DESCENDANTS OF JOHN BOWEN
OF
OLD RAPPAHANNOCK COUNTY, VIRGINIA Va.

Compiled by
Mrs. Ada Wheatley Bayliss
Descendants of John Bowen
of
Old Rappahannock County - Virginia

By Mrs. Ada Wheatley Day leather, and Mrs. Ada Wheatley, Bayless

As stated on the accompanying chart, this record of the
descendants of John Bowen (1) of Old Rappahannock County, Va. was made
from a copy of the record in an old book of Thomas Conrad Bowen (47)
of Albemarle County, Virginia. This record was copied about 1898 by
Thomas Conrad Bowen’s daughter, Mrs. John J. Grantham (75), and sent
by her to my Mother, Mrs. William Arthur Wheatley (99), in Nashville,
Tennessee, on March 26, 1901. I have in my possession Mrs. Grantham’s
copy of the record and her letter to my Mother. After my Mother’s
death, these papers were packed away for twenty-two years and were only
brought to light in 1924. In 1923 Mrs. Grantham’s daughter, Miss
Margaret Bowen Grantham (127), of Summitt Point, West Va., sent me the
greater part of this record copied by her Mother from the old book of
Thomas Conrad Bowen.

I have learned from a letter from Mr. Conrad Bowen Shirley
(134) of Greenwood, Albemarle County, Virginia (grandson of Thos. C.
Bowen)”that our records were burned twenty years ago”. I have heard
this from others also. So the copy of the record in the possession of
Miss Margaret Bowen Grantham and the copy in my possession are the only
records in existence of this line of the Bowen family that I have been
able to locate after two years of exhaustive search.

Several old Bibles with records of the Bowen family have been
burned at different times and in different places. One was burned in
Fauquier County and one in Culpeper County, beside the record burned
in Albemarle County.

The above described record states that, “the founder of the
Bowen family in Virginia came from Wales and settled in the Northern
Nook”

It is important to remember that Old Rappahannock County is
not the present county of Rappahannock. Old Rappahannock County was
formed from Lancaster County in 1656 and was one of the very first
counties of the Northern Neck of Virginia. In 1692 Old Rappahannock
County was divided into Richmond County and Essex County, which now
appear on the map, though of course the extent of these counties is
greatly reduced since the early Colonial times.

The present county of Rappahannock was formed from Culpeper
County in 1833.

At the Land Office in Richmond, and in Crozier’s Virginia
County Records, and in the records of Old Rappahannock County in the
Archives Department of the State Library in Richmond, there are
records and deeds of various parcels of land to John Bowen (1) and his
wife, Rebecca (2), in Old Rappahannock County on the Rappahannock River.
At the Land Office, Richmond, Rappahannock County, Book No. 5 -

"John Bowen, Oct. 20, 1660 - 550 acres. In the freshes of Rappahannock County on the main branch of Rappahannock Creek next and adjoining to the land of William Lane"

Rappahannock County -
"John Bowen April 17, 1660 - 609 acres. On the head branches of Rappahannock Creek near the land of William Lane"

Crosier's Virginia County Records, Vol. 6, gives these same two transactions: "John Bowen 550 acres, 1660, and John Bowen 609 acres, 1660".

In the Archives Department, Records 1666 - 1667, page 130 & 139: "John Bowen & wife Rebecca - Deed 1667".

Rappahannock Records 1671 - 1676, Page 34: "John Bowen - Deed Nov. 1671; "pages 52 - 53 - 161, also same records; page 162, "John Bowen and Rebecca Bowen - Deed Dec. 30, 1673".

I have learned from competent authority that John Bowen's land was located, in all probability, on the Richmond County side of the Rappahannock River.

