Pioneers of Kanawha Valley (The William Morris Family)

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It has been conceded by all persons that pretend to know anything of the history of this Valley that William Morris and his family were the first white people that made a permanent settlement in the Kanawha Valley, and that they arrived here in the spring of 1774, or the fall of 1773, the exact date not now being known. He came from Culpepper county, Virginia, but whether he came directly or stopped on the route, is uncertain. Before the arrival of William Morris, there had been an attempt made by one Walter Kelly to make a settlement on the Kanawha river, at the mouth of Kelly’s Creek, and some small improvement made, but Kelly was killed by the Indians, and when William Morris arrived, there was no white man in the valley and no settlement whatever. We append hereto a diagram of the river, showing the streams from the junction of the New and Gauley rivers, along the Kanawha river, down to the mouth of Elk river. These streams have since acquired their names and are given, as they are now known. William Morris, when a boy about twelve years old, was about the Scotch-yards in London, which place was a police headquarters, and near the Thames, and out of curiosity he went aboard of a vessel, and while the boy was aboard and looking about, the ship left her mooring and he found himself on the way to America. After he arrived at Philadelphia, he found that the vessel would not return to England for some months, and the owner of the vessel took the boy to his own home and there he was cared for and given an opportunity to show the spirit that was in him. The merchant was so pleased with young William Morris, that he wrote to the boy’s father for permission to retain him, and William remained until he was grown and afterwards. He then went to Virginia. He married Miss Elizabeth Stips, in Orange County. Whether he lived in Orange, and after the organization of Culpepper, found himself in the new county or whether he made a removal, we know not. When William Morris reached the Kanawha Valley, he made his settlement at the mouth of Kelly’s creek, on the spot where Walter Kelly had attempted to make his home. The family of William Morris was of such number and strength that an ordinary Indian party was not willing to make an attack upon them, and the Morrices made arrangements to remain and if necessary to fight it out on these lines. They were on the ground when General Andrew Lewis with his little army marched from Lewisburg to the mouth of the Kanawha, or from Camp Union to Point Pleasant, which was in the fall of 1774. The sons of William Morris, John
and Henry, went into this army, and were at the battle of Point Pleasant. Afterwards, as the children of Walter Kelly became of age, William Morris presented each with a horse, saddle and bridle, although said heirs had no title to the land and had no claim against Morris, but to satisfy them that he did not want to take from them any claim they might have had, without compensation, as Kelly had cleared a small patch and had tried to raise a crop and made some improvements thereon, he paid this compensation. It seems that William Morris and family went to work immediately upon his arrival in this new country, and with his family made rapid progress in opening farms and building houses, and making preparations of defense against marauding parties of Indians, which for many years afterwards, were constantly prowling through the country. Shadrach Harriman was the last white man killed in this part of the country, which was in 1794. This Morris settlement was in a wilderness. It was one hundred miles west of Lewisburg in the then county of Botetourt, afterwards Greenbrier, and about the same distance to the Ohio river, on which there were no settlements below Wheeling or Pittsburg. In this wild wilderness of woods there were all sorts of animals: in the river there were fish, and plenty of wild fruits and nuts in the woods. There was no danger of starvation, and in one season they would have their corn and gardens to rely upon. But for the great drawback, the savage Indians, the enterprise of making the settlement would have been made a pic-nic, but with this eternal danger, it was anything but a frolic. Imagine this small settlement, in the upper part of the valley, with no market, they had to depend upon themselves for everything. They brought their guns and ammunition, their plows, hoes, axes, mattocks and all other tools they had. There were no markets and no transportation, no stores nor mills nor factories. They must manufacture their own goods or wear buckskin, and it was a long ways east to go for powder, and nothing to the west could be had. There were not many other settlers that came until in 1788 when the Clendenins came and made their settlement at the mouth of Elk river. And when the county of Kanawha was organized in 1789, it was said there were but thirteen voters in the county, but there were 118 residents of said county, in the year 1792. William Morris was now an old man, and in 1792 he made his will and in January, 1793, it was admitted to probate, which was the first will recorded in the new county and it will be found in deed book A, page 30. His age is not known, but from the best information we have, he was at least seventy years old and probably older. The will of William Morris disposed of his real estate and mentions the names of his ten children. He evidently had fears that his wife might wish “to engage herself in the bonds of wedlock” and he provided that in such event, that the property he had given to her should revert to his estate. She was not satisfied with the provision that he had made for her by his will, for the record of the Court shows that “she came into Court and broke the said will.” She preferred to take her dower provided by law, rather than
