

Anderson Family History

by James Henry Anderson (1864–1941)

with 1875 account written by Alexander Anderson (1797–1884)

[This document is primarily about descendants of Robert Anderson (1740–1820) son of John Anderson and Ann Moore. Except as noted in brackets [] it is consistent with most other sources. Although it is dated 1898 when author James Henry Anderson (1864–1941) was only 34 years old, references indicate changes as late as 1930. In 1951, an Aycock High School student and relation of “Boss” Anderson showed the handwritten original document to Bryce Neese, a history teacher. Using a typewriter, Bryce copied the original. In 1970, he gave a copy to his cousin James Florence Jr. In October 2007, James gave a copy to William Lee Anderson III who transcribed it into computer readable form. References to John Anderson-Ann Moore’s original home place location are shown in **strong (bold typeface).**]

When a youngster, I remember making many visits to my Grandfather Alexander Anderson’s old home. This old place had been handed down for two or three generations from parent to next of kin, and was said to have been the first settlement made in that part of the country.

Many happy hours were spent on this quaint old place, in romping around over the fine meadows after the haying was done, and in many other ways that made life pleasant for a boy.

I remember the old threshing machine which was built to the barn and was really a part of the barn. This machine was made almost entirely of wood, but very little iron or steel being used in its construction. The immense cog wheel of the horse power was of wood and was something like 16 feet in diameter. The gin was in the loft. The wheat when threshed went through a sieve with the chaff to the lower floor, and the straw out at a window. The wheat was separated from the chaff at convenient times by means of a fan which was also a machine made of wood.

I call to mind the old clocks which were so tall that they had to stand on the floor. Then there was a old chest and a washpot that would hold 15 or 20 gallons of water. These were said to have been brought over from Ireland by the early settlers. There were many other things suggestive of olden times that would have been of great interest had one only known their history.

As I grew older I became more interested in the old place, I wondered who the people were who first settled there, where they came from, and why they came. On one occasion I took the matter up with Grandfather and got quite a little information concerning his ancestors. He was at that time near 80 years old and said that he had forgotten a great deal that he had heard about them and but little had been recorded that he could refer to. With the information I gathered from him, from my father, Uncle Henry and my aunts, all of whom remembered a good deal of what they had heard of their ancestors, I will endeavor to put in written form what I have learned.

The most of this is from tradition though I have no doubt that records could be found that would substantiate some of these statements. I am confident that most of them are true in the main but some may be a little mixed.

This account begins at Londonderry, Ireland and at the time of the siege of Londonderry (The place was besieged in the years 1688–1689). I suppose it was the latter date 1689. A little girl by the name of Margaret was there and after growing up to womanhood, remembered and often spoke of the sickness and suffering the people experienced during imprisonment there at that time. Her maiden name is unknown. She married a man by the name of More, Moor, or Moore. (The spelling is uncertain). His given name is not known.

This man was a soldier in the British army. For this service, after getting an honorable discharge, he was to get a Grant of land in the then Province of North Carolina. Mrs. Moore and her daughter Ann came to America. It is said they located or lived somewhere near Lancaster in Pennsylvania. If I am not mistaken, Ann was said to have been about five years old when they crossed the Atlantic. I don’t know whether there were other children or not.

It is said that Mr. Moore was to settle an estate then follow his family to America. Later Mrs. Moore received word that her husband had been thrown by a horse and killed. I have no record as to whether he settled the estate of whether it was settled by the British government and the proceeds put in chancery.

At what time Mrs. Moore crossed the Atlantic is a question, but the great exodus of people from the north of Ireland, according to history, commenced about 1718 and lasted for a good many years afterward. A few, however, had been coming over each year for years before. This and much other information might be obtained from the Scotch Irish Society as they have made a thoro search of immigration and church and other records on this subject of the early days.

It is reasonable to suppose they came over about 1720 or earlier and that they came from or somewhere near Londonderry, or Derry, as it was at that time called. It is possible that they settled in or somewhere near Derry township in Pennsylvania, as so many people came from Derry about that time as it fill up a whole township. Some built homes and settled permanently in Pennsylvania, but the majority moved on further west and many to the south.

