the land at Marbletown—Jooste one-half and then the other half to be divided between them. Geertje to have the land at Wassemaker's land. Children of Lysbeth, deceased, to have their portion in money from the other children."²

Jooste Jans was the eldest son—therefore, the heir-at-law and entitled to a double portion. Geertje was the eldest daughter, who, from the additional name of "Crom," suggests that she had been married before this time, or that she was the daughter of Jan Joosten by a former marriage and carried her mother's name as the custom was in Holland. Lysbeth predeceased her father and left children. Another daughter, not named in the will, is supposed to have been Cathrin, and can only be accounted for by her marriage and in having received her portion and so disappears from consideration in the distribution of the property.

In passing, it is needful to say that among the Dutch families residing on the South Branch of the Raritan River were several

¹ Col. Arch. N. J., 1st Ser., XXX., p. 480.

² Probate Records Ulster Co., N. Y.

related to Jan Joosten and probably were his neighbors at the time of his death; they may be mentioned here because of their later associations and intermarriages, and in showing the French influence in the locality. There were the de la Meters, du Bois, Bodines, Traphagens, Molenaurs and Powelsens.¹ About 1715, a Reformed Dutch church was organized at the head of the Raritan, called the Readington church; it was on the north branch of the Raritan. Among its elders were Abram de la Meter and Jan Hendricksen, from Ulster Co., N. Y. An Isaac Van Metre was a land owner in Bridgewater township, Somerset Co., in 1714, and was probably the same person who was "received" into the communion of the Readington church, on confession of faith, in 1731.²

Jan Joosten was, in every sense, an enterprising and influential citizen; a man of vision, initiative, culture and other fine and useful qualities; and in whom the people placed their matters of trust without fear of being betrayed or exploited. He was, indeed, a worthy progenitor of the line of descendants who have distinguished themselves in every sphere of usefulness. We shall, however, not go so far afield, but confine this narrative to the progeny of Jooste Jans Van Metre, the eldest son of Jan Joosten.

Jooste Jans' early life, aside from his adventures, while yet a small boy, with the Indians in 1663, has not been revealed, but may be assumed to have been pretty much the same as that of other youths, until the time of his engagement to marry was published in the banns of the Reformed Dutch church at Kingston, on the 18th of November, 1682, and which was followed by his marriage announcement in this wise: "Jooste, Jans, J. M. of Meteren, born in Gelderland, residing in Mormer [Marbletown] and Sara du Bois, J. D. of Kingston, residing in the Nieuw-Pals [New Paltz] married in the Pals, 12, December, 1682."³

SARA DU BOIS was the daughter of Louis du Bois and Cathrine Blanchan, his wife. Sara was baptized at Kingston, September 14, 1664. They had issue:

¹ "History Somerset Co., N. J.," p. 561.

² Readington Church Records.

³ Records Reformed Dutch Church at Kingston, N. Y.

Jan, bapt. October 14, 1683, sponsors.....	{ Jan Joosten Macyken Hendricksen
Rebekka, bapt. April 26, 1686, sponsors..	{ Jacob du Bois _____
Lysbeth, bapt. March 3, 1689, sponsors...	{ Gysbert Crom Catrynda du Bois
Isaac, bapt. circa 1692, record missing.	
Hendrix, bapt. September 1, 1695, sponsors	{ David du Bois Janekken Molenaar

LINE OF LOUIS DU BOIS

Much has been written about Louis du Bois, and there is yet much to be revealed by investigation concerning the ancestry of this influential forbear of the American Van Metres. From various sources of authority the following lineage has been compiled.

Monsieur Le Turque, of the Genealogical Institute of Paris, has developed a line of ancestors running back to the days of the Scyrri which includes descent from Charlemagne, Emperor of the West; Alfred the Great; Hugh Capet, King of France, and Henry I., Emperor of Germany. The most important of these lines have been compared and verified; and where the line is broken the cause is attributed to the summary action of Louis XIV.'s minister, Cardinal Mazarin, and Marshall Turenne, who decreed that the names of many of the noble families of France, who espoused and held to the faith of Protestantism, should be erased from the rolls of the nobility and their property confiscated. By the Edict of Nantes, promulgated in 1598, civil and religious liberty was restored and confirmed to the Huguenots, but when Louis XIV. revoked the Edict, thousands of French families fled to England, Germany, Switzerland and Holland. It was during the latter part of this reign of terror that the father of Louis du Bois found shelter in the Palatinate of the Rhine.

According to this tracing of the family the line begins with Guelph, Prince of the Scyrri, A.D. 476. Azo, Marquis of Liguria, A.D. 1030, a descendant of the Prince in the fourteenth generation, married Marie, a descendant of the powerful house of Este, in Italy. The Estes were of the Actii of Rome who settled in Lombardy about 500 B.C. Guelph, grandson of Azo and Marie, Count of Bavaria and Saxe, A.D. 1107, married Judith, a descendant of Charlemagne. A great grandson of Guelph and Judith, Henry V., Duke of Bavaria and Saxe, A.D. 1195, married Mathilde, a descendant of William the Conqueror, through Henry I. and Henry II. of England. Henry VI., son of the Duke of Bavaria and Saxe and Mathilde, married, A.D. 1200, Agnes, Countess of Palatine, a descendant of Alfred the Great. A descendant of Henry VI. and Agnes, Madame Claude de Lannoy, married Charles du Bois, Seigneur des Querder, who was a descendant of MacQuaire du Bois, Count de Roussey, A.D. 1110.

The line of descent from Charles du Bois and Claude de Lannoy is as follows :

- I. Gen. : Eustache, Seigneur des Querder and de Fiennes, married first, Gille de Renel; married second, Jeanne de St. Ol.
- II. Gen. : Gueslain des Fiennes, Count de Clarmont, married Jeanne de Longueville.
- III. Gen. : Marc de Fiennes, Seigneur des Querder, married Madelaine d'Ognies.
- IV. Gen. : Maxamillien de Fiennes, Seigneur des Querder, married Catherine Cecil Germand.
- V. Gen. : Maximillien des Fiennes, married Louise Charlotte d'Etamps.
- VI. Gen. : Charles Maximillien des Fiennes married Henrietta de Reignier de Boisleau.
- VII. Gen. : Chretien Maximillien des Fiennes, Seigneur de Beaufermez and de Bource, married?
The record of the erasure of Chretien's marriage and family, that is, the Chretien known to have been the father of Louis du Bois, makes a break in Louis' line of descent. The official record was obviously destroyed because of his Protestantism, and to prevent him—or any of his descendants—from ever after establishing a claim to the title and estates. We are informed that there were not two branches after the resumption of the title of Marquis des Fiennes. We are also advised that Louis was a second son; and that the title and arms of the des Fiennes became extinct with the death of the Marchioness de Poyanne, in 1761.
- VIII. Gen. : Louis du Bois de Fiennes, born October 10, 1626, in La Basse, near Lille, in the province of Artois, France, married, October 10, 1655, at Mannheim, in the Lower Palatinate of Germany, to Catherine Blanchan, daughter of Mathese and Madelaine [Jorisse] Blanchan, who were co-refugees with the du Bois from French Flanders to Wicres, Artois, France.¹ Louis du Bois died 1695. The du Bois des Fiennes appear to have been of military stock, and to have furnished France with some able sol-

¹ Anne Louise Thompson, of Clinton, Iowa.

diers. At least ten of them were in the last crusade.¹ The first Maximilien was "Marischall des camps et du armées du roi"; his son was a Lieutenant-General in the French Legion; and Louis du Bois' father—Chretien, Marquis des Fiennes—was Captain of cavalry in his father's regiment.²

The two eldest children of Louis du Bois were born in Mannheim; and in 1660 the family came to America. Upon their arrival here they proceeded to New Village [New Pals] in Ulster Co., N. Y., where Louis rapidly rose to prominence in local civil and religious affairs. He, with two of his sons, were among the "twelve patentees" of New Paltz, receiving the grant from Governor Andross, September 6, 1677. Louis was also a member of the first Court of Sessions held at Kingston, the seat of Ulster County. He led in demanding of the English government, and of the Assembly, that there should be no taxation without the consent of the people, and for this daring attitude he lost his commission.³ Thus anticipating the crisis of 1776!