accept the provisions of the will made for her. She afterwards married a young Irishman by the name of Thompson, but she did not long survive her first husband. Leonard and John, the sons of William Morris, were the executors of said will, and the witnesses thereto were Jacob Skiles, John Cammel, William Morris, Jr., John Jones and Franky Jones. John Jones and Levi Morris were on the bond of the executors, in the penalty of one thousand pounds. Jacob Casdorph, John Moss, and John Cammel appraised his personal estate, which was three hundred and sixty pounds. There were Dudley, Jim, Deriah, Sally and a girl, slaves of the deceased. From 1774 to 1792-3, William Morris resided in the Kanawha Valley with his family. He had a wife and ten children when he arrived, eight sons and two daughters, probably each of his sons had a wife with some children, and they came with some horses and other stock through a wilderness where there was no road, and settled down to hew out of the woods a home for themselves and their posterity. They were English and they were Baptists, and they had a little church near the mouth of Kellys creek, close to the spot where the little brick Methodist church now stands, and we hear that the records of this church are with some of the descendants to this day. They were all moral men and many of them religious men. They lived for years surrounded by dangers that might at any hour destroy their lives. They saw a civil government established, and a town spring up near to their homes. He lived through the Indian wars, through the war for Independence, saw the government of the United States inaugurated as well as that of the county of Kanawha and the town of Charlestown. Then the old Patriarch William, the Pioneer of this Valley, found that he must go to another world, and he made his last will and he died and was buried, somewhere, no one knows where. In the history of Kanawha county by Gov. G. W. Atkinson, he did not attempt to give the genealogy of this family and said it could not be done, and still insists it can not be done, owing to the great number of them, the repetition of the names and their inter-marriages, the want of family records, and the absence of monuments, &c. We shall not raise any issue on this allegation, but will give such as we can, in the best way that we can, and we know of no one that can contradict the same. The children of William Morris, the Pioneer, are as follows: A. William Morris, Jr., known as “Major Billy.” B. Henry Morris. C. Leonard Morris. D. Joshua Morris. E. John Morris. F. Carlos or Carrol Morris. G. Levi Morris. H. Benjamin Morris. I. Elizabeth Morris. J. Franky Morris. These are given by the will of the old pioneer, to which we have referred. (A) Major William Morris. This was the eldest son of the old Pioneer. He was born December 17, 1746. Whether in Orange or Culpepper or some other county, is not definitely known. Catherine Carroll was born March 15, 1751, somewhere in Maryland, and they were married May 10, 1768. When and how this family learned of the Kanawha valley and caught the western fever of emigration, has not been learned. In 1769 the western limit of civilization was in the
county now called Greenbrier, and the inhabitants were not numerous. There may have been some hunters or explorers that had visited this part of the world, but there are no particulars of their reports. This son came with his father, and with his own wife and children. He seems to have made his home at the mouth of Kellys creek, and it is supposed that when his father became old, this son took the care of the farm from his father. He seems to have been engaged in making his home and farm comfortable, and especially engaged in searching out the country for good tracts of land, and he became possessed of many large tracts of choice lands. When the new county of Kanawha was formed, he was one of its Justices, and he was also one of the trustees appointed for the town of Charlestown and Point Pleasant, when said town was afterward established.

There was no more important person in the settlement than he, who was known in later life, as Major William Morris, to distinguish him from the many bearing the same name. He was in the Legislature from this county in 1792, 1793, 1794, 1796, 1797, 1798, 1800. He was sheriff in 1801. In an old family Bible, in which is written, “The property of Will Morris, June 2, 1796,” we find the following: “Aug. 19, 1794, William Morris and Catherine Morris, his wife, were taken in the Baptist church and on the 20th she was baptized.” This book became the property of John Morris, says: "John Morris, this his book, Apl 2, 1816." Afterwards we find the endorsement, “Catherine Morris, the owner of this book, died Sept. 3, 1823. Signed, “John Hansford, Sr., 1824.” This book was also the property of John Hansford, Sr., and in 1854 it belonged to Felix G. Hansford, and now is in the hands of Bradford Noyes Hansford. The book was printed in 1791, by Isaiah Thomas in Mass. It also appears in this Bible that William Morris was born December 17, 1746, and Catherine Morris was born March 15, 1751, and that Catherine died September 3, 1823. The children of Major William and Catherine Morris were: 1. Jane – born Nov. 3, 1770; mar. Maj. John Hansford. 2. Gabriel – born Dec. 27, 1772. 3. William – born Dec. 16, 1775, mar. Polly Barnes. 4. Catherine – born Jan. 13, 1778; mar. Chas. Venable. 5. Carroll – born Nov. 2, 1779. 6. John – born Aug. 24, 1783. 7. Cynthia – born Jan. 5, 1792; mar. Isaac Noyes. OF CATHERINE CARROLL. In our Oct. 1904, Mag., it is said that Stephen Teays married Mary Carroll, and that she came to the Kanawha on a visit to her aunt, Mrs. Catherine Morris. (The validity of the following two sentences is in question:) And it is tradition that the Carrolls, whose ancestors were Catherines, owned land where the city of Washington was afterwards located. If this is correct, then they were descendants of Daniel Carroll of Maryland, who owned a farm where Washington now is. Mrs. Morris was a woman of more than ordinary attainments, and was highly respected by all who knew her. She outlived her husband about twenty years, and by her will she left her estate to her daughters, Mrs. Jane Hansford, Mrs. Catherin Venable, and Mrs. Cynthia Noyes. The Morris family secured a large estate in land and there were patents issued to them in Botetourt, Greenbrier and Kanawha, and
other counties; and Major William was the owner of most of these lands. In the early
days, the accumulation of a large personal estate was unusual if not an impossibility.
There was not much money, and tobacco was made a legal tender. This was neither a
safe nor a convenient investment for pioneers, so far from market. The will of Major
William Morris was recorded in April, 1803, and he left a large estate in land and six
negroes. We will close our remarks on this member of the Morris family by publishing
an account of him and of the valley, which we find in the Southern Literary Messenger
of 1856, written by Dr. Henry Ruffner, who had lived in this county and knew the
people thereof. BILLY MORRIS. There was a Presbyterian minister who made a visit at
an early day to the Kanawha Valley, who was known as “Little Bobby Wilson,” and who
passed safely through the wilderness of Sewall and Gauley mountains, and on a
Saturday evening arrived at the first inn that he found in the Kanawha Valley, old Billy
Morris’s. Old Billy Morris, as everybody called him, because he had a son called young
Billy, was one of the seven brothers who were among the first settlers in the country.