The built many churches, of which the old records have given much history of those early days. From these old church records many people have been traced back to their homes in the old country, by means of letters of recommendation from the home church to the church in their adopted country.

Sometime prior to 1725 a man by the name of John Anderson came over to Pennsylvania from the north of Ireland and married Ann Moore. The date of his arrival is unknown. History gives an account of one John Anderson arriving in 1722, but there were so many John Andersons, it is doubtful if this was the same one. Through this marriage it was possible for Mrs. Moore to continue her journey to North Carolina, where she could take possession of the land that was to have been granted her husband for service in the army.

This, however, was a big undertaking in those days. Much had to be done before moving several hundred miles into a vast wilderness that was just being settled. Each settler had to depend upon his own resources to the greatest extent. It required much time to acquire clothing, shoes, implements, stock, etc, and a means of conveyance. John Anderson, Mrs. Moore, Ann, his wife, and several children started out to select a new home somewhere on the Catawba or Yadkin river in North Carolina. These parts at that time were being rapidly settled by Scotch Irish people, mostly from Pennsylvania.

While on their way they heard bad news form that part of the country. It seems that it was unhealthy or that smallpox was raging there. Anderson not wishing to endanger the health of his people turned in a more southeasterly direction. The old road that was said to have been made by them was used for a long time and a part of it is still in use. This old road indicates that they must have crossed Dan River about Milton, or possibly at Danville, Virginia. They finally reached the head waters of the Eno River and decided to settle there. At this place Anderson located a tract of land. According to the best information I have it was **about three miles square at the confluence of the East and West forks of creeks, where they form the Eno River, which was about the center of the tract.** This I suppose covered the Moore Grant. History states that settlers at this time were allowed only one square mile (or section) in the Province of North Carolina, unless it was in special grant for services or otherwise.

I don't know whether or not there were any others besides the Anderson family in this party. Anyway this was said to have been the first settlement made on the Eno River, or in this part of the country. Other settlements were made shortly afterwards from accounts of the Taylor, Thompson, and Tinnin settlements that were made to the north. I have no record of the date when these settlements were made tho the extracts that will appear in the following paragraphs will give a close idea.

The church went wherever the Scotch Irish went. I have heard it said that these people on the Eno had a place where they gathered on Sundays for some kind of religious services, and in all probability they called it a church sometime before a regular church was organized. My grandfather I think, made an attempt to procure data and write an account of the early settlers. But he did not take the matter up early enough to get the history from those who were most familiar with it and in his old age had forgotten many of the particulars.

Here I will give extracts found among some of his books after his death. There are as follows: History says the **settlements commenced along the Haw and Eno rivers about the year 1738–1739.** The Deed made to Eno Church ground was in the year 1754 to John Anderson. Eno congregation was organized in the year 1756 by Rev. Messrs [illegible- and Spencer. (I failed to make out the first name but was told it was something like Lockee.)

The corner stone of one old church was laid in the ninth year of the reign of King George II. This would have been about 1736.

The Deed referred to above was made to John Anderson buy a Mr. Thompson. It was said that Mr. Thompson wanted to give the land for the church, but Anderson had a knowledge of the law that there must be a consideration

of money in the transfer of real estate, so he paid the money and the Deed was made out in his name. The old Deed was still in existence a few years ago, and in the hands of Mr. John Thompson.

“Scotch Irish” (by Hanna)

From this book I get the following extracts: Rev. Hugh McAden, a young minister from Pennsylvania made a visit and preached in North Carolina during the year 1755. August 3rd, 5th, Debow on the Hico River. August 6th at South Hico Chapel. 7th at Van Hooks on Hico. August 10th, 12th, 1755 at Anderson’s on the Eno river. Following this was a long list of places where he preached. Then he preached at Anderson’s again, on April 24th, 25th he preached at Hawfields.

From the fact that there was a chapel on South Hico in 1755 it was evident that ministers had been in these parts before, and possibly several years before. (South Hico Chapel may have taken the name of Greers later.)

