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Some Pennsylvania Dutch Genealogies

By Frank L. Crone, San Francisco

The families from which the writer is descended have no particular claim to distinction and their histories are recorded simply because they present certain points of general historical interest. With one single exception all the American ancestors of the writer are of Pennsylvania-German or Pennsylvania-Dutch origin. Both of the terms just employed are more or less inaccurate and under the circumstances we may be pardoned for using the more inaccurate but less odious term. By the Pennsylvania-Dutch we mean those families who came to this country between 1683 and the outbreak of the Revolution from the Palatinate and other states of South Germany and from Switzerland, together with a very small number from sections now included in France and who settled in Pennsylvania. Leaving their old homes in Germany, Switzerland and France they came down the Rhine through Holland and touched in England on their way to Pennsylvania.

Many of the early settlers in northern and central Indiana were of this stock and their descendants are now numbered by thousands, many of whom are entirely ignorant of their true origin. In the families herein recorded there is only one record in the direct line of a marriage outside this racial strain. In the collateral lines it may be said that such marriages are more frequent but there has been a strong tendency to keep the strain pure.

The Crone, Switzer, Weaver, Stuckey, Stout and Steel families came from the counties of Berks, Lancaster and York in Pennsylvania. The Crones, Stouts and Steels came to Pittsburgh and then northwest to the vicinity of Mansfield, Richland county, Ohio. The Stuckeys and Switzers came straight west from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to Lancaster, Ohio, while the Weavers first went into the Shenandoah Valley and then northwest to the vicinity of Lancaster, Ohio, and later to Richland county, Ohio. The next removal was to Noble
county, Indiana, where the writer's parents were married and he was born.

To describe these migrations in another way it may be said that certain families followed the trail along which the Pennsylvania railroad was afterwards laid. Others went directly west to Lancaster, Ohio, while others came up from Virginia and followed the line of the Baltimore and Ohio to Lancaster, Ohio, and later to the vicinity of Mansfield. Not only these families but hundreds of others followed these routes of travel. They came in covered wagons bearing with them not only necessary tools and utensils but in many cases some prized article of furniture or table wear.

THE CRONE FAMILY

The first American ancestor of this family was Johannes Cron who came from the Palatinate and landed in Philadelphia September 19, 1738. He settled in York county where he died in 1769, leaving two sons, Simon and John. Simon apparently died without heirs but John of the second generation died in 1785, leaving twelve children, Jacob, John, Lawrence, Christina, Conrad, Michael, Henry, Anna, Mary, Catherine, Barbara and Elizabeth. The five last mentioned were minors. John Crone of the second generation and his sons Jacob, John and Lawrence were soldiers of the Revolution.

Jacob Crone of the third generation was born about 1756 or 1757. He served in the Sixth Pennsylvania regiment from 1777 to 1781. He was evidently a man of some independence of character for he declined to receive his pay in the depreciated currency offered him. After his father's death he must have suffered some financial reverse which compelled him to dispose of the double share in his father's estate to which he was entitled by reason of being the eldest son. Later he sold his personal property and went to Hagerstown, Maryland. In the meantime he had married Margaret Drift, daughter of Peter Drift (Trift) and a sister of Jacob Drift, a captain in the Revolution and later brigadier-general of State militia, and of Peter Drift, also a Revolutionary soldier. They were married January 3, 1786 and had two sons, Jacob and John, When these two sons were very young the family removed to Hagerstown and later returned to York county. None of
the sons of Jacob Crone or Krone left any issue, but his daughter's descendants live in Pennsylvania and Maryland. Jacob Crone was a soldier of the War of 1812.

John Crone of the fourth generation married Elizabeth Pence (Bentz or Pentz) November 4, 1813. Elizabeth Pence was the daughter of Bernhard and grand-daughter of George Pence (probably the soldier of the Revolution) and doubtless the great-granddaughter of John Bentz who settled in York county in 1732. The fall of 1814 John Crone joined one of the companies which went to the relief of Baltimore but which arrived too late to take any active part in the hostilities. Later he removed with his family to Baltimore, thence to Hagers-town and later to Greencastle and Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. He was a blacksmith and these frequent changes of residence were doubtless due to his search for employment. The Crone family returned to York some time previous to their departure for Ohio in 1832. They settled in the vicinity of Lucas, Richland county, Ohio.