John Bowen (1) died in 1686 leaving his wife and five children. His will is given in Crosier's Virginia County Records, Vol. 7, page 64, and is as follows:

"John Bowen, April 1 - 1686 15 May - 1686
Sons - Matthew, John, Stephen and Alexander, Daughter - Martha - my wife and child she goes with. Wife and son, Matthew, executors. Witnesses - Moses Hulbert, Alexander Doniphan, Francis Williams"

In the Parish Register of Christ Church, Middlesex County, Va., page 60, marriages -
"Matthew Bowen and Eliza Wood, ye 6th of May - 1700"

Thomas Bowen (18), son of Stephen (9), married Sally Winterton (19) on December 11 - 1781, in Fauquier County, Va. (Crosier's Virginia County Records, Vol. 4, page 13).

They had three children, Thomas, James and Nancy. After the death of Thomas Bowen (18), his wife, Sally Bowen (19), married Mr. Murphy. They had several children, among them a son, Winterton Murphy.

Thomas Bowen (18) was a Lieutenant in the Revolutionary War. This record is found in the Archives Department, State Library, Richmond.

James Bowen (4), son of Stephen (2), married Rachel Bower (21), Dec. 17, 1761, in Fauquier County, Virginia. They had thirteen children. It is not true that James Bowen married his cousin Rachel Bowen. He married Rachel Bower whose parents came to this country from Germany. The following references are proof that James Bowen married Rachel Bower: (1) Crozier's Va. County Records, Vol. 4, page 13; (2) Fauquier Historical Society (Warrenton, Va.), Bulletin No. 2, Published July, 1922; (3) Record of Thomas Conrad Bowen; (4) Record of Mrs. Rose Boll Oden, Falls Church, Virginia.

James Bowen (20) was a soldier in the Revolutionary War and received a Bounty Warrant for his services. He served in Capt. Peter E. Bruins's Co., 11th Va. Regiment. His record is found in the Archives Department, State Library, Richmond.

James Bowen (35), son of Thomas (10), was born Sept. 1, 1787 and died February 12, 1837. He married, first, Mrs. Amelia Tuttle Pollard (36) by whom he had one son. He married, second, Harriet Martin Wheatley (37), daughter of James Wheatley and Mary Martin Wheatley, of Fauquier & Culpeper Counties, Va. James Wheatley served in the Revolution. They had eight children. During James Bowen's (35) married life in Fauquier County he lived at Belle Coll, during his married life in Warren County he lived at Clover Hill.

Col. James Bowen (35) served in the War of 1812. His papers were burned or destroyed, but his war record will, no doubt, be found in the records of Virginia Soldiers, War 1812, in the Archives Department, State Library, Richmond, when these books are indexed and made accessible.
T.K. Cartwell, in "Shenandoah Valley Pioneers and Their Descendants," page 518, says: "James Bowen was a member of the Virginia House of Delegates from Frederick County, 1833-36" (Warren County was formed from Frederick County in 1836).

Mrs. A. J. Bowen, of Success, Va., wrote me on March 13, 1923, "Col. Bowen and his wife are not buried at Clover Hill, the old home place, but across the road in an old burying ground, that belonged at the time they were buried to the Timberlake, but has long since passed into the hands of strangers."

The graves of Col. James Bowen and his wife, Harriet M. Wheatley Bowen, are marked with tombstones.

Walter Bowen (61), son of James (35), was born July 14, 1821 at Belle Coil, Fauquier County, Va., and died July 31, 1881 at Winchester, Va. He married, on Sept. 27, 1842, Ann Maria Kerfoot (62), daughter of John Kerfoot and Betty Taylor, and grand-daughter of Handy Taylor and Kitty Williams. Ann Maria Kerfoot was born at Walnut Hill, Warren County (then Old Frederick County) Feb. 10, 1823 and died at Spring Dale, Warren County, Va. April 21, 1869. They had ten children.

Walter Bowen (61) was a captain in the Confederate Army. He was Captain of Co. E., 7th Va. Cavalry, Col. Turner Ashby (afterward General Turner Ashby). Ref: (1) Life of Turner Ashby by Thos. A. Ashby, New York, 1914; (2) Fauquier Historical Society Bulletin (Warrenton, Va.) No. 2, page 164; (3) Roster of Warren Co. Veterans, Published by W.L. Grayson, Front Royal, Va.; (4) Vol. 9 Confederate Records, Archive Department, State Library, Richmond.