In 1663, Louis du Bois headed an expedition against the Minnisk Indians, and was of the colonial forces against them again in 1670.⁴ The first-named punitive expedition of June 7, 1663, was known in New York history as the Eusopus War. It was organized at the time the settlement was attacked by the Minnisinks, who burned Hurley, killed and injured some of the settlers, and carried away as prisoners, the wife of Louis du Bois, his three children, and at least two of Jan Joosten's. These were taken to the fastnesses of the Catskill Mountains and there remained in captivity for months, but were rescued on the eve of torture by du Bois and Captain Martin Kreiger's company of Manhattan soldiers; the trainband finally rounded up the Indians and defeated them on September 3, 1663. In connection with this tragic experience the following statement is quoted: "About ten weeks after the capture of the women and children, the Indians decided to celebrate their own escape from pursuit by burning some of their victims and the ones selected were Catherine du Bois, and her baby Sara, who afterward married her companion in captivity, John Van Metre. A

¹ MacKenzie's "Colonial Families of United States," VII., p. 472.

² Kate Mason Rowland.

³ MacKenzie's "Col. Families of U. S.," VII., p. 472.

⁴ Index of Ancestors, Year-Book of Colonial Wars, 1922.

cubical pile of logs was arranged and the mother and child placed thereon; when the Indians were about to apply the torch, Catherine began to sing the 137th Psalm as a death chant. The Indians withheld the fire and gave her respite while they listened; when she had finished they demanded more, and before she had finished the last one her husband and the Dutch soldiers from New Amsterdam arrived and surrounded the savages, killed and captured some, and otherwise inflicted terrible punishment upon them, and released the prisoners.”^{1, 2}

Louis du Bois was one of the founders, and the first elder, of the Reformed Dutch Church at New Paltz. He often officiated at the marriage ceremonies and baptisms among the families connected with the church, and with many enterprises of civic importance and progress his name was frequently mentioned. After his death, in 1695, his widow married Jean Cotton and their three children left numerous descendants, one of whom, Garrett A. Hobart, was the Vice-President of the United States during President McKinley's first administration.

Between the year 1695 and the date of the filing of the inventory of his father's personal estate at Burlington, in 1706, there is no documentary evidence at hand as to where he lived, neither is there any information available as to when or where Jooste Jans died, and nothing covering the movements of John Van Metre, as we shall henceforth call him. It is probable he was absent on some expedition with the Delaware Indians, acting as interpreter, or as a trader along the trails to the south, or he may have remained quietly in Somerset County closing out his father's estate. He was not present at the wedding of his sister, Rebecca, who was married at Kingston, in September, 1704,³ to Cornelis Elting, Jr. As an item of peculiar interest, in this connection, we make this record: that it was Sara, the daughter of this couple, baptized at Kingston Church 6th February, 1715, sponsored by Sara du Bois and her son, John Van Metre, Jr., who after her parents' removal to the Shenandoah Valley, Va., married Col. John Hite, the eldest son of Jost Hite. Her family became socially famous, and, by marriage, were related to that of President James Madison, of Virginia.

¹ Martin Kreiger's Journal.

² MacKenzie's Col. Fam. U. S., VII., p. 472.

³ Records Reformed Dutch Church of Kingston.

"In tracing John Van Metre from Ulster County, N. Y., to the stop on the Monocacy River in Maryland, the writer finds him in 1727 over in old Spottsylvania County rendering advice to the settlers at Germanna, where skilled artisans had come in answer to the system adopted by the Governor [Spottswood]. They surveyed the lands chiefly from the forks of the Shenandoah westward, thus showing that they entered the valley through the gap of the Blue Ridge at the point hugging the line forming the north boundary of the Robert Carter and Mann Page grant. This proves that *John Van Metre was the first white man to visit the country south of the Cohongaruta*" [Potomac].¹

In an article relating to the last of the southern Indians, it states :

"Mr. John Van Metre of New York gives an account of his accompanying the New York Delaware Indians on their raid against the Catawbias—They passed up the South Branch of the Potomac, and *he afterward settled his boys there.*"^{2, 3}

Kercheval, a prominent and reliable historian of the border, who derived his information from the immediate descendants of the participants in its events, gives the following account of the coming of the Van Metres to Virginia :

"At the mouth of the Antietam Creek, then in Prince George's County, Md., between 1730 and 1736, occurred the famous battle between the Catawbias and the Delawares by which the Catawbias secured the victory. This took place at what is now the coke-yard of the Antietam Iron Works, three miles from Sharpsburg—where numerous skeletons and war implements have been found."⁴

"John Van Metre, a Dutchman from the Hudson, was an Indian trader and pioneer explorer of the Shenandoah Valley, who spied out the land about the time of Governor Spottswood's expedition in 1716. He equipped a band of Delaware Indians at his own expense and traveled far southward and over unknown land. On his return he advised his sons to take up lands in the Wappatoma Valley, on the South Branch River above 'the Trough,' as it was the finest land he had ever discovered. Subsequently his sons, John and Isaac, took his advice and petitioned Governor Gooch, in 1731, for 40,000 acres, which was granted, and which they later transferred to Jost Hite, whose wife was Anna Maria du Bois, a near relative of Louis du Bois."⁵

¹ Cartmell's "History of Frederick Co., Va., p. 12 et seq.

² *W. Va. Hist. Mag.*, III., p. 191.

³ *W. Va. Hist. Mag.*, II., p. 17.

⁴ Scharff's "History of Western Maryland," II., p. 1204.

⁵ MacKenzie's "Colonial Families of the U. S.," VI.

Thus it was that John Van Metre beheld and explored that "land of promise" where he envisioned the future as he looked upon the beautiful valley of Virginia sweeping southward, enfolded by the evergreen Blue Ridge, whose western slopes fell gently to the verdant meadows and sheltered limestone bottoms that were washed by the swift waters of the Shenandoah and those of the placid Potomac. This sylvan wilderness of Lord Fairfax, which he called "the Northern Neck" of Virginia, was the "land of Goshen" to which the restless pioneers of the east shortly came, and whose first settlement may be traced to the intrepid trader Van Metre; and it actually began with the granting of a vast area to his sons on the 17th of June, 1730.

Sarah du Bois, Jan's wife, who still retained her maiden family patronymic, established a home in Salem prior to 1709, in which year there is a record found in the "Eare Marke Book," of Salem County, reciting that John, Jr., and Isaac Van Metre, had recorded therein their ear marks for cattle and swine.¹ John was then in his 26th year, and Isaac in his 17th year of age. This same John Van Metre, Jr., was commissioned to be coroner of Salem County on March 17, 1713; and was reappointed on the 21st of January, 1712/4.² Entries in the Salem County Court Journals disclose that John Van Metre, Jr., individually, and also in company with his brother, Isaac, were alternately plaintiff and defendant in several actions in ejectment, and in other causes, before the Court of Salem County, in the years between 1709 and 1718.

¹ "Ear Mark Book, Salem Co., N. J.," p. 7.

² Liber CCC, Commissions of New Jersey, pp. 239, 242.

JOHN VAN METRE, OF VIRGINIA ¹

While still a resident of Somerset County, N. J., John Van Metre, Jr., met and married Sarah Bodine. The Bodines were a family lately settled on the Raritan, having come there from Staten Island, and belonged to a group of French Huguenots that had been established on the island many years before. They were descendants of Jean Bodin, the celebrated French economist, of Medis, France. A younger Jean, or John, of that line married in France, Esther Bridow, emigrated to America, and settled on Staten Island.² Among his sons was Francis Boden, or Bodyne, from whom the Somerset County stock derived descent.³

Circumstances seem to indicate that either Pieter Bodeyn, who was connected with "the Rebellion in the Raritans," in 1723, or Isaac Bodin, from the vicinity of Basking Ridge, was the father of Sara Bodine; she was also the sister of John Bodine, of Raritan Landing; he also had been a trader³ and probably an associate of John Van Metre, Sr., in his Indian adventures.