John and Elizabeth Pence Crone were blessed with seven children who reached maturity, John, Jacob, Elizabeth, Joseph, George, Emily and Catherine. John moved to Indiana, Jacob to Missouri and Joseph and George to Iowa while the families of the daughters remained in Ohio.

John Crone of the fifth generation, grandfather of the writer, came west to Fort Wayne, part of the way on the Wabash and Erie canal, in 1849, with his own and the families of John Weaver and Michael King. From Fort Wayne he went to a site near the city of Kendallville where he lived until his death in 1898 at the age of eighty. In Ohio he had married Catherine Switzer whose family will be noted later. They had eight children who reached maturity, all of whom remained in Indiana with one exception, Elizabeth Crone Jones of Garrett, Barbara Crone Rawson of Sunfield, Michigan, Mary Jane Crone Teal of Kendallville, John S. Crone of Kendallville, William H. Crone of Wolcottville, Sarah Ann Crone Blackman of Kendallville, Amy R. Crone Stultz of Elkhart and Laura Irene Crone Tyler of Kendallville.

John S. Crone, father of the writer married Ella Weaver whom he met while she was a teacher of Noble county enjoying a salary of some eleven dollars a month with the privilege of boarding 'round.
Mention has been made of the marriage of John Crone of the fifth generation and Catherine Switzer.

Peter Switzer was one of four brothers who came to Lancaster county about 1740. He married Elizabeth Heffelfinger who came over on the same ship. Among other children they had a son Frederick who married Barbara Burkhart, daughter of Andreas Burkhart of Brecknock township, Lancaster (now Berks) county.

Frederick Switzer of the second generation had two sons who came west, Frederick and Jacob. Many of the descendants of both are found in western Ohio and eastern Indiana.

Frederick Switzer of the third generation married Barbara Stuckey (Stukey or Stuke) whose father John Stuckey was born in Switzerland in 1742, came to North Carolina in 1760, later removed to Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, and in 1792 came to Fairfield county, Ohio. This Stuckey family is now found through Ohio and Indiana and States farther west.

Catherine Switzer, daughter of Frederick and Barbara Switzer, married John Crone in 1839.

The mother of the writer is descended from one of four Weavers, probably George, who settled in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, about 1709. The first accurate record we have is of her great-grandfather, John Weaver, born in 1762. This John Weaver married Susannah Sirk (Shirk), daughter of Matthias Sirk who was a son of David Sirk, the immigrant who came to Pennsylvania in 1747 and settled near New Holland. Matthias Sirk accompanied the family to Virginia and later to Ohio and died in 1833 at the age of one hundred seven years and five months, unless the author of the inscription on the gravestone were guilty of romancing. The family of John Weaver went to the Shenandoah Valley sometime after 1790 and came to Fairfield county, Ohio, in 1813. Later they settled in the vicinity of Bellville, Richland county. Here William Weaver, son of John Weaver, married Catherine Stout, daughter of John Stout, who was probably a son of Christian Stout and grandson of Peter Stout (Stoudt) who died in Berks county in 1795. Their eldest son was John Weaver.
The eldest son of William and Catherine Stout Weaver was John Weaver, grandfather of the writer, who married Mary Steel. The name Weaver is lost in this family for lack of male issue.

The Weaver family is a large one and is found in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois but no further details can be given in this paper.

**The Steel Family**

John Weaver, grandfather of the writer, married Mary Steel. She was a daughter of James Steel and Elizabeth Fissel Steel. James Steel was born in Ireland in 1789 and came to this country when a mere lad. He was brought up by, and later married into a Pennsylvania-Dutch family. Elizabeth Fissel Steel was a daughter of Adam Fissel (Fishel or Fischell) who was doubtless the Adam Fissel who was a soldier of the Revolution. The Steels came to Richland county, Ohio, in 1819.

With the exception of an occasional member of the family who followed blacksmithing along with farming or kept an inn for a time every one in the direct line of all these families was a farmer. Most of them came from the Palatinate where their ancestors may have followed the same honorable occupation thirty or forty generations or more.

With no recorded exception all the families described here were loyal to the patriot cause during the Revolution and furnished their quotas in succeeding wars. Three descendants from the original Johannes Crone have won mention in *Who's Who*, Dr. William O. Krohn of Chicago, Mr. R. B. Crone, president of Hastings College, Nebraska and the writer. Among the best farmers of the west and middle west will be found many of the descendants of all the families herein described. For the most part they have been pioneers for four or five out of the seven generations they have been in this country. Pennsylvania-Dutch has been the native language up to the last two or three generations.