They were a family of large, brave and worthy men and all, except old Billy, hunters,
while hunting was the deep occupation of the country, but quiet and industrious
farmers, after they had farms large enough to yeil them substance. Old Billy differed
from his brothers both in body and in mind. They were tall and spare made; he was
less tall and corpulent. They were not, but he was remarkable for energy and strength
of character. He was born to command, as much so as Napoleon Bonaparte, though in
an humble sphere. All the poor men and the ordinary men around him for miles, fell
naturally, so it seems, under his authority. He ordered and they obeyed. He
reprimanded, often severely, and they submitted, nearly always humbly. He made
them fear him, though he had no power over them but the moral power of a strong
mind. He made them love him also with a sort of filial affection, though neither they nor
any one else could tell why, for he was often gruff in speech, overbearing in manner,
and when he exercised kindness towards his neighbor, he did it often more as a master
than as a friend. But then, when he chose he had a masterly way of showing kindness,
making the recipient feel more grateful than if they had secured the same favor from
another man. In truth, he had a strong heart with an imperious will, and loved and
hated with a power which was always felt by those around him. To his children he was
very kind and to his neighbors, who did not oppose him, or offend his prejudices, he
was a good neighbor, a remarkably good neighbor. He had sagacity in matters of
business, while others hunted bears, he acquired choice lands, and improved his farm,
erected mills, and built flat boats for families emigrating to Kentucky, by which means
he became the wealthiest man among the primitive settlers in the Kanawha valley. Yet
the man was not an educated man. But he gave his children, especially his sons, a
liberal education. It may be supposed that such a man was bigoted in his opinions and
full of prejudices. Strong minded, self-relying men, not liberalized by education, always are. As he was not disposed to tolerate opposition to his will, neither would he regard those with favor who differed from him in religion or politics. He was a Baptist, wholly and exclusively. He knew little of other religious denominations, and had imbibed unfavorable opinions of them. He seems to have some how gotten a particular dislike to the Presbyterians, which was rather unfortunate at first for our Little Bobby Wilson, though in the end, it was not. It being Saturday evening when he arrived, Mr. Wilson was properly concerned to discern how he might spend the next day in a Christian manner, and whether providentially a way might be opened for him to do a little good among those heathenish, whiskey-drinking, bear hunting barbarians of Kanawha, for such was the character he had heard of them. When Little Bobby saw what a corpulent backwoodsman he had for his host, how loudly and authoritatively he spoke to those around him, how rough were his manners and how dogmatical his conversation, he was almost afraid to say a word to him about religious worship. But in the course of the evening, he found that Morris was himself a member of the Baptist church, and that his rudeness of manner proceeded not from ungodliness but from early associations with rude and ignorant backwoodsmen. Therefore, he ventured before going to bed to inquire if there was to be any preaching in the neighborhood to-morrow. “No,” said his host, “None nearer than Elk.” “How far is that, Mr. Morris?” “Eighteen miles.” Mr. Wilson then said, “Well, Mr. Morris, as I am a preacher of the Gospel, and do not wish to travel or to be idle on the Sabbath day, would it be convenient and agreeable to have preaching appointed for me in this neighborhood? I suppose that a small congregation could be collected?” “What profession are you of?” “I am a Presbyterian.” “A Presbyterian are you! Then you can’t preach about here. We are all Baptists, and have not much opinion about your sort of people.” This settled the question. Mr. Wilson left early next morning, and went to the little village of Charleston, just above Elk ferry, where he found a Mr. Johnson, a Baptist, preaching out under the trees, and Mr. Wilson was pressed by Mr. Johnson to preach, which he did to the great satisfaction of his rural congregation, and the next day he preached again in the Court House. Mr. William Morris and George Alderson, were the first delegates from Kanawha county to the General Assembly of Virginia. Both were able men in their way, but rather uncouth legislators by reason of their ignorance of public affairs, and of the usages of polite society. They both attracted notice by their backwood garb and manners, and Alderson, also by his stammering tongue, which had often to make three or four trials at a word. Jane Morris (A-1) was born Nov. 3, 1770, and became the wife of Maj. John Hansford in 1787, and it has been said they were married in Lewisburg. She was the oldest child of Major William Morris, and a sketch of the Hansford family was published in our Jan., 1904, magazine. She came with her father when she was but four years old and rode in