John and Sarah [Bodine] Van Metre had three children born in Somerset County. The records show that they were baptised in the Reformed Dutch Church on the Raritan, in the following order: Sarah, baptised October 30, 1706; Johannes, baptised April 28, 1708; and Marie, baptised April 26, 1709. John Van Metre's wife, Sarah Bodine, died about this time, for he afterward married Margaret [sup. Molenaur, Mulinar or Miller, the name is synonymous] and then have removed to Salem County, where the Mulinar family had preceded them. John, in his will, dated 1745, expressly states that his son *Abraham* is the son of his "said wife Margaret." Johannes, the only son of his first wife, Sarah, having predeceased his father, Abraham became the heir-at-law and executor of his father's will.⁴ The children of John and Margaret Van Metre, who were probably born in Salem County, were *Abra-*

¹ For descendants of John Van Metre, of Virginia, in other lines, and for general reference, see "Genealogy of the Duke-Shepherd-Van Metre Family."

² *Somerset Co. Historical Quarterly*, 1916, p. 122.

³ *Colonial Arch. of N. J.*, 1st Ser., XXX., p. 151.

⁴ *Frederick Co., Va., Wills.*

ham, Rebecca, Isaac, Elizabeth, Henry, Rachael and Maudlina. A further evidence of John's second marriage is found—that on the 13th of September, 1712, John bought of James Sherron and Mary, his wife, of Monmouth County, N. J., 250 acres of land, lying on the Burlington Road at the head of Salem Creek, and called "Virgin Spring"; and a further conveyance from Nicholas Winter, of Salem, of 100 acres was made "by John Van Metre, of the precinct of Alloways creek, in the county of Salem, in the western division of the province of West Jersey," "Gent."; and "with the consent, good liking and approbation of Margaret," his wife, they convey this tract of 250 acres to Herman Richman, of Middletown, Monmouth County, in consideration of £150 current money of New York, etc. The title passed on the 19th of June, 1719.¹ Further search among the deeds in the State Department at Trenton discloses another transfer which evidences the desire of John Van Metre to release his holdings in Somerset County and put the proceeds in Salem County investments.

Following along, in chronological sequence, the course of John Van Metre's career, it reveals his penchant for land speculation, for his adventures were frequent and progressive in extent.

John Van Metre had inherited from his father, Jooste Jans [John Van Metre, Sr.], a thirty-seven-acre tract of land on the west side of the Raritan River, on its south branch; it was a part of tract No. 1 of the 835 acres that the Governor granted to his grandfather, Jan Joosten, in 1700. This tract, John and wife Margaret conveyed to Henry Miller [Hendrix Mulinaer], of Somerset County, on the 16th of November, 1719. The deed is signed by "John Vanmetre" and "Margot Metere."² Hendrix Mulinaer died shortly after and his widow Cathrin is presumed to have married Isaac Van Metre. Isaac Bodine, who was named in Miller's will as executor, renounced in favor of Isaac, who administered on the estate, with his brothers, John and Henry Van Metre, becoming his bondsmen.

A particular instance which involves quite a group of the Van Metre family is found in "An Indenture dated June 19, 1714, between Col. Daniel Coxe, of Burlington, of the one part, and Jacob du Bois, of the county of Ulster, N. Y., and Sarah du Bois

¹ Salem Deed Book, 1715/19, p. 54.

² Liber C, East Jersey Deeds, p. 316.

of the county of Salem, and John Van Metre and Isaac Van Metre, of the same county and division aforesaid, of the other part," recites that Daniel Coxe purchased Thomas William's land in Salem County—7,000 acres—in consideration of "£750 lawful money of New York, at eight shillings the ounce," and the said Coxe conveys unto the said Jacob du Bois, Sara du Bois, John Van Metre and Isaac Van Metre, 3,000 acres beginning on a branch of the Maurice River, and being part of the 7,000 acres taken up upon the right of the three property purchases of Thomas Williams by Daniel Coxe.¹ Shourds, the Salem County historian, states that "these parties divided their lands by the compass, the du Bois taking theirs on the north side of a line and the Van Metres on the south side. The Van Metres continued to purchase until they owned a very large portion of the land reaching from the Overshot Mill on Upper Alloways Creek, near Daretown, southeasterly to Fork Bridge, about 6,000 acres in all."² The grantees thereof were Sara du Bois, wife, or widow, of the elder John Van Metre; her two sons, John and Isaac Van Metre; and her brother, Jacob du Bois. Here Sarah established her son Isaac permanently, as she thought, as by a deed dated 27 May, 1726, reciting "for and in consideration of the love, good will and affection I have and do bear toward my loving and dutiful son Isaac Van Metre of the province aforesaid," the mother transfers to him 302 acres of land lying at Pile's Grove between Nickomus Run and Salem Creek. Possession of this property was taken over by Isaac on the 26th of May, 1726, in the presence of Cornelius Elting, Jr.³ On the 26th of May, two years after he had obtained the larger grant from Col. Daniel Coxe, John Van Metre purchased of John Powell, 600 acres of land on Alloways Creek,⁴ and with this and the other accretions, he became one of the largest freeholders in Salem County. This was the last conveyance of which he was the grantee, as far as we have record.

A hiatus of several years occurs between that date and the scene of John Van Metre's next change of base. This may be explained by stating that the general drift of emigration southward into Maryland was becoming more rapid under inducements offered by

¹ Liber DD, p. 316, Salem Deeds.

² Shourds's "History of Fenwick's Colony," pp. 302-4.

³ Liber D, p. 203, Salem Deeds.

⁴ Liber DD, p. 41, Salem Deeds.

Charles, Lord Baltimore; which were very tempting. An official proclamation inviting settlers to seat upon his lands was not issued until 1732, and then only after a little settlement had been made on the Monocacy Creek, and Hite's colonization scheme had opened up the Virginia lands. Calvert's purpose was to divert some of the pilgrims of the new Canaan to his own province.¹

The first intimation we have of John Van Metre's decision to leave New Jersey is found in the record of a deed dated 25 March, 1730, by which "John Van Metre of Prince George's Co., Md., yeoman, conveys to Cornelius Newkirk, of Salem, N. J., 200 acres of land, being part of the original grant of 3,000 acres made by Col. Coxe to the du Bois and Van Metres in 1714; and out of which 400 acres was set apart as John's dividend, the other moiety of 200 acres having been previously sold to Elisha Bassett. To this deed the witnesses were Cathrine Van Metre, John Miller and William Burkitt.² Again, on the 23d of March, 1734, John Van Metre conveys to his brother Isaac a certain tract of land of undetermined quantity, out of which 110 acres had previously been sold to John Tyler.³

The actual date of John Van Metre's settlement in Maryland can only be conjectured; but it has been ascertained that he made a deal for 300 acres of land in Frederick County, Maryland, on the 8th of November, 1726, of a tract called "Metre" that lay at the mouth of a stream called "Metre's Run" falling into the Monacacy River. At that time this purchase lay in Prince George's County, but by the subsequent erection of Frederick County out of it, the property fell within the bounds of the latter; and, it is asserted that it was upon this ground that a part of the battle of Monacacy Junction was fought during the Civil War. Van Metre acquired other properties in Maryland, some of which lay upon Antietam Creek, in what is now Washington County, and it was while he was living here that he looked beyond the Potomac and cast wistful eyes upon the virgin meadows of the Valley of Virginia, where he was destined to realize larger conquests later.⁴

Lord Baltimore's palatinate was indebted for much of its pioneer settlers to the stream of immigration that set in from Pennsylvania

¹ *Penna.-German Mag.*, 1914, pp. 42, 43.

² Liber DD, Salem Deeds, p. 41.

³ Liber E, Salem Deeds, p. 32.

⁴ B. F. Van Metre's *Genealogies and Biographical Sketches*, p. 20.

and New York, and although it acquired many accessions in this way, a large part of it was diverted to the western portion of the province, and on into Virginia, because of the border controversy along the lower Susquehanna. The Dutch element came in as early as 1725¹ via the Monocacy trail, a path most direct and popular, which led from the German settlements in Lancaster and York counties, in Pennsylvania. It was evolved from an Indian trail leading southward from the Codorus Creek in York County, and down its valley to Fort Conococheague, thence to Fort Frederick near the Potomac.² Coming from New Jersey the immigrants had only the Delaware to cross—to reach Christina on the Brandywine, or to New Amstel [New Castle], and by a familiar route pass overland and strike the head of Elk River; then along its waters reach the Chesapeake Bay, and by its tributaries attain their destinations in Western Maryland, or travel on into Virginia.