It is said that Eno, Hawfields, Greers, and New Hope churches were organized about the same time. Settlements were probably made along Dan River and its tributaries, Country Line and Hico years before they stated on the Eno and Haw rivers. **I think it safe to say the Anderson Settlement was made as early as 1738 and possibly earlier,** and that it was the first in what is now Orange County.

It is said that the settlers in these four neighborhoods in the early days assisted each other in their heavy work tho a good many miles apart. It is strange that the history of these intelligent people should be so obsolete, but we should take into consideration that it was all a vast backwoods county filling up with new settlers, all striving to build new homes, and feed, clothe, and educate their children. There were no towns or places where records could be kept, only in private hands. It seems that the early history of this part of the country was in the hands of Dr. David Caldwell and Patillo, whose libraries were burned by the British during the war of the Revolution and that they themselves were sought for their lives.

I will here give an account of the Anderson family written by my Grandfather Alexander Anderson [1797–1884], which is as follows:

My grandfather, John Anderson, came from the north of Ireland to the state of Pennsylvania and then to North Carolina, but at what date I have now no means of ascertaining. **He pitched his tent near the spot where my dwelling now stands.** An **elm tree, which shades my spring** and now measures 16 feet around at the two feet about the ground, was used, I have heard said by grandmother, to hang clothes on by bending down the top. She was the first person buried in Eno grave yard.

One old church was organized in 1755, and I suppose Grandfather to have been here some years previous to that time, his name being associated with the early church history.

The following statement of the names of my grandfather’s family is from a record kept by himself in his own handwriting: Charity Anderson, born August 9th, 1727. Then Ann, William, James, David, John, Elizabeth, Robert, Michael and Phebe.

Charity married Tapsley [should be Thomas Lapsley]. They had three sons and one daughter. Ann married Dickey Bull of Haw River and perhaps the Dixon family became connected with that of Bull. [This Ann is confused with her niece Ann, daughter of James, who married Richard Bull.]

William’s wife was a Mebane. They had one son and three daughters, Fannie, Ann and Jane. James, their son, lived on the banks of Haw River in sight of Holt’s factory.

Fannie was Thomas Armstrong’s first wife. Ann married David Mitchell of Caswell County. They had a family of six sons and two daughters. One married Alex Mebane, Sr. Anderson Mitchell, the youngest son, is all that is living of the family. He is in the western part of the state and is one of the Superior court judges.

Jane, which I think was the oldest of the three sisters, married John Thompson, who built the first mill, where Newlin’s factory now stands. They had a large family, all of whom I believe are now dead.

James, the brother, married in the Murray family of Cross roads. [This James married Elizabeth Mebane. His nephew James, son of William married Martha Jane Murray.] They had four sons and one or two daughters. The boys are all dead I believe. I knew but little about James as he

moved west long before I was born. He, however, had a son, Alexander Anderson, who became a zealous and popular preacher about the time of the rise of the Cumberland Presbyterians. Some account of him is given in the Bucks Theological Dictionary.

David's wife was a Williams. They had one son and three daughters, one of whom was Thomas Armstrong's last wife.

John's wife was a Stewart (or Stuart) and claimed kin with the Royal family. They raised a family of three sons and four daughters. Elizabeth or "Aunt Bettie", as she was called, married an Allen (Sam or George). I did not know personally anything of the family except Bill Allen, one of their children. Bill Allen married a Nelson and lived two or three miles south of Hawfields church. Old David Mebane's first wife, I think was their daughter.

Robert, my father, married a McKee and raised three sons and two daughters.

I never learned anything about Uncle Mike (Michael), I think he went west long before my time.

Phebe married a McKee, a brother of my mother. They raised a large family and moved to Tennessee about the time I was born.

The foregoing statement was written by Alexander Anderson March 1875 and copied by J. H. Anderson, 1907.

The following is a list of the names of the children of John and Ann Anderson taken from an old Bible owned by my uncle, W. H. Anderson Cedar Grove, N.C.:

Charity Anderson was born August 17, 1725,
William Anderson

Ann Anderson was born August 5, 1730,
James Anderson was born March 19, 1731,
David Anderson was born March 25, 1734,
John Anderson was born March 10, 1735
Elizabeth Anderson was born 1738,
Robert Anderson was born March 30, 1740,
Michael Anderson
Phoebe Anderson

Michael Anderson was apparently the youngest son of John and Ann Anderson. He went West in very early days, (probably Tennessee, as that was the frontier at that time) possibly before the war of the Revolution.