front of him on the horse and before she reached the end of her journey, they were attacked by an Indian. She lived near her father until in 1798, when her husband built on the opposite side of the river below Paint creek. Major Hansford was in the House of Delegates from Kanawha from 1811 to 1818, both inclusive. She was an invalid for many of her last days, and she died on August 12, 1854. She had twelve children, one of whom was a girl, and she, Sarah Hansford, born in 1792, married a William Morris, whose children were Fenton, Joshua and John. Her sons were Herman, William Morris, Felix G., John, Carroll, Charles, Alva, Gallatin and Melton. For further particulars of the Hansfords, see said January, 1904, magazine. Of Gabriel Morris (A-2) we can give no information. William Morris (A-3) the third of the name, was born Dec. 16, 1775, and his wife was Polly Barns, who was the daughter of Josph Barnes of Shepherdstown, and her mother was the sister of James Ramsey, the inventor of the steamboat. See our magazine for July, 1903, for the family of Ramseys. After the death of her husband she married Edward Hughes – see July 1904, magazine. This Billy Morris invented the “Slips or Jars,” a simple tool which made deep well boring possible, and that the great utility of the invention entitled him to be ranked among the inventors, and as a great public benefactor. The children of this family were: 1. Joseph Barns Morris; marr. Sally Hughes. 2. Catherine Morris; mar. Morris Hansford. 3. Roxie Morris; mar. Joel Alexander. 4. Janette Morris; never married. 5. Cynthia Morris; mar. Wm. White. 6. William the IV; mar. Julia Mitchell. 7. Maria Morris; mar. Norborn Thomas. 8. Thomas Morris. Catherine Morris, who married Morris Hansford had four children: William, Franklin, Monroe, and Emeline. Roxie Morris, who married Joel Alexander, had a large family, whose names are unknown. Janette Morris never married, and lived with her sister, Catherine Hansford. She lived to be 80 years of age, and danced with the children and never grew old. Catherine Morris (A-4), born January 13, 1778, and married Charles Venable in 1800. He was one of the first to emancipate his slaves. They left no children, but their home was one where the young people delighted to assemble and where they were always found. We have by tradition an incident of her that gives some insight to her character, while she was a young lady, and at home, there was an entertainment of some kind to be given, and to which she was invited, to take place at the house of a relative on the opposite side of the river, and it so happened that at the house there were none of the family that were going, neither were there any one who was known to her to be going; neither was a boat on her side of the river known to her, and it looked as if she would have to remain at home. She did not like this situation and she wanted to go and she determined that she would go. She prepared the clothes she desired to wear, and after dark took them under her arm and went to the river. She placed the clothes in a sugar trough she hauled to the river and shoving the little boat ahead of her, she swam the river, dressed herself in the dry clothes, and proceeded to the house.
and enjoyed the pleasure of the evening’s entertainment as if nothing unusual had taken place. She was heard to say that she had done so often. She lived not far from Charleston, on the South Side, now in the lower part of Kanawha City, in a large brick farm house. She had no children. Carroll Morris, son of Major William (A-5) We know not whom he married. His children were: Maria Morris; married John Hansford. Letitia Morris; married ______ Whittaker. Parthenia Morris; married ________ . Catherine Morris; married Dr. Sutherland. Michael and Carroll, Jr. Carroll Morris lost his life in attempting to swim across the Kanawha, just below Upper Creek Shoals. John Morris (A-6), born Aug. 24, 1783. His wife was Polly Duke. He sold his place to Aaron Stockton and removed to Missouri. He had a son, Granville Morris, who was killed in the Black Hawk war. When John determined to go further west, he went to work to build a boat, into which he took his family, negroes, wagons, tools and some cattle, &c. The entire Baptist congregation assembled at the river and a prayer was offered for his safe journey and he launched his boat and left the Kanawha valley. Cynthia Morris (A-7), was born Jan. 5, 1792. She married Isaac Noyes, who came from some of the northern states, and became one of the leading merchants and salt manufacturers of this county. For some time he lived on a farm, which is now included in Kanawha City, and was the adjoining farm of Chas. Venable. This couple lived to be very old and were known and respected by the people of Charleston. They were the ancestors of the Noyes and Smiths and Rands, Arnolds and Rubys, who compose a large part of the inhabitants of Charleston. Col. Benjamin H. Smith, and his son, Maj. Isaac N. Smith, and his son, Harrison Brooks Smith, were all lawyers of prominence, and the latter is yet so engaged. To write of Col. Smith would require a large volume, and the space will not permit to go further into the later families. HENRY MORRIS – B. He was the second son of William Morris, Sr. He married Mary Bird of Bath County, Va. She was, with her sister, captured by the Indians and taken to Chillicothe and for seven years kept there, until she was sixteen years of age. When she and her sister were departing for their home, an Indian child cried for her sister. They retained the sister, and she was never heard of again. Henry build his cabin on Peters creek of Gauley river, in 1791, and his only neighbors were Conrad Young and Edward McClung. Henry and Mary had eight children; seven girls and one son. They were Leah, Catherine, Margaret, Polly, and Betsy. There were two other girls, whose names we can not give. The only son was John Morris. The incident of the murder of two children of Henry Morris is given as follows: -- There were two Indians and two white men, said to be Simon Gerty and Saul Carpenter, who went near to Henry Morris’ house on Peters creek, and while Margaret, aged 14, and Betsy, 11, were going to drive in the cows, when the Indians attempted to capture them; Margaret tripped on a vine while running, and was caught and scalped, and died soon after her father found her. Betsy also endeavored to make her