The halt on the Monocacy was among relatives and friends from the Kingston region—for here were found the Eltings, Crows, Hites and other family groups who had preceded the Van Metres. We now come to the period, the most romantic in the maturer years of John Van Metre's career, the culmination of his thought and ambition; and that restless spirit, inherited from the father with his vision and early advice, inspired the two Van Metre brothers to launch the scheme to colonize their relatives and friends in the Valley of Virginia. Between them they obtained from the Governor and Council of Virginia, on the 30th of June, 1730, a grant of 40,000 acres of land, unappropriated and unsurveyed, in Spottsylvania County, in the Northern Neck of Virginia, "where white men," it was said, "had never trod." This is an error, of course, for the "Knights of the Golden Horseshoe" had preceded them.

¹ Thomas Chalkley's Journal.

² Spangler Genealogy.

THE VAN METRE GRANT IN VIRGINIA

“At a council held at the capital the 17th. day of June, 1730. Present.—The Governor. Robert Carter, James Blair, William Byrd, John Robinson, John Carter, Rd. Fitzwilliam, John Grymes, Wm. Dandridge, John Curtis,—Esquires. Several petitions being this day offered to the Board for leave to take up land on the River Sherando on the Northwest side of the Great Mountains, Robert Carter, Esq. Agent for the Proprietors of the Northern Neck moved that it might be entered that he on behalf of the sd Proprietors claimed the land on the sd River Sherando as belonging to the sd Proprietors & within the limits of their Grants it belonged sole to the Proprietors to grant the sd lands wch moven at his request is entered and then the Board proceded to the hearing of the sd Petitions. On reading at this Board the Petition of John Van Metre setting forth that he is desirous to take up a Tract of land in this Colony on the West side of the Great Mountains for the settlement of himself & eleven children & also that divers of his Relations and friends living in the Government of New York are also desirous to move with their families & effects and Settle in the same place if a Sufficient Quantity of land may be assigned them for that purpose & praying that ten thousand acres of the land lying in the forks of the Sherando River including the places called by the name of Cedar Litch & Stoney Lick and running up between the branches of the said river to complete that quantity & twenty thousand acres not already taken up by Robert Carter & Mann Page, Esqrs., or any other,—lying in the fork between the sd River Sherando and the River Cohongaluta and extending thence to Opekon and up the South Branch thereof may be assigned for the Habitation of himself his family and friends. The Governor, with the advice of his Council is pleased to give leave to the sd John Van Metre to take up the sd first mentioned tract of ten thousand acres for the Set'lem't of himself and his family, and that as soon as the Petitioner shall bring on the last mentioned Tract twenty families to Inhabit on that this Board is satisfied so many are to remove thither leave be & it is hereby granted him for surveying the last mentioned Tract of twenty thousand acres within the limits above described in so many several dividens as the pet'r & his sd partners shall think fit. And it is further ordered that no person is permitted to enter for or take up any part of the afsd Lands in the meantime provided the sd Van Metre & his family & the twenty other families of his Relations and friends do settle thereon within the space of two years according to his proposal.”¹

¹ MSS. Journal of the Council of Va., 1721-1734, p. 364.

A similar paragraph in the Minutes of Council provides for the seating of Isaac Van Metre, brother of John above, of the province of West Jersey and his family and twenty other families upon a ten thousand acre tract lying near "The Trough" on the Opequon River, and to be settled upon the same conditions as the obligations of his brother John Van Metre. All these lands lay in Spottsylvania County, Virginia.

Within the two years allowed in the grants, the Van Metres had negotiated a transfer of all their rights therein to Jost Hite, their relative from New York, also a Hollander, but more recently of Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania. The transfer, or assignment, was made to Hite on August 5, 1731, and in that year Hite and his partners, with several families, no doubt the same people who had agreed to move thence with John Van Metre, began to settle on the Hite lands.¹ The Van Metres, however, under some mutual arrangement with the Hite Company, retained options on certain choice spots in the Valley in the area originally granted them by the Governor, William Gooch. One of these parcels—there are two—contained 1,786 acres and the other 885 acres, and both were located on the west side of the Sherando River, in a new county soon to be called Orange. Patents for these tracts were issued on October 3, 1734, the year Orange County was erected and established.²

The Northern Neck territory is briefly described in one of the papers in Lord Fairfax's office in Winchester, Va. It was unrecorded and accompanied the original survey documents. "The boundaries of the patent beginning at the Chesapeake Bay, lies between the Potomac and the Rappahannock Rivers, crossing the Blue Ridge, or, rather passing through the gap at Harpers Ferry, then with the Cohongaluta [Potomac] to its source in the Alleghanies, then by a straight line crosses the great Northern Mountain and Blue Ridge to the headwaters of the Rappahannock, wherever that may be."³

The Van Metres, after selecting and reserving sufficient land for their immediate families, assigned the remainder of their grants to their relative Jost Hite, who associated with him another Pennsylvanian named McKay. Together they petitioned the Governor and Council of Virginia for—and were granted—an additional

¹ *West Va. Historical Magazine*, I., pp. 53-54.

² Land Records, Richmond, Va., Vol. XV., pp. 323, 327.

³ Cartmell's "History of Frederick Co., Va.," p. 29.

100,000 acres contiguous upon that assigned them by the Van Metres, and upon which, within the next two years, they had seated 54 families.

Isaac Van Metre returned to New Jersey, but eventually came back to Virginia, settled in "The Trough," and was finally killed by the Indians, about 1757. John Van Metre immediately removed from Maryland and settled permanently on Opecquon Creek in Frederick County, Va. [now Berkeley County].

"Referring to the Hite grants of 1734 and the lands conveyed by him to purchasers in the vicinity of Shepherdstown, W. Va.—they were all based on the original John Van Metre grant, and are so recited in the deeds of conveyance which proves," concludes Cartmell, that there "Van Metre located part of his patent and is entitled to the credit of being *the first white man who stood on the south side of the Potomac west of the Blue Ridge.*"¹

Among other pursuits in which John Van Metre was engaged, beside that of an ambition to be a landed proprietor, was in stock breeding, especially horses, of which he raised a large number in the fine limestone valley that was peculiarly adapted for such a purpose. The raising of blooded stock, grazing and farming, was almost a passion in this family, and it was pursued with religious fidelity by generation after generation. As the time approached when John Van Metre realized that he had not much longer to live, he executed a deed of gift, dated September 17, 1744, in which for "love and affection" he distributes, equally, among his then surviving children, and the heirs of those deceased, all his "stalyons, geldings, mares, and colts," and names the sons in the order of their birth. Considering that Johannes, the eldest son, was then deceased, he continues, "to Isaac, my eldest son; Henry second son; Abraham my third son; Jacob my fourth and youngest son; Maudlina, wife of Robert Pewsey, my youngest daughter; Solomon Hedges, Esq.; Thomas Shepherd; James Davis and Robert Jones, sons-in-law; grandsons Johannes, son of my son Johannes, dec'd; and John Lessige, son of my daughter Rachael, dec'd."

John Van Metre was evidently possessed of several separate parcels of land, located, principally, "on drains" [small runs] emptying into the Opequon, in the South Branch valley, and into the lower section of the Potomac above its confluence with the

¹ Cartmell's "History of Frederick Co., Va.," p. 12.

Shenandoah. He died on one of his larger Opequon farms, between the 13th of August, 1745, and the 3d of September, 1745; the two dates being the date of executing and probate date of his will respectively. His will is a verbose document of several pages and very carefully drawn.¹ An analysis of it shows how the testator disposes of about 3,350 acres, of which 235 acres were in the homestead; it was improved, and contained the orchards, arable and grazing fields; each child, and the heirs of his two deceased children, receiving varying apportionment of the land. The aggregate included a tract of land lying at the mouth of the Antietam Creek, in Maryland, which he called "Pel-mel." It also discloses the fact that his son Isaac owned considerable land at Monocacy; and that his grandson Johannes' legacy, was conditioned upon Johannes selling *his* Monocacy property and dividing the proceeds equally with his sister Joanna, in lieu of a bequest from the testator. Maudlena, who was then single, was to have 20 shillings in her devise; and the grandson John Lessige had added to his other legacy "2 Brood mares." The present purpose is to confine this sketch of the will to that portion which concerns the son Abraham, who received "the lion's share," about 775 acres:

"In the name of God Amen, the thirteenth day of August one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, I, John Van Metre in Frederick County in the Colony of Virginia being sick in body but of sound mind and Memory praise be given to God for the same and calling to mind the uncertainty of the Transitory Life, and willing through Divine Assistance to settle and Dispose of those Temporal blessings which it hath pleased God beyond my Deserts to bestow upon me and therefore making this my Last Will and Testament Disannuling all other wills and Testaments heretofore made by me &c. &c. Imprimis—I commend my Soul into the hands of God that gave it, hoping thro the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ it will be accepted and my body to be Interred with Deacency at the Discretion of my executors hereafter named. I also will that all my Just Debts and Demands Whatsoever in Right of Conscience is Due to Any to be Discharged and paid (as also funeral expenses) By my executors and as to my Real and Personal Estate, I Will, Dispose, Devise, Give and Bequeath it in the manner following—that is to say. First my will is that my beloved wife Margaret Van Metre Have the third part of my moveable estate, also one room which she likes best, to Dwell in, in my

¹ Frederick Co., Va., Wills.