Capt. Bowen's name is inscribed upon the monument to Confederate soldiers, in Front Royal, Va.

Capt. Walter Bowen and his wife, Ann Maria Kerfoot Bowen, are buried at Walnut Hill, Warren County, Va.

William Arthur Wheatley (100) left Randolph-Macon College in 1861 when 18 years old and enlisted in the 13th Va. Regiment, Capt. Stockton Hoth's Company, Elze's Brigade, Joseph E. Johnston's Division. In 1863, on the expiration of his enlistment in Va., he re-enlisted in Memphis, Tennessee, in Capt. Tad Samuder's Battalion, which served as scouts with Gen. N. Bedford Forrest, in Gen. Sterling Price's Division, Army of the Mississippi. He fought in battles of Corinth, Iuka, Holly Springs, Courtland, Ala. - and others.

John Bowen (1) of Wales and his family who settled in Old Rappahannock County, Va. in 1666, were the first of this name to settle in Virginia. Look at a map of Virginia and you will see that John Bowen (1) entered Virginia from the South, through the Cape, going up the Rappahannock River and settling in Old Rappahannock County. As time passed, his descendants evidently went up the Rappahannock River, as the water courses were practically the only nodes of travel in the very early Colonial times, and they lived in the counties convenient to this river, in the Northern Neck of Virginia. At the time
of the Revolution we find our Bowens in Fauquier County.

The Fauquier Historical Bulletin - No. 1 - gives the following: "At this time (1669) the settlement of the Northern Neck was progressing steadily -- the lands in these counties were taken up by settlers who came to Virginia through the Capes and by settlers of the tidewater region who were attracted by the more productive Piedmont soils. The counties were widened and extended on either side of the great rivers. Pioneers were pushing outward, and before 1728 had crossed the mountains. A more numerous migration to the Northern Neck had set in from another source. The new settlers of German and Scotch-Irish origin came from Pennsylvania and other northern Colonies and had learned of the fertile Shenandoah lands from the Indian traders".

When the Shenandoah Valley began to be settled about 1728, Bowens from the north, came into Virginia with the earliest settlers of this region. A tide of settlers came from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and other states and entered Virginia from the north. Heads Bowen and his family came from Pennsylvania and settled in what is now Augusta County, Va.

John Bowen (1) of Wales, entering through the Capes on the south had settled in Virginia sixty years or more before any other branch of the Bowen family. The other branches of the Bowen family entered Virginia from the north and were the descendants of the Massachusetts and New Jersey Bowens.

The Bowen connection is an extremely long one. More than thirty men of the Bowen family were soldiers in the Revolution, as listed in Eckenrodes' "Va. Soldiers of the Revolution", Vols. I and II.

The greatest confusion has been caused in this line of Bowens by genealogical articles published in the "Baltimore Sun" (I have the article but not the date) and in the Richmond "Times-Dispatch" of Nov. 17, 1907. As these articles are practically identical, I will point out the errors in the article in the Richmond "Times-Dispatch" of Nov. 17, 1907. This article says, "The Bowen family of Virginia which early settled in Albemarle County was derived from the family in Massachusetts. Four brothers named Bowen bought land and settled in Albemarle early in the 19th century. James Marshall, William, Peter & Thomas G. Bowen. They are supposed to have moved from Milford, Delaware, to that county and to be the descendants of the New Jersey family". This is entirely incorrect. As shown on the chart these four brothers, James (52), William (56), Peter (55) and Thomas G. Bowen (47), were of the thirteen children of James Bowen (20) and Rachel Bower Bowen (21) and were the fifth generation in Virginia from John Bowen (1), the immigrant from Wales, who settled in Old Rappahannock County in 1666. These four brothers were born in Fauquier County, Virginia, and moved into Albemarle County from there.