escape, but in getting over a fence, her dress, of home-made linsey, caught on a splinter on the rail, and held her until the Indians came up and she was likewise scalped and killed, and was found by her father with her dress still fastened on the rail in the fence. This was in 1792. The children were taken by the father, wrapped in a blanket and placed in a box and buried together in one grave, and the family went to the Fort on the Kanawha. Henry Morris then and there swore eternal vengeance on all Indians. His neighbor, Conrad Young, had several sons, and each had a gun, while Morris had but one gun, and the Indians were supposed to have been watching a path that lead to the two houses, but they were not seen any more by the neighbors. Henry was a large, stout, healthy man, and had no fear of anything and when aroused, was a desperate one. He determined to kill every Indian that he could find, and it was not long afterwards that he heard of one being in the neighborhood and he took his gun and started to find him, and followed him up Elk river and killed him early in the morning, the particulars of which are published in the Magazine for January 1904, page 52. And as long as Henry Morris lived, he never recognized any Indian as a friendly one, and if there were friendly Indians in the neighborhood, they had to keep the information from Henry, and get them out of the way before he learned thereof, for he could not be persuaded to treat them other than as sworn enemies. Henry Morris was at the battle of Point Pleasant, and was with the men that went around on Crooked creek to attack the Indians on the flank and rear. He was an athlete and no man could cope with him in any game, where strength, skill and endurance were required, such as running, jumping and wrestling. He cleared out a good farm on Peters creek, and there he raised his family. One of his girls married William Bird, of Bath County. They settled on the Twenty Mile of Gauley, but afterwards settled on Sycamore, where they remained all their lives. Another daughter married Jesse James of Bath County. They settled on Otter Creek, where they had a good farm. After their children grew up, Jesse moved on to Elk river, not far above Charleston, and remained there all their lives. One of the James girls married Arch Price, who lived on Elk river. Another daughter of Henry married one of the sons of his neighbor, Conrad Young. Henry Morris remained on his Peters creek farm until his death in 1824. John Morris, the only son of Henry, married Jane Brown in 1807 and they had seven sons and five daughters, viz: Henry, Leonard, Thomas, Ryan, John and Silas. The girls were, Mary, Mattie, Jane, Margaret and Sarah. Of these boys Silas is the only remaining one, and he lives in Missouri. Mattie married W. B. Summers, and lived on Peters creek until her death in 1903. Jane married Rev. A. N. Rippetoe and she died in 1904, at the Cross Lanes. Thomas Morris married Leah Ellis, and their oldest son was John Silas Morris, and one of the sons of John Silas was Alfred N. Morris, who was born in 1875; he was baptized and joined the Jordan Light Baptist church in 1894; licensed to preach in 1897; married Virginia Belle Given in
1899, and was ordained a minister in 1899. Rev. A. N. Morris, of Anstead, Fayette County, was in possession of much of information concerning the Morris family of late date, and the same can be secured through him. Henry Morris secured a Patent for 600 acres of land on Peters creek in 1793. There was a grand-son of Henry Morris, who lived at Summersville, Nicholas County, and he had a sweetheart on the Kanawha. He would leave home after dinner and go down Peters creek, up Bell creek, over Little Gauley mountain, down Hughes creek to the Kanawha, swim the Kanawha, march to Henry Jones’, where he found her, and afterwards married her. She was a grand-daughter of Franky Morris Jones, a sister of Henry Morris. Some one in speaking of Henry Morris, said that he was a physical giant, an athlete and daredevil. That he was as fearless as he was powerful and as determined as fearless. LEONARD MORRIS – (C.)

Leonard was the third son of William Morris, Sr. It has been said that he was the original first settler, but as far as it known, he came with the others. This statement probably grew out of the fact that he was one of the first Justices, and attended the County Courts and was probably more and better known to the visitors than the others. In a controversy between the claimants of the Burning Spring 250 acre tract, patented to Gen. G. Washington and Lewis, it has been said that he was one of the witnesses who testified that he saw, in 1775, the surveyors making the survey of this tract. There is nothing in the file or the papers to show this, and we give it as tradition. It is more than probably true. He was in 1798 the sheriff of this county. His home was at the mouth of Slaughters creek, and his neighbor was John Flynn, who was killed by the Indians on Cabin creek. Dr. Hale writes that a son of John Flynn was captured and taken to Ohio and burned at the stake. Lens creek perpetuates the name of Leonard Morris. Leonard Morris married first Miss Price and afterwards, he married Margaret Likens. The first set of children were: -- 1. John – he went to Missouri and died prior to 1831. 2.Meredith – he went south and was never heard of. 3.Mary – married Lawrence Bryan in 1794. 4.Sarah – married Fleming Cobb in 1794. 5.Elizabeth - married Robert Lewis. 6.Leonard, Jr., - married Mary Austin in 1805. The second set of children were: - 7. Charles – married Lucinda Crocket of Ky. 8.Nancy – married John D. Shrewsbury. 9.Parthenia – married J. B. Crocket. 10.Joshua – married daughter of Jonathan Jarrett. 11.Hiram – never married 12.Peter – married daughter of Jonathan Jarrett. 13.Andrew – never married; died 1822 in Indiana. 14.Cynthia – married Samuel Hensley. 15.Madison – married Nancy Spurlong. 16.Dickinson – married Susan, daughter of Jas. Morris. Hiram Cobb, a grand-son of Leonard’s, like most of the Morris family, was hale and hearty and was proud of his strength. He made a bet of one gallon of peach brandy that he would come in a canoe from Point Pleasant to Charleston between suns, and he won the bet. Some incredulous person made the remark that he had secured the help of a negro man to help him through the Red-House shoals. Cobb heard of this remark