Dwelling House, and one third part of the Orchard next the Run with the keeping of one Riding horse and two Milch cows, Linnen and wolling yarn to be wove her bed and bedding the said Room and Liberties to be by her possessed during her Life, without controle hinderence or molestation of any person whatever. Item second—I Will Devise bequeath unto my son Abraham and His Heirs Lawfully Begotten, a certain Parcel Tract of Land Bought by me of Francis Prichard on Opequon River against the Land formally Bequeathed to him, said Tract begins at Elm Tree being the East corner of the said Tract between a Line tree Hickory Saplin and aforesaid Elm Saplin By Opeckon Run side thence down the same to the Beginning Tree aforesaid Prichards Tract, thence South fiftyfive degrees West One Hundred and Ten Poles, to the aforesaid Beginning Elm Tree. Containing By Estimation One Hundred acres of land be it more or less. Provided there should be no Heirs male or female of my said son or sons (hereafter named) Live to arrive to the age of Twenty one Years, that then after the decease of my said son or sons afsd, or their heirs, that then their part of land to be equally divided amongst the rest of my surviving devisees hereinafter mentioned. Furthermore I also give unto my sd son Abraham Van Metre one Certain Tract of land being and Situate on Opequon Run in the county afsd and to his Heirs Lawfully Begotten being part of four hundred and Seventy five acres of land Bought of Jost Hite, Beginning at or about two yards below a pine tree on a high Bank on Opekon Run called the Allan Hill, and running thence by a Division Line North sixty-five degrees East sixty Poles to a small Hickory thence Twenty degrees West twenty-eight Poles to a Black Oak thence North Twenty degrees West sixteen Poles thence North Fifteen degrees East two hundred and nine to a Spannish oak another corner of the Original survey thence North Twenty degrees West sixteen Poles to the first Beginning head of the survey of the Original Tract by Opequon Run side near a white Oak marked IVM, then up Opeckon Run to the Beginning Pine, Containing by Estimation Two Hundred and thirty seven of land be it more or less. . . . Also I Give Devise unto my son Abraham 'a son of my wife afsd s thirds of my moveable estate and Legacies are paid' an equal proportioned child's part therefrom as well as lands.

"I also Will Devise Bequeath unto my son Abraham Van Metre and his lawful heirs the Southermost part and half-moiety of Four Hundred acres of land for me and in my name to survey for him his Heirs afsd which land I have Jos Hite's Bond for procuring a Patent, which if he shall not obtain the said Patent he is to have the Bond for Recovering so much as will amount to his share or Proportion according to his dividend of sd Tract and the same land to be held and enjoyed by him under the same Restriction

and Limitation as the above mentioned Land Namely the Land bought of Francis Prichard &c. &c.”¹

The will, which is a very lengthy one, was witnessed by Edward Morgan, Andrew Corn and Joseph Carroll. It was probated at Winchester, Va., September 3, 1745. The executors were a son-in-law, Thomas Shepherd, and sons Abraham and Jacob.

¹Frederick County, Va., Wills.

THE VAN METRE FAMILY IN OHIO

Abraham Van Metre, the eldest son of John and Margaret Van Metre, born either in Somerset or Salem county, New Jersey, circa 1721, died in Berkeley County, Virginia, in 1783; married first, Ruth Hedges, daughter of Joseph and Catherine [Stalkop] Hedges, of Prince George's County, Maryland, and sister of Solomon Hedges, Esq., a landed proprietor and prominent citizen of Virginia, who married Rebecca, sister of above Abraham. Abraham married second, Mrs. Martha [nee Roberts] Wheeler, who was probably a sister of Samuel Roberts, an intimate business associate of Abraham Van Metre. The issue of these marriages were: Jacob, Isaac, *Abraham, Jr.*, Joseph, Rebecca, Mary, Ruth, Hannah, Daniel and John.

By his father's will, Abraham was bequeathed three separate tracts of lands comprising the homestead his father bought of Francis Prichard, one hundred acres on Opequon Run; another in the same locality bought of Jost Hite containing two hundred and thirty-seven acres; and the half-moiety under the bond of Jost Hite. The three tracts aggregated five hundred and thirty-seven acres; and he had land of his own in addition to these parcels. Abraham succeeded in recovering the land from Hite which was in dispute with his father and obtained his patent for it, from Lord Fairfax, on the 28th of October, 1754,¹ and from which Abraham sold one hundred acres in May, 1768, to Samuel Roberts, who had then married Abraham's granddaughter Naomi, the daughter of Abraham Van Metre, Jr. She thus became Samuel Robert's second wife. Abraham, true to the instincts of the family, settled down as a breeder, grazier, and trader in horses and cattle; and carried on extensive business relations with the settlers along the Ohio River frontiers. He supplied many of the posts that had been established on the border, and at the little settlements at the crossings of the streams in the wilderness. In addition to

¹ Frederick Co., Va., Land Records.

the trading, he and his sons acted as guides and counsellors to the pioneers; and so in the days preceding the Revolution they had become known as active, reliable frontiersmen.

Abraham's name first appears on the Virginia records when he was "appointed overseer of roads from Simon Lynd's to old Sands, in Frederick Co., Va., 8th March, 1748.¹" The following is one of the many instances of a business character which relates to Abraham Van Metre's trading expeditions up the Ohio valley. The item is dated July 4, 1777, a memorable day the year previous. "Then rec'd of Abraham Van Metre Three Steers & one Cow mark'd a crop and half-peny in ye neare eare—half-peny the of [off] eare. Being appraised by Jacob Van Metre and Edward Polke according to order of Captain Connelly commander of Fort Dunmore, Pittsburg. Being for the use of Government of Virginia & appraisment to Sixteen pounds ten shillings. Rec'd by me—William Harrod."²

While engaged in these trading tours Abraham had ample opportunity of observing the character of the country, consider the advantages it offered, and the inducements to purchase, so that he was able to provide for himself and friends back in Berkeley certain settlement rights which he located on the waters of Short Creek, in Ohio County, then in Virginia.³ Some of this ground which he obtained was not surveyed, however, until it was made for his heirs in 1786—three years after his death. With a portion of these lands he was historically connected because it included "Blacks Cabin and Spring" where the Court of Ohio County was afterward held for the District of West Augusta, and where it was organized on the 6th of January, 1777,⁴ as recorded:

"At a meeting of the Court held at Blacks Cabin, January, 1777, . . . forasmuch as the tract of land agreed upon for holding Coarts at in future doth of right appertain unto Abraham Van Metre of Opeqhon Creek, in the county of Bartley [Berkeley], Ordered that Zachariah Sprigg, and Silas Hedges Esquires be appointed to contract and covenant with the sd Van Metre for not less than two acres of sd tract—including the Cabbin and Spring. In behalf of this county, for the purpose of erecting and

¹ History of Washington Co., Pa., p. 152.

² "Documentary History of Dunmore's War," p. 68.

³ Survey Book, II., Ohio Co., W. Va., pp. 9, 48.

⁴ *Annals Carnegie Museum*, Ohio Co., Pt. III., p. 10.

Building thereon a Courthouse, Prison and other necessary public Buildings, for any sum not exceeding Twenty pounds & Report make of their Proceedings therein as soon as may be to this Coart."

