

Once lived on earth my grandparents; in other words, my father's father and Mother and my Mother's father and Mother; And for the sake of their decedents who may now or hereafter desire to know something concerning them, I now undertake to record what I myself do know. And it is chiefly to my father and Mother and their lifetime that I am indebted for what information I can impart. (And here I will let the names of my Mother's father and Mother lie still until I am done speaking of my father's father and Mother).

The name of my father's father was John Irvin, being a decedent of the same name as my father himself. The name of my father's mother was Mollie Irvin, upon being married; but I do not know what it was previous to marriage. They were both born, raised & married in Ireland. Yet I am ignorant of the day and year of their birth and marriage. After being married, they found themselves in the midst of times hard and difficult in Ireland. Meantime, news reached their ears of how easy it was to live in America; which it induced them both to be bound for the happy land. At length they took shipping and set sail for America with the view of making out better to live and to maintain their religious principles without any molestations on account of them, both being real and steadfast Presbyterians. And while of board a-ship and nearly about the middle Atlantic their first child was born. The same they named Abraham. Their voyage was without storm & tempest to endanger them; but a whale or two in room of storm & tempest undertook to turn over the ship to eat up Grandfather & grandmother; & sometimes it seemed that the ship would be turned over in fact, but presently Columbia's blue cliffs arose to view, and soon they landed safely on the American shores, and settled themselves in Pennsylvania. And in Pennsylvania they lived 'til their last child was born: the full number of their children being eight; namely Abraham, who was born on board a-ship, as afore mentioned) William, Robin, John, Elizabeth, Mary, Nancy & Margaret.

About this time it was daily talked of in Pennsylvania, that in Va. there was much uninhabited and occupied land. And as land bore a high price in this neighborhood around where grandfather lived, it occurred to his mind that it would be to his profit and advantages to turn this land whereon he lived into money, and go to Va. where he could get land for nothing and soon was confirmed in this determination to do so; yet not to remove his family thither until he first visited Va. in order to make preparations for himself and them. Accordingly he set out for Virginia and came to the place whereon O.C. Clark now lives and is the owner of, and selected it as a place of residence for himself and family; and did also take up all the land which lay within four or five miles around same. And let me observe that Grandfather found here at the same time an individual old, white man only, and he just ready to die with no other one living in many miles of the place. The old man was glad for grandfather to take possession here in promise from grandfather that he should remain here what little time he was to live and be attended to.

After grandfather had made such preparations and arrangements as seemed to him necessary for removal, he returned to Pennsylvania for his family. Now Jacob went down into Egypt, with three score and ten souls; but grandfather came to this place with ten white souls and two negro souls, who went by the name of Sam and Mollie. On reaching here, afterward old MC in 1736 (This date is blurred in the original manuscript, but each reference to the date seems to be 1736. This about corresponds to the accepted date of their arrival.) He found the old white man as before alluded to still alive, but soon died, and lies by the side of a large rock at this upper end of a field next to Little Falling River.

And now it was that grandfather and his force sat themselves to till the ground and lay up for his new plantation, and it is certainly a fact, though it may strike the ears of some with incredulity that this place whereon O.C. Clark now lives, is the first plantation that was ever settled and cultivated within 35 or 40 miles of same.

Grandfather had not been settled here long till the newcomers began to pour in upon him, who bought land of him which he had taken up, at a low price; so that he had neighbors enough and while he was engaged in secular affairs, he did not forget religion, and that there was no meeting house nor preacher to be found within a long way of him: so he resolved to have a meeting house and someone to preach in it; and got some men to join him, who were professors of religious, and had a large log meeting house built and for grandfather's part of payment, he gave a tract of land just over Hat Creek fronting this meeting house. This house was completed about 2 years from the time he came here. And his coming here is as before said in 1736(?).

Now before he left Pennsylvania, Mr. Tennant, a young preacher told him that when on reaching the place he intended to settle, if he found himself scarce of preachers, he would come into Virginia, board at his house and preach a year on his letting him know, and as soon as Hat Creek was built he wrote Mr. Tennant that he might come on. Accordingly Mr. Tennant came in agreement to his word, and he boarded at his house one year and preached at Hat Creek once a month throughout the year, besides preaching about and about elsewhere.

THIS MANUSCRIPT WAS LEFT INCOMPLETE. IT TRADITIONALLY WAS
WRITTEN BY THE SAME WILLIAM THAT WROTE THE CHURCH HISTORY.