and he proceeded to give the slanderer a threshing for his falsehood. Charles Morris (C-7), one of the sons of Leonard, was born in 1790 and died in 1861. His wife was Lucinda Crocket, of Ky. Their children were: - 1. Leonard – born in 1819; married Courtney Walker. 2.Hamilton – born in 1821. 3.Francis – died young. 4.Andrew – born in 1828; went to Texas; died in1875. 5.Charles – born in 1827; married Miss Foster; died 1875. 6.Margaret – born in1829; married ______ Samuels, attorney. 7.Parthenia – born in 1831; married Thos. Swindler. Leonard Morris, born 1819, resides at Brownstown, and although he is eighty-six years of age, has the appearance of being only sixty. He has been an active, busy man of business all his life, and remembers people and incidents of his early days, from whom we have learned much here given. Hamilton Morris, brother of the above Leonard, was born in 1821, and resides in Charleston, and but for the fact that he has lost his eyesight, would be as active as ever. “Ham Morris,” as he has been called, was elected Clerk of the County Court of Kanawha county, and was one of the most popular men in his county, and one of the most efficient and reliable clerks that ever filled the said office. Long may they both live. JOSHUA MORRIS. (D.) Joshua was the fourth son of William Morris, Sr. He married Frances Simms of Virginia. Their children were – 1. William Morris lived at Gauley Bridge; married Sarah Hansford. 2.Edmund Morris. 3.Henry Morris. 4.Elizabeth Morris. 5.Lucy Morris. 6.Nancy Morris – married John Harriman. 7.Thomas Morris. 8.Mary Morris. 9.John Morris – born in 1794 in Culpepper County. Joshua first settled in Teays Valley, but the Indians became troublesome and he removed back to the Virginia settlements, east of the Alleghenies, but he did not remain, but again came and settled on his lands on Mud river. William, his son, married Maria Hansford. They lived near the Falls of Kanawha, and removed to Missouri. They had Fenton, Joshua, and John. JOSHUA MORRIS’ WILL. This will was dated July 31, 1824, and was recorded on the 13th Sept., 1824, in Will book No. 1, page 46 in Kanawha county. He directs his debts to be paid and the residue to go to her surviving children and children of deceased children, viz: William, John, Edmund, Henry, Elizabeth and Lucy Chapman and Nancy Harriman, each, in equal parts, the estate being divided into nine parts, and the above named seven, and the children of Thomas, deceased, to have one-ninth, that is, Armstead, Geo. K., Malon Morris and and Frances Thompson and Polly, Kitty, Juliana, Cassandra, and Jennett Morris, children of Thomas, and children of daughter Mary Chapman, viz: Joshua M. Chapman, Malon Chapman and Frances, Mary and Nancy Chapman. My beloved wife to have the profits of one third of his estate and Edmund and John Morris and Joshua M. Chapman to be his executors. JOHN MORRIS OF CABELL CO. -- (D-9.) The youngest son of Joshua Morris, was John Morris, who settled in Teays Valley, in the upper part of Cabell County. As we stated that his father, Joshua Morris, found the Indians so badly disposed that he left this settlement and returned to
Virginia, and there remained until peace was restored. John was born in Culpepper County, Virginia, in 1794, and was brought with his father’s family to Teays Valley, while quite young. His first wife was Mary Everette, and their child was, 1. Eliza, who married William Love. The wife of John died, and he then Mary Kinard, in 1819, who was born in Culpepper Co. The children were: -- 2. Charles K. Morris, who married Martha A. Kilgore. 3. Albert A. Morris, who died unmarried. 4. Joseph W. Morris, married Sarah A. Russell, he was a Capt. in C.S.A. and was killed at Frederick, Md. 5. Edna E. Morris, married Addison T. Buffington. 6. James R. Morris, married Helen M. Russell. 7. Mary S. Morris, married first Ira T. McConihay, and then John P. Sebrell. John Morris was an extensive farmer, and stock raiser, and owned many slaves. His home was east of Milton. He was more than once elected to the Virginia Legislature, and was well known throughout Cabell and adjoining counties, as a man of wealth and influence. When the civil war came on, he took his family to southwest Virginia, and while there he died in 1862, and his wife died after her return home in 1876. While he was absent, his house was burned by some of the Union Army and a great loss inflicted upon him and his family. His son Charles K. Morris was also a farmer and stock raiser, and a man of influence in his county. Joseph and James, both attended school at Marshall Academy, and they married sisters, who lived between the town of Guyandotte and the Academy, on the Ohio river. They were the daughters of John Russell, of whom more may be learned in our October, 1901, Magazine. Joseph Morris died in the service of C.S.A. James R. Morris was also in the C.S.A., and is yet living to tell the tale; his residence is at Milton, W. Va. The daughters of Mrs. Addison J. Buffington, reside at Parkersburg, W. Va. Their mother was Edna E. Morris. Mrs. Sebrell lives in Putnam county, W. Va., and she is the mother of Dr. J. M. McConihay, of Charleston, and from her we learned much, and also from Mrs. Reynolds, a daughter of James R. Morris.