[Signed] DAVID SHEPHERD.¹

"Know all men by these presents that—I, Abraham Van Metre, of Bartley county, Colony of Virginia, do bargain and sell for the Consideration of Twenty pounds Paid when Sur'yd of the county current money to the Court of Ohio county & Successors a Lott of land Containing Two acres which I claim lying at the head of the Northerly Fork of Short Creek known as Blacks Cabin, Bounded as follows—Beginning at a White Oak standing at the head of a spring and running thence N. 56 deg. W—20 poles to a stake, S. 34 deg. W—16 poles to a stake, thence S.E. 20 deg. 20 poles to a stake, thence N. 34 deg. 16 poles to the beginning, containing Two acres for the Use Publick of the sd county, I do Bind myself my heirs and assigns forever quit my claim for the above Two acres as Witness my hand & seal this — day of March, one thousand, seven hundred and seventy-seven."

[Signed] Abraham Van Metre. Seal.

Interlined before signing, Ordered to be recorded, Test,
Witnesses.—ANDREW FOUTS, JAMES McMECHEN, C. C.
CONRAD STROUP,
JOHN SPAHN.²

"3d. April, 1777. Ordered that a Coarthouse be erected and that John McCullough High Sheriff,—be ordered to put the contract up at Publick auction to the lowest undertaker, on Abraham Van Metre's ground."

"3d. November, 1777. Ordered that the Sheriff pay Abraham Van Metre 20 pounds for the lands which the county took to build Courthouse and Prison on—out of the money by him collected of the tithables in this county."³

The county seat being thus established on a part of his lands, Abraham, with his nephew David Shepherd sitting as Judge, and there being a number of other settlers from the Packhorse Ford, on the Potomac, then living in the vicinity, of whom may be mentioned Jacob Van Metre, Levi Harrod, Henry Keeth, John and Francis Duke, Morgan and John Van Metre, David McIntire, Wm. Shepherd and Charles Hedges, all relatives of the grantee, Abraham Van Metre, found it necessary for the protection of the

¹ *Annals Carnegie Museum*, III., No. 1, December, 1904.

² *Annals Carnegie Museum*, III., Pt. 1, December, 1904.

³ Records Ohio County, W. Va.

neighborhood, to erect a stockade on Short Creek, near its juncture with the Ohio. This post became known in border history as "Van Metre's Fort" and it became the rendezvous for the settlers during subsequent attacks by the Indians on the settlement.¹ This fort subsequently fell to the possession of Abraham's son Joseph Van Metre during his father's lifetime and he, predeceasing his father, willed it to *his* son Morgan Van Metre.² From 1777 to 1782, "The Courthouse Fort," as it was locally known, was under the command of Major Samuel McCullough. It was situated in Richland township, in what is now Brooke County, West Virginia; and is believed to have been the first fort erected in this part of Virginia.³

Abraham Van Metre's loyalty and service to the cause of the Colonies during the Revolution included his participation in the defence of the border when it was infested by the British, renegade Tories, and their Indian allies. It is found that he was with Squire Boone's party at "Painted Stone Station" in Shelby County, Ky., in 1779;⁴ and with Captain James Harrod's company "at the Falls" of the Ohio in 1780.⁵ And when the Virginia Convention assembled in 1776, Abraham was present and was among those who signed a petition to the congress, May 18th, signed by the inhabitants and some of the "intended settlers of that part of North America now denominated *Transylvania*—who pray for protection against the demands and impositions of gentlemen styling themselves Proprietors." About eighty men, most of them afterward prominent in the history of Kentucky, signed this document. From its preface it seemed that they were not all yet in Kentucky, but were intended settlers—the language, however, a little farther on implies that they were all at that time in Kentucky.⁶ West Liberty, in which locality Van Metre's Fort was situated, was known as "the Short Creek country." It was established on lands originally improved by Abraham Van Metre. It rapidly developed in importance and was incorporated by legislative enactment, November 27, 1787, on the lands then owned by Reuben Forman, who married Abraham Van Metre's daughter Ruth; and

¹ "Pan-Handle History of West Virginia," p. 134.

² "Washington-Irvine Correspondence," by Butterfield, p. 302.

³ "Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania," II., p. 444.

⁴ Collins' "History of Kentucky," I., p. 12.

⁵ Vide same, p. 24.

⁶ American Archives, 4th Series, IV., p. 1527.

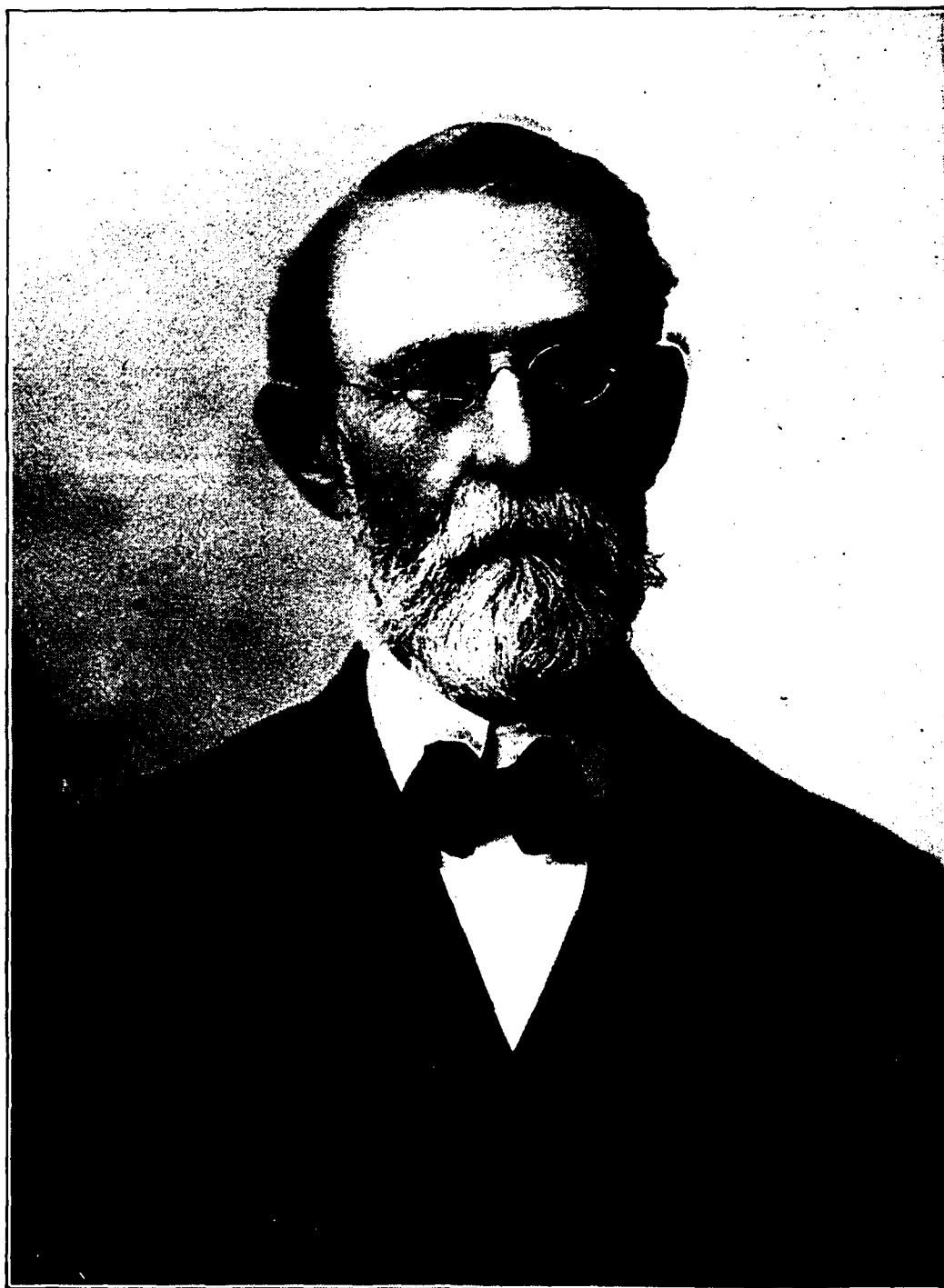
Colonel Providence Mounce [or Mountz], who was the husband of Hannah, another daughter of Abraham—these two men laid out the town, the first in the Pan-handle of Virginia.¹

Abraham Van Metre, Jr., son of Abraham and Martha [Wheeler] Van Metre, born at Opequon in Berkeley County, Virginia, in 1751; died December 30, 1834; married in 1773, Elizabeth, daughter of William and Joanna [Van Metre] Burns, of Berkeley County, Virginia. She was born October 20, 1753, and died June 13, 1831. Abraham, of whom but little is known of particular interest, was an executor of William Burns' will. His father-in-law owned a three-hundred-acre farm on the Warm Springs road; and another of three hundred and fifty acres on the west side of the Opequon Creek,—both in Berkeley County, Va. Like his forefathers, Abraham Van Metre was a cattle breeder and grazier, and had quite an estate, and was devoted to these pursuits. The children of Abraham, Jr., and his wife, Elizabeth, were: Ruth, Naomi, *Joseph*, Josiah, Abraham, 3d, Ashahel, Abishua, Isaac and Elizabeth. The daughter Naomi became the second wife of Samuel Roberts mentioned above.