In a copy of a letter from Miss Isabelle Ball of Balls Church, Va., Nov. 11, 1908, to Mrs. A.J. Bowen (69) of Succas, Warren County, Va., she says, "James and William Bowen of Albemarle County were brothers.
of my grandmother, Margaret Bowen Ball. The old home place where they were born is named "Spring Hill", and is situated near Jeffersonton, Fauquier County. The house is still standing. It is a beautiful frame building."

Wood's History of Albemarle County gives an account of these four brothers after they entered Albemarle County.

Another error in this article is as follows:

"Of the early family connections we find from Fauquier records of marriages, that of James Bowen and Rachel Bowen (his cousin) Dec. 17, 1761". As stated before this is not true. James Bowen (33) married Rachel Bowen (21) Dec. 17, 1761, as stated in: (1) Crozier's Virginia County Records, Vol. 4, page 13; (2) Fauquier Historical Society Bulletin, No. 2; (3) Record of Thomas Conrad Bowen of Albemarle County; (4) Record of Mrs. Rosa Hall Owen, Falls Church, Virginia.

Another error in this article in the "Times-Dispatch", is:

"Their sister (sister of James and Thomas), Sally Bowen, married Mr. Murphy 1790". Sally Bowen (19), who was the wife of Thomas Bowen (18) married Mr. Murphy after the death of Thomas Bowen. Sally Bowen (18), who was the sister of Thomas (18) and James (20) died single.

A fourth error in this article says: "Culpeper County, where the first of the Bowen family settled in coming into this state (Virginia)" Culpeper County was not formed until 1749 and was a wilderness, inhabited only by Indians, at the time John Bowen (1) of Sales settled in Old Rappahannock County, Virginia, in 1666.

Richard Bowen of Winchester, Va. who established the "Virginia Centinel", April 2, 1788, later combining this paper with the Winchester "Mercury", is not of our family of Bowens. Either Carr-mell's or Norris' History described him as a young man coming over from England to Winchester, Va. Whether he came from England or is descended from the Northern branch of Bowens is immaterial as he did not belong to our line of Bowens. The Frederick County records give his marriage to Elizabeth Lindsey in 1760.

The first of our line of Bowens to reside in Frederick County (from which Warren County was formed in 1836) was Col. James Bowen (33), born 1707. He was grown at the time he came to Frederick County, "and was from Lower Virginia", according to the notes of Mrs. W. J. Bowen.

Perhaps in the future some one of this line will have the inclination, the time, and the means, to visit the county seats of these old counties along the Rappahannock River and examine the original records. I believe much additional information about this line of Bowens could be gotten from the original county records, following the Bowens from Old Rappahannock County, through the counties bordering the Rappahannock River and into Fauquier County.
I do not expect that any one who reads this record will realize the research and the hard and incessant work I have put upon it for the last two years. Most of the time it has seemed impossible of accomplishment. There are so many Bowens and so much wrong information. But no matter how difficult this task has been I feel fully repaid in the knowledge that in correctly tracing this line of Bowens I have completed the work of my beloved Mother, Ann Elizabeth Bowen Wheatley.

Ada Wheatley Bayliss
Chesterfield Apts.
Richmond, Va.
Aug. 1924.
Descendants of John Bowen of Old Rappahannock County, Virginia

The first five generations of this record were copied from an old book belonging to Thomas Bowen Bowen of Eschen Rant County, Virginia. The author, Rev. Alonzo W. Bowen, Grandson of Henry P. Bowen, made the copy about 1869 while on a visit to Albemarle County. He sent a copy on March 23, 1887 to Mrs. J. Elizabeth Bowen Wheatley, of Memphis, Tenn., which has been used in preparing the first five generations of this chart.

Compiled by: J. Alabama Wheatley, Jr.
Cheatham Apartments
Richmond, Virginia
July 14, 1910

The Bowen line begins with John Bowen of Wales and his wife Rebecca settled in Old Rappahannock County, Virginia in 1666.