JOHN MORRIS – (E.) John was the fifth son of William Morris, Sr. His wife was Margaret Droddy, and their children were, John, Edmund, Levi, William and Thomas Asbury, and if there were others, they are not known to us. Of what we know of John, is gathered principally from the life of Bishop Thomas Asbury Morris, his son. John was a captain of the Kanawha Militia in its earliest days; he was one of the executors of his father’s will; he lived about five miles above Charleston, on the south Side of the river, and afterwards removed to Cabell county. He was, as was all the Morris family, a strict Baptist. His second son Edmund was a Clerk of Cabell county court, and was a politician and represented Kanawha county in 1809 in the Virginia legislature before Cabell was organized, and may have been elected after Cabell county was organized. The older brother removed to Kentucky. BISHOP THOMAS ASBURY MORRIS He was born in Kanawha just above Charleston, April 28, 1794, and when quite young in 1804, went with his brother, Edmund to Cabell and assisted in the Clerk’s office. While there he was
drafted for military services in war of 1812, and started on the road when his father secured a substitute, who followed and took his place, while they were at Point Pleasant. Thomas Asbury studied under William Payne, a teacher who taught him to be a Methodist and he began to preach, and his first sermon was at the house of his father. He continued and was encouraged by the Spurlock brothers, Burwell and Stephen, who were prominent Methodist ministers, and he finally was ordained and placed on the circuit. His first wife was Abagail Scales, a daughter of Maj. Nathaniel Scales, January 23, 1814, and he lived at his first home, called “Spice Flat Cottage.” Their daughter, Jane, born in 1815, married Joseph G. Rush of Cincinnati, and their son, Francis Asbury Morris, was a member of the Missouri Conference. In 1836 Thos. A. Morris was elected a bishop of the Methodist Church, and in 1842 his wife died, and he in 1844 married Mrs. Lucy Meriweather, of Louisville, Ky. In 1851 he met the Conference at Charleston, and visited his early home, but it was all changed, so he could not recognize the place. In 1871 his wife died, and in 1872 he married again, and in September, 1874, he died. He was a man of great executive ability, and as earnest, faithful minister. It was said of him by his cousins that he became a Methodist in order to become a bishop, there being no such office in the Baptist church, but, when he became a Methodist he little dreamed of being a Bishop. He came in contact with a Methodist, whose teaching convinced him and being convinced, he followed the dictation of his own conscience. In 1808, there was presented to the County Court of Kanawha county the following report on the establishment of a Ferry across Mud River, near the mouth of Mud River. In pursuance of a writ of ad quod damnum, I have caused to come on the premises the following jury, to-wit: Manoah Bostick, M. Holland, A. Reece, N. Scales, J. Estes, E. Morris, T. Buffington, W. Dingess, Jno. Morris, Jos. Hilyard, S. Sanders, and Chas. Alesbury, good and lawful men, who being duly sworn well and truly and impartially to inquire whether public convenience will result from the establishment of a ferry across Mud river between the Merritt mill and the mouth of Mud river, where the road crosses from the Green Bottom and the mouth of Guyandotte, leading to the Falls of the Guyandotte. Upon their oaths do say that a public convenience will result from the establishment of a ferry at the place aforesaid and in the opinion of the jurors aforesaid a ferry ought to be established. In witness whereof the said jurors have hereunto set their hands and seals, this 27th May, 1808. Manoah Bostick, Michael Holland, Allen Reece, Nathaniel Scales, Joel Estes, Edmund Morris, Thos. Buffington, Wm. Dingess, John Morris, Joseph Hilyard, Sampson Saunders, Charles Alsbury. This report was received by the Kanawha County Court and ordered to be recorded, which was done by A. Donnally, C. K. C. in deed book C., page 306. This order probably was not executed until after the County of Cabell was organized, and it will be noticed that the Court House was not mentioned for the reason
that there was none to mention, even the town of Guyandotte was not mentioned but
the place was called the mouth of the Guyandotte. John Morris had deeds recorded in
Kanawha, viz: From Reuben Slaughter, half 1000 acres, Hurricane, 1804 From A.
Bennett, 1780 acres, Mud river, 1804 From Chas. Brown, 3500 acres, Mud river, 1805.
COMMON WEALTH VS. JOHN MORRIS, JR. An interesting case is reported in Virginia
Cases, 176, in which Thomas Ward filed an information against Morris, Jr., in which it is
complained that Morris wrote a petition to the Legislature, in which he stated that Maj.
Ward, sheriff of Cabell county, being desirous of having the seat of justice for said
county located on his own plantation, where it was first held, is actuated by selfish and
interested motives and not for the welfare and convenience of the majority of the
people of the county, and that the place he desires is on his own land, almost
inaccessible by reason of hills and mountains, not near the centre of population or
territory, and he being sheriff has the collection of the revenue, he persuades ignorant
men to sign his petition and for so doing frequently stating that he will indulge them for
a time, which indulgence is a great favor, &c., &c. The defendant Morris plead that what
he had written of Ward was true, and he was ready to prove the same. This raised a
question of law which the Court returned to the general court and the general court on
June 12, 1811, decided that the truth might be given in evidence in justification, &c.
The County of Cabell was established by Act, January 9, 1809, and in the Act it
provided that a commission should locate the public buildings. On May 9, 1809, the
commission reported that they do fix the mouth of the Guyandotte, on the upper side
thereof, in the middle of a field, &c., to be the place for said buildings, and this was
signed by John Shrewsbury, Wm. Clendenin, John Reynolds, Jesse Bennett and David
Ruffner. The town of Guyandotte was established by Act June 5, 1810. When was the C.
H. removed from Guyandotte and to what place was it removed, are questions yet
unanswered. CARLOS MORRIS. – (F.) Carlos Morris, the sixth son of William, Sr. We are
unable to give information of this son, or of his family. LEVI MORRIS. – (G.) The
seventh son of William Morris was Levi. His wife was Margaret Starke, and after her
death he married Peggy Jarrett. His children were: -- 1. Cynthia Morris, married L.
Brannon, a hatter. 2. William Morris, married Sarah _____. 3. Benjamin Morris, married
Amanda Hamilton. 4. James Morris, married Sarah Shelton. 5. Geo. Washington Morris,
made Sarah Hamilton. 6. Frances Morris, married Wm. Spurlock. 7. Elizabeth Morris,
made Levi Spurlock. 8. Martha Morris, married ____ Burgess. Levi was born in 1768
and died in 1834. James Morris – (G – 4) – son of Levi Morris, married Sarah Shelton –
they had four boys and eight girls, viz: George Morris --killed by fall on the ice, a boy.