Robert Anderson [1740–1820] appears to have been next to the youngest son. **He inherited the old home place** and married a McKee who was Grandfather Alexander Anderson's mother.

This grandmother, my father and aunts well remembered. She often spoke of "Jarsey" (Jersey) as a former home. It is uncertain whether she meant New Jersey or the Isle of Jersey in England. She had a separate apartment in grandfather's home and father, when a boy, staid with her. She gave him an old chest that was brought over from the old country and I think it was the one referred to above.

I am not sure whether it was this grandmother or grandmother Ann, who was five years old about the time of crossing the Atlantic.

The following list gives the names and dates of birth of the children of Robert Anderson, who married a McKee:

Charity Anderson born December 3, 1784,
William Anderson born April 28, 1786,
Robert Anderson born November 29, 1795,
Mary Anderson born July 19, [missing],
Alexander Anderson born March 20, 1797.

Charity Anderson married Preston Paisley about the year 1818 and died May 18, 1869. With the exception of Alexander there seems to be no record of the rest of Robert Anderson's family.

Grandfather **Alexander Anderson was born March 20, 1797 [died 1884], at the old home site of his forefathers.** This place having fallen to him by legacy. **He lived here for about 87 years** and carried on the farm as did his

predecessors. He was married at an early age to Susan Thompson. **They had five children, Robert Washington, Caroline, Martha, Jane and William Henry.**

Aunt Caroline married David T. Clark, who lived near Hillsboro, N.C. They had six children, Alexander, Fannie, Martha, Mary, Jimmie, William and Henry. None except Alexander left any heirs. There are the Clarks who live near Efland, N.C.

Aunt Martha and Aunt Jane never married. As I knew them they were two good old ladies who were little understood. They were liked best by those who knew them best. Aunt Martha was a school teacher of merit in her day. Aunt Caroline was a good motherly woman and was loved by all who knew her.

Uncle Henry married Annie Crisp. They had two daughters, one of whom died in infancy. The other and elder, Lillian Helen, married Jas. M. Atwater and lives in Burlington, N.C. (1930) **Uncle Henry was a very successful farmer and owned one of the best managed farms in that part of the country. (Orange County)** He at one time had the reputation of producing the finest tobacco grown in that section. He was for many years a ruling elder in Eno Church. (Father will be referred to later). Grandfather's children all lived to a good old age.

I have heard it said that the Thompsons were Quakers though Grandmother became a member of Eno church. She lived a long and useful life in her home community and church. I thought her the best old grandmother that I ever knew.

In addition to carrying on his farm Grandfather was engaged in freighting in the days before the railroad. It was said that he kept a number of fine work horses which he made pay for their care by keeping them on the road when not needed on the farm. Products of the farm in those days had to be hauled by wagon to market where it could be put aboard a seagoing vessel. From these points a return load of merchandise would be carried for the stores of the inland towns. Thus the wagons would be loaded both going and coming.

Besides being an elder in Eno church Grandfather led the singing and took part in other branches of the church work.

I never knew very much about Grandmother's people as they lived in another community. She had one sister named Ann and four of five brothers, none of whom ever married so far as I know. Aunt Ann, Uncle William, and Uncle John, or Jack, as he was called, lived at the old Thompson place where they were born. All lived to be very old. One brother died when a young man and one or two went west.

My father, **Robert Washington Anderson [1819–1898]**, the eldest of grandfather's children, was born April 29, 1819. **He lived at the old Anderson home with his parents until he reached his majority.** When quite young he spent a part of his boyhood days on the road between Hillsboro and Milton, N.C. carrying Uncle Sam's mail. Grandfather having contracts for carrying the mail pressed him into service. This was long before the railroad in these parts. This was his first experience out from the home and probably helped to stimulate a desire for going further out into the world. In 1840, about the time he was twenty-one, he embarked with an uncle of his, a Mr. Thompson on the Prairie Schooner, as a four horse wagon crossing the plains, was called and sailed for Northwestern Missouri.