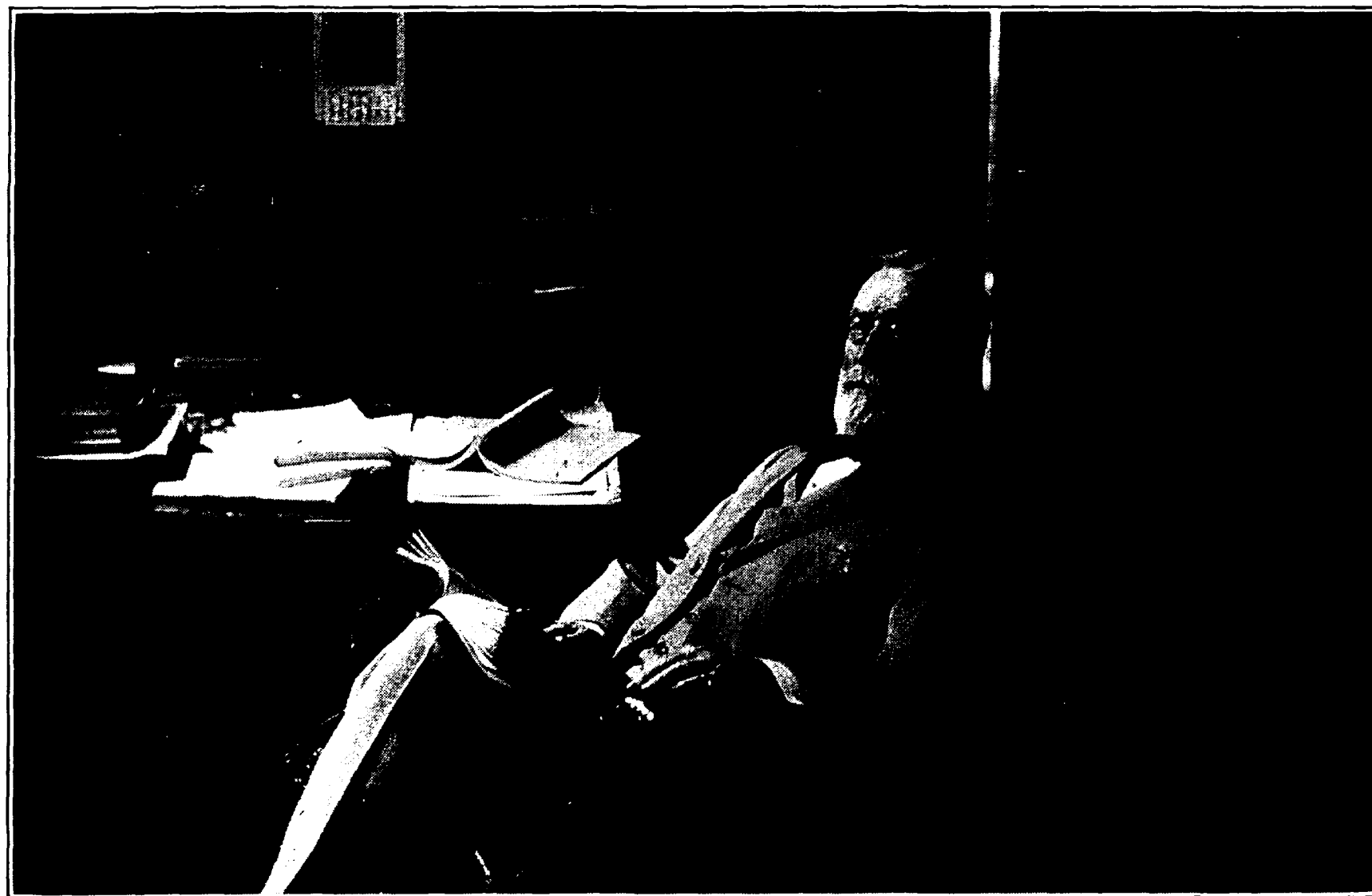
Joseph Van Metre, son of Abraham, Jr. and Elizabeth [Burns] Van Metre, was born in Berkeley County, Virginia, December 5, 1778, died January, 1822; married August 18, 1800, Margaret Whitnach, daughter of John G. and Mary A. [Carl] Whitnach. Margaret was born July 12, 1780; died October 7, 1865. In 1809 Joseph and his family removed from Virginia to the Ohio country and settled on the homestead of his grandfather Abraham Van Metre, Sr., at West Liberty. After his death in 1822, his widow married, second, Samuel Roberts, widower of Naomi, his second wife, and of his first wife who was Hannah Whitnach, elder sister of his third wife.

Joseph Van Metre was a member of a military company commanded by Captain Anderson.

¹ Schuricht's "German Element in Virginia," II., p. 108.



SAMUEL ROBERTS VAN METRE



SAMUEL ROBERTS VAN METRE IN HIS STUDY

The children of Joseph and Margaret [Whitnack] Van Metre were: Gabriel, *Robert*, Sarah, Joseph W. and Vincent H. Van Metre.

Robert Van Metre, the second son of Joseph and Margaret [Whitnack] Van Metre, was born on the old Van Metre homestead, at West Liberty, on the 19th day of November, 1803, died at Appleton City, Missouri, in 1892; married in 1822 Mahala, daughter of John Henson Wheeler. She was born February 5, 1805, died ———. Robert and Mahala Wheeler Van Metre left issue as follows: Anna, Henrietta, *Samuel Roberts*, and Joseph W. Van Metre.

Samuel Roberts Van Metre, son of Robert and Mahala Wheeler Van Metre, was born on the old Van Metre homestead near West Liberty, ~~Virginia~~, on the 8th of August, 1836, died at Marietta, Ohio, December 20, 1916; married, 22d August, 1861, Miss Josephine Johnson, daughter of Isaac and Laura Stanton Johnson, of Washington County, Ohio. Mrs. Van Metre was born on the Johnson homestead which has been in the family possession for over one hundred years.

Samuel R. Van Metre came to Ohio when a young man, but his youth was spent about West Liberty where he attended the local schools, and later finished his technical training at Bethany College in the vicinity. Bethany is that famous institution which was founded by Rev. Alexander Campbell "for the education of christian young men," in 1841, and was the successor of the old Buffalo Academy. West Liberty, in those days, was the center of learning in the upper Ohio valley.¹ Dr. Campbell was an eminent educator, whose influence was widely known and felt throughout the region west of the Alleghanies, and, for that matter, over Virginia itself, for he had been a member of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1829, where he had done some vigorous work and left a great impression upon the country by the principles he defended in dealing with the issues before the Convention. He was

¹ *Trans-Alleghany Magazine*, I., p. 20.

president of Bethany's classic halls for over twenty-five years, or until his death in 1860.¹

Mr. Van Metre's first venture was in establishing a dry-goods house in Malta, Ohio, under the firm name of Van Metre & Palmer. In 1876 he came to Marietta and founded the mercantile business which still bears his name, and with which he was successfully identified for over fifty years, and in conducting it he displayed and practised those qualities for integrity and reliability which were the foundation principles of his life and advanced him to positions of honor and influence, not only in his own community, but throughout the state; and with such confidence were his abilities considered when his services were sought in the organization of the Citizens' National Bank, of which he became vice-president; and of the Board of Trade, of Marietta. He was one of the organizers, and the first president, of The Farmers' Mutual Insurance Company of Washington County; and was also on the board of directors for years—and vice-president—of The Cyclone & Windstorm Insurance Association of Columbus. He was also vice-president of The Federated Mutual Insurance Companies of Ohio, and of The Co-Operative Mutual Insurance Companies of the United States.