Levi Morris—married Mary Voirs and went to N. C. Benjamin Morris—married Ann

Morris Harvey, of Fayetteville, now more than eighty years of age, was a son of Capt. John Harvey; his wife was Miss Dickinson, daughter of Hon. H. M. Dickinson, of Fayette county. His sister Fanny, married Capt. Snelling C. Farley, of steamboat fame. ELIZABETH MORRIS-SEE. – (I.) She was the ninth child of Wm. Morris, Sr. She was married to one Mr. See, whose name does not appear. It appears, however, that in 1792, there was an administrator appointed for one Michael See, in Kanawha county, and Shadrack Harriman, Ed. McClung and Roland Wheeler were the appraisers of his estate. Michael See and Adam See, the songs of Geo. See. Adam was born November 29, 1764, and they came from the South Branch of the Potomac, near Moorefield. Whether the husband was Michael, and whether he was a brother of Adam See, we cannot, with assurance now determine. Michael See was the only one of the name mentioned among tithables in 1792. The lived near Witchers creek. They had a negro boy, Jonathan, who was carried away by the Indians and he was afterwards made one of their chiefs, in Ohio. Dick was a younger brother of Jonathan, who had grown up, and both Jonathan and Dick, were sons of Dick Pointer, of Donnally’s Fort. Dick belonged to Leonard Morris and expressed a desire to go and see Jonathan. Mr. Morris gave his consent and furnished Dick with horse bridle and saddle, and gave him such instructions as he could. Dick started off to the Indian Chief Jonathan, and was gone but two or three days, when he returned home and in explanation of his return said that he had concluded that it might be safer for him to remain at home and let Jonathan come and visit him, and no doubt this was a wise conclusion. FRANCES MORRIS-JONES – (J.) – was the tenth and last child of William Morris, Sr. She married John Jones. He was born in 1755, and died in 1838. He was in the Battle of Point Pleasant. Their children were: -- (1.) Gabriel Jones, who went to Culpepper county. (2.) William Jones, who went to Indiana. (3.) Nancy Jones, married _____ Huddleston. (4.) Thomas Jones. (5.) Levi Jones, who went to Indiana. (6.) Frances Jones, married Sand. Shelton. (7.) Edward Jones, went to Indiana. (8.) John Jones, went to Indiana. (9.) Hilliary Jones, lived in Fayette county. (10.) Benjamin
Jones, went to Texas. (11.) Cynthia Jones, marred Mr. Funk and 2nd Jabez Spinks. For the history of this family, see the October 1903, Magazine, 285-288. John Jones came from Culpepper also, and was one of the soldiers of Gen’l Lewis’ army and was in the battle of Point Pleasant, and afterwards in the Revolutionary war. He settled and lived above Paint creek on the Kanawha river, and he was thrifty and had a good home and farm and acquired considerable land. He was a member of the Baptist church, located at Kellys creek. His wife survived him. Before her death, she had prepared monuments for herself and husband. She was the youngest of William, Sr., and was known as “Franky.” Col. B. H. Jones, of the 60th Va. Infantry, C.S.A. is said to be a grand son of John and Franky Jones. He died at Lewisburg, and had written much of the late war.

MARRIAGES OF THE MORRIS FAMILY. We take the following list of marriages from the records of Kanawha county. Owing to the fact that there are so many of the same name, we are not able to designate the person or to locate them in the proper family.

1793 Sarah Morris and Chas. Young – Mar. 20, by F. Watkins. 1795 Sarah Morris and Fleming Cobb – by Jas. Johnson. 1796 Elizabeth Morris and Joseph Hilyard – by Jas. Johnson. 1796 John Morris and Mary Ann Coleman—by Jas. Johnson. 1794 Mary Morris and Lawrence Bryan – Nov. 9, by F. Watkins. 1800 Catherine Morris and Chas. Venable – by Jas. Johnson. 1802 Lucy Morris and Joseph Chapman. 1803 Edmund Morris and Sally Estill – 11 Sept. 1804 John Morris and Jane Jordan – Apr 20. 1805 Leonard Morris and Mary Heister—July 13. 1806 Polly Morris and Jas. Ellison. 1807 Cynthia Morris and Isaac Noyes. 1807 Miriam Morris and Eason Hannon. 1807 John Morris and Jane Brown. 1802 John Morris and Hannah Morrison. 1824 Maria Morris and And. Slaughter – May 5. 1824 Parthenia Morris and Absalom Walls – Feb. 29. 1824 Roxalena Morris and Joel Alexander – June 7. 1824 James C. Morris and Polly Webster. 1832 Letitia Morris and Norris Whittaker. 1834 Leonard Morris and Eliza Ann Jones. 1834 Geo. W. Morris and Sarah A. Hamilton. We’ve given a start on the history of the Morris family and of their genealogy. We can not go further in the line of descent, and we have now taken much space. No doubt but we have omitted some and may have located some names in the wrong families, but we have endeavored to learn the facts and give them as we have learned them. We can but notice that all the descendants have not remained loyal Baptists, and no doubt “Major Billy” will require of those who have dared to deny the family faith, some satisfactory explanation. To those who would pursue the subject of the genealogy of the descendants, we refer them to Rev. A. N. Morris, Anstead, Fayette county, West Virginia.