The uncle settled near the town of Liberty. Much of the land he procured was swampy but when drained would grow as fine corn as could be produced anywhere in the world. This uncle in a few years became quite wealthy for a man of his time. Missouri was then a frontier state. One could stand on the bluff of the Missouri River in the north-western part of the state and could look into the great out of doors. To the west as far as the eye could reach the great plains stretched out beyond the river valley. Not a hill was to be seen and on all sides lay some of the finest farming land in the world. At that time the states of Missouri and Kansas were French Territory.

I heard my father say that many men from the East were living in cabins along the border through the winter months. As soon as spring opened up they were ready to go further; some going as far as the Pacific Coast.

It was my delight to hear him tell of the things of the west. Corn could be bought for eight cents a bushel. Bacon was so cheap that in some instances it was used for fuel. Father was once on a steamboat that was racing with another down to St. Louis. In order to keep up a high head of steam a side of bacon would be thrown into the fire occasionally. Men would cross the Missouri River with their wagons on the ice.

He was at Kansas City Mo., before there was even a town at the place. Now it is one of the greatest Railroad centers in the west. I heard him say that he saw a spring from which flowed a river of considerable size.

In going from Memphis, Tennessee to Kansas City, Mo., it was the writer's privilege to travel from 75 or 100 miles up a stream called Spring River. It was about the size of Dan River at Danville, Virginia, and headed in the northern Arkansas or southern Missouri. I suppose this was the same river my father spoke of.

After spending about 18 months in Missouri he returned to North Carolina and was there at the time when the United States went to war with Mexico. He volunteered for service but his regiment was never called out for duty.

After having **settled a tract of land about two miles north of Cedar Grove**, Orange County, N.C., he [**Robert Washington Anderson**] was married to Mrs. Hannah C. Wharton (formerly Miss Hannah McLean) of Guilford County. To them were born three children, Alexander Currie, Joel Franklin, and Susan Hannah.

This happy marriage was terminated by the death of the wife February 19, 1858.

Mrs. Hannah C. Wharton had one child by her first marriage, a daughter, Pandora, who married a Mr. Dick. Mr. Dick died leaving her with six young children, 3 sons and 3 daughters. One son De. Vance Dick lives at Gibsonville, N.C. Mary married her cousin, James Dick of Mebane, N.C.

On March 12, 1861, father was married the second time to Rebecca Jane Foushee of Person County. To them were born the following children: John William (or Willis), James Henry, Mary Frances Elizabeth Campbell, Ella Bernard, Anne Louis, Sarah Thomas, and Jessie Rebecca.

The perplexing days of the Civil War coming on necessitated that a stand should be taken for one side or the other. While a staunch friend of the Union, Father cast his lot with the cause for which so many of his friends and neighbors fought and died, the defense of his native state. His age prevented his taking an active part in the war. Toward the last he was called into service with the Senior Reserves but was never in a battle.

After the war was over he continued to carry on his farm and provided for his family. During the Reconstruction days and for many years afterward, it was quite a struggle to provide the necessities of life for a large and growing family, and to give them a reasonable education. The country was impoverished by the war. Almost every one had to start over again. They were beaten but not disheartened. There were many drawbacks, but by being industrious, the people soon began to get ahead. The public school system was poor, and many were not able to send their children to private schools.

Father's family grew to be eleven in number, all of whom grew to manhood and womanhood. They were provided for in a manner that would reflect very great credit to his and our mother's efforts. I was the second child of the second marriage and can remember mother from the prime of her life to her death. She was of medium size with gray eyes and black hair. She was very considerate of others especially so of her family but not sparing herself. This caused her breakdown. Negroes were free when her children were small and of little help. She preferred doing her own work to the hiring of sufficient help to carry on the work of the household. This brought her to a premature grave. She seemed to have good judgment in all things except her own comfort and health. She was greatly interested in the welfare of her children and friends. She served well but had she been more considerate towards herself she doubtless could have served much longer.