Socially, Mr. Van Metre was conservative, but his affability and geniality attracted to him many friends to whom he was always loyal and hospitable. He was a member of the Cincinnati Chapter, Sons of The Revolution; and a member, also, of The First Congregational Church of Marietta, a consistent and practical observer of its tenets; sympathetic, benevolent and generous in his dispensations to charitable objects; and to any other worthy causes which appealed to him, regardless of denominational lines or class distinctions. When laying aside his business cares he found relaxation and great pleasure on his farm, where the breeding and rearing of fine stock was his chief interest and delight. He was a good judge of blooded stock, particularly of horses, and very proud of the fine strains of his cattle of whatever kind. The breeding of good stock was a trait characteristic of the family and has come down through generations of the Van Metres.

The Van Metre home is in Marietta's fine residential district, where the family lived a quiet and well-regulated life; and where Mr. and Mrs. Van Metre received and entertained, with splendid

¹ *West Va. Historical Magazine*, October, 1902, pp. 69, 74.



HOME OF S. R. VAN METRE AND FAMILY

grace, a large circle of friends and visitors. Mrs. Josephine Van Metre, now in her eightieth year, and a Christian woman and mother of exemplary virtue and devotion, resides in the old homestead. Mr. and Mrs. Van Metre were the parents of the following children: Laura, Mary, and *Wyllis Vincent Van Metre*.

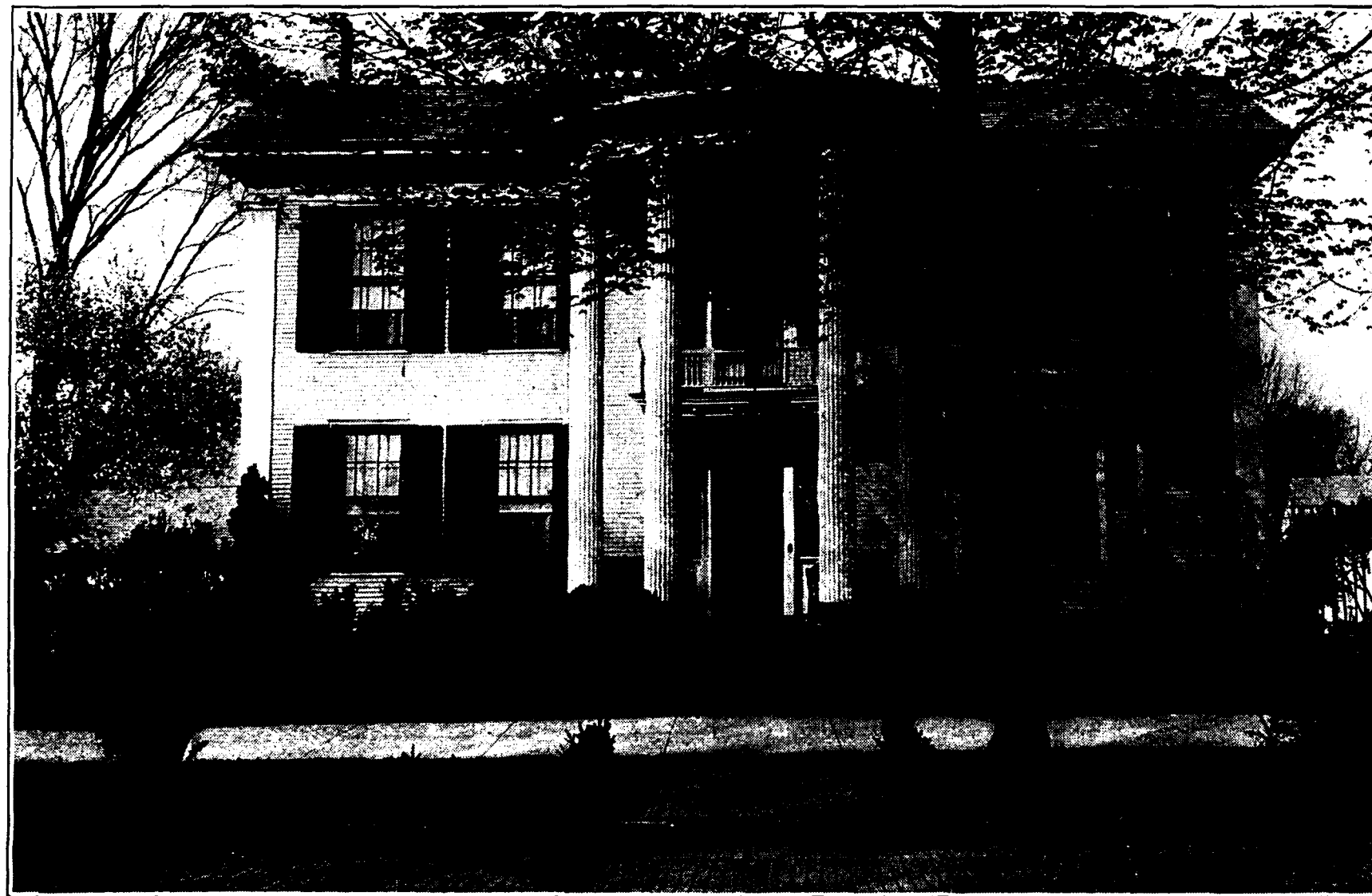
Laura Van Metre, now deceased, possessed those beautiful qualities of character which found expression in active religious work in connection with The First Congregational Church, and among the poor and deserving of Marietta. She contributed much service in social welfare work and was through her efforts successful in relieving many distressing conditions, and in bringing the recipients of her benefactions under Christian influence and a life of usefulness and virtue.

Mary Van Metre, now also deceased, was of the same Christian and unselfish disposition, possessing an amiable and winning temperament that won her friends everywhere. She married Captain O. J. Stowe and went to live at Los Angeles, California. She was a member there of The Daughters of the American Revolution. Their daughter, Josephine Stowe, married Edward Wileman, Esq., and resides at San Gabriel, Calif. They have one child, Richard Wileman.

Wyllis Vincent Van Metre, son and only surviving child of Samuel R. and Josephine Johnson Van Metre, and residing in Marietta, was born at Malta, Morgan County, Ohio, October 23, 1869; married, June 5, 1895, Miss Grace Applegate, daughter of Robert Morrow and Julia [Russell] Applegate of Beverly, Ohio. Mrs. Van Metre comes of excellent colonial New England ancestry. Her great-great-grandfather, Captain Enoch Shepherd, was an officer in the Revolutionary War, and her great-grandfather, Major John Clark, served also in the War of 1812. Both belonged to Quincey, Mass. Their families, in 1788-1789, were among the first settlers of Marietta, when it was the threshold of the Northwest Territory. Mrs. Van Metre's line of descent from this stock is through Lorana, daughter of Captain Shepherd, who married Major Clark; and their daughter Clarinda Jane, married Charles Russell, and were the grandparents of Mrs. Van Metre. She is a graduate of Martha Washington College, of Abingdon, Virginia.

Mr. Wyllis V. Van Metre, after preliminary schooling at Marietta, was sent to Oberlin, Ohio, where he spent four years of training in business administration at Oberlin College, and also finishing his musical education at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. He has continued the mercantile house S. R. Van Metre & Co. founded by his father over fifty years ago in Marietta, and is considered one of that city's most progressive and successful merchants. He is also identified with many of her civic and corporate institutions; and is a director in The Ohio Windstorm Insurance Company, of Columbus, Ohio. Aside from his business relations, he takes a deep interest in historical matters, particularly in those subjects which relate to the development of the colonies, the achievement of their independence, and the early Dutch and French influences in the making of this nation; but is always loyal to America first. In this connection he has membership in several hereditary patriotic societies, and in other organizations which represent and exalt the best elements of American citizenship, among which may be named The Ohio Society, Sons of the Revolution, of which he is vice-president; The Society of Colonial Wars of the State of Ohio; and The Holland Society of New York.





HOME OF MR. AND MRS. WYLLIS V. VAN METRE IN MARIETTA