She was a member of the Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church. After a lingering illness she died March 17, 1883.

On December 24, 1887, father was married the third time to Mrs. Sallie E. Harris, formerly Miss Sallie E. Oakley. She was a good woman and took much interest in those that were at home during her time and things generally. She survived father and continued to manage things at the old home until her death. This she did very successfully. She filled the place of mother as but few stepmothers can do.

Father became a member of Eno church at the age of fourteen. He served as deacon and later as ruling elder in the same church. He was the first person buried in the new cemetery. The old church was burned in 1893. The new church was built at Cedar Grove.

From a statement that father was heard to make it was thought that he preferred the new place as a place of burial. The rest of his people were all buried at the old cemetery.

He awoke on the morning of January 30, 1898 at his usual time seemingly well. Shortly afterward he complained of a pain in his head and becoming unconscious, passed away quietly about sunrise.

I think the most if not all of the sons of the old pioneer, John Anderson, took part in the great conflict with England for independence. It is said that one of them was shot, the bullet passing through his body and that a silk handkerchief was drawn through to clean out the blood. He was carried on a litter a good many miles to his home.

He lived for many years and continued to carry on his farm though with great difficulty as he never recovered from his wound. On being asked why he did not apply for a pension he replied, "My country is more in need of money than I."

The country at that time was almost in a desperate condition. The able bodied men were in the service and the old men, women and children left at home could not produce enough food, clothing, etc., for home use and for the army. This worked a great hardship all around. It is said that these men would go home in the spring prepare the land for the crop so that it could be handled by the ones left at home, and then return to their places in the army.

There is no doubt that in many cases of this kind, when the men returned home to arrange for a crop, they found that the British had preceded them and had taken away the work stock, the cattle, and all that would be of use to them and destroyed the rest. It is said that they drove the stock away from the Anderson place.

It may be truly said that John Anderson was the Patriarch of our branch of the Anderson family in America. Were it possible for him to enumerate his descendents at the present time, he would find them scattered from the Mason and Dixon's Line to the Gulf of Mexico and from the Atlantic to the Pacific. I have heard my aunts speak of a cousin by the name of Stewart (or Stuart) Anderson, who was connected with a Bank in Atlanta, Georgia. James Patton Anderson, a relation, was the first representative from Washington Territory to Washington, C.C. He would have been appointed first Governor of this territory, had he not taken sides with the South before the Civil War.

William James Anderson, a pioneer and leading merchant and farmer of Elma, Washington (1892) told me that his ancestors came from the north of Ireland to Pennsylvania then to North Carolina and later to Tennessee. His grandfather was a Cumberland Presbyterian preacher. This man was probably the first paster of the First Presbyterian Church of Knoxville, Tennessee before the split in the church took place. He was no doubt the Alexander Anderson referred to in Grandfather's statement.

From reading "Scotch Irish" and other histories of these sons of Scotland, one can get an idea of their reasons for coming to this country in such great waves during the 18th Century and the part they took in the great struggle with England for independence. They were lined up all along the frontier from Maine to Georgia as a barrier against the Indians. They were first to declare their independence. Patrick Henry's memorable speech in Virginia was their keynote for action. They fought the first battle of the Revolution on the Alamance creek. Thus the foundation was being laid to make the world safe for Democracy.

It is said that one of the old grandmothers stated that it was a desire for religious freedom that caused them to come to this country. Others said that it was political as well as religious reasons that caused them to make the change.

I remember hearing Grandfather say that marriages, to be legal, were required to be performed by ministers of the church of England. This was in spite of the fact that there were no English Churches or ministers in central or western North Carolina until after Hillsboro was put on the map about the year 1760.

This Memoir is a reminder of occurrences and statements made in days gone by and was written by request of one who was interested in learning more about the Anderson and Moore families of early days in North Carolina.

Some of these statements can be established, while others probably cannot. History is sometimes very difficult to complete; fragments picked up here and there sometimes go a long way to completing the chain of evidence in the making of history.

If one item can be found there that will be of service to any one, the writing of this paper may be well worth while.

Written by
JAS. H. ANDERSON
about the year 1898.