Cassidy Family

Leaves of History-Cross Creek, Brooke County-Part II
Online use, Refer to Obituaries
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Wilbert and Helen Vost
Mike Young
Virginia Pfister Young

Ernest Zambarda
Milly Fisher Zambarda
Sarah M. Zang
Mary Martino Zielershowksi

DECEASED, WHOSE WORK IN WORDS AND PICTURES IS STILL APPRECIATED

Helen Amsperger Boles
Howard Cameron
Fannie Clark Campbell
Shirley Carter
Betty Fowler Fell
Viola Cheesebrough Gillespie
Helen Rigo Mars
Glenna Havorton Morton
Irene Vargo Popp
Anthony Nuzopapp
Elza Smith
Harold Scott
Ed Taylor
Helen V. Saunders
A.D. White
Rudy Zambarda
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Hamilton Grigsby</th>
<th>I. Campbell Saunders</th>
<th>Q. James Leeper</th>
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<tr>
<td>B. Cox - (later) Boyd</td>
<td>J. James Puntney</td>
<td>R. Jonas Amspoker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Seth Clark</td>
<td>K. James Murchland</td>
<td>(later) George Amspoker</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Nathaniel Hunter</td>
<td>L. Elijah Cornelius</td>
<td>S. John Amspoker</td>
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<td>(later) Benjamin Sanders</td>
<td>M. John Wiggins, Jr.</td>
<td>T. Robert Cassidy</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Richard Elson</td>
<td>(later) Frank Dailey</td>
<td>U. Lowthers</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. William Baxter</td>
<td>N. William Fowler</td>
<td>V. James Steen</td>
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<td>H. Edward Wiggins</td>
<td>P. Peter Mooney</td>
<td>X. Ewing McCleary</td>
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<td>Y. Lucas</td>
<td>Z. Ed Mitchell</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>BB. Nicholas Headington</td>
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Robert Cassidy was born in County Donegal, Ireland, circa 1786. It is not known exactly when he came to America, but his younger brother, John, was in Cross Creek Township (now Jefferson), Washington County, Pennsylvania, by 1810. This John Cassidy was one of the founders of the old Bethel Methodist Church in Jefferson Township, where today (1998) eight generations of Cassidys lie buried, including Catherine, the mother of Robert and John.

Robert purchased 132 acres of land very near his brother, bordering the Virginia state line. It had been patented by John Morrison, an early pioneer, by whom it was named "Rockbridge". By 1818, Robert purchased an additional 85 acres, this time joining his other property but in Brooke County, Virginia. This farm lay on Amspoker Ridge between lands of Robert Steen and John Amspoker, and bordered the Robert Murchland tracts. By 1843, Robert and his new wife, Isabelle Forbes Cassidy, sold all but 8 acres of their Pennsylvania tract to Ewing McCleary, and moved across the state line to what has been known for the last century and a half as "the Cassidy place".

Pictured above is the Robert Cassidy log house on Amspoker Ridge above Cross Creek. In the picture are John and William, sons of Robert and Isabelle Forbes Cassidy. The house was abandoned in the early 1900s when a frame house, built by Joseph Cassidy, replaced this one.
Three of the sons of Robert and Isabelle grew to adulthood, but little James died at the age of three. He and his little sister, Nancy J. are buried near their parents graves in the old Bethel Graveyard, small white headstones marking their resting place.

Robert died 22 January 1851, but Isabelle survived him by twenty-five years. The Bethel Church records list her death date as 30 October 1876, but the stone which marked her grave a few years ago has disappeared.

Of the three Cassidy brothers who grew to manhood, only Joseph married. John, the youngest, and William, the eldest remained on the home place to live out their lives. John was a dairy farmer as well as a broom-maker by trade. William served in the War Between The States, having been "volunteered" by his mother to go in place of his cousin who was an only son and the father of small children. All three of the Cassidy men were noted in their lifetimes for their extraordinary strength. William Truax, during his lifetime, told this writer that he, personally, had seen each of them at old Virginia Station lift a 200 pound barrel of salt from the ground, up over the sides of a wagon, single-handed.

Joseph married Margaret Ellen Headington, a daughter of John and Jane Murchland Headington, and brought his bride to the Cassidy homestead where the young couple shared living quarters with his elderly mother and two bachelor brothers. Here, in the old log house, were born their three children - Jane Isabelle (Jennie), John Robert, and Mina. But fate had other plans for Joseph and Margaret Ellen. Shortly after the birth of Mina, Margaret Ellen died of the dreaded childbed fever, ending their marriage of five years and five days. Joseph never remarried and life seemed never to be quite the same again.

Margaret Ellen's mother, Jane Murchland Headington, took little two year old John Robert to raise, while her sister, Isabelle Headington Wiggins, took the new baby, Mina. But Joseph refused to give up his first-born. Little "Jennie" remained with her father. For a few years, she had her grandmother Isabelle Cassidy as a mother substitute. But when Jennie reached the age of six, this grandmother also died, leaving her to be reared by her widowed father and two bachelor uncles. Years later, after her marriage to David Clarke, an Irish immigrant, and the birth of her children, she and David returned to the old Cassidy place. Here they lived at the time of their deaths just a few months apart in the mid 1930s.

Pictured at the left is the only likeness the family possesses today of Jane Isabelle (Jennie) Cassidy Clarke. Hers was a life of many hardships, but she was well known in her lifetime for her exceptional talent in telling funny stories, a trait of her Headington ancestors
John Robert Cassidy, who was reared by his Headington grandmother after the death of his mother, grew to manhood on the old Headington farm on the hilltop above Virginville. He married Flora Lantz and bought the old John Frederick Klein property joining his grandmother's land and lying in Pennsylvania bordering the state line. He was a staunch supporter of the Bethel Methodist Church where his wife served many years as song leader, Sunday School Superintendent and teacher. They were the parents of three sons and one daughter. This daughter, Rosetta, was organist and pianist at Bethel for many years during her youth. Two of their sons died as small children. The surviving son, Nelson Cassidy, married but had no issue. Rosetta, however, who married Joseph Pugne, left the world with some descendants of the Robert Cassidy line.

In physical appearance, John Robert Cassidy resembled his Headington ancestors. He was a quiet, unassuming man of few words. He was an excellent carpenter and in his later years, built for himself a home on the remaining eight acres in Pennsylvania of the original Robert Cassidy farm. This feat he performed under trying circumstances, having lost his right arm in an accident prior to that time.
With the death of Nelson Cassidy, son of John Robert and Flora Lantz Cassidy, the Cassidy name from the Robert and Isabella Cassidy line, nearly disappeared. Their descendants are many but they bear such names as Kerns, Clarke, Campbell, and Pugne. And as the name disappeared, so did the old home place, like its neighbors - the Steen, Amspoker, and Grigsby houses - victims of the coal strippers. For this writer, not one vestige of "Grandma's Place" remains today. Even the spring from which we drank as children has disappeared along with the huge willow tree where we played childish games with our cousins. All that remains is the picture of the old log house on an accompanying page, and the memory of homemade bread and butter piled high with brown sugar every time we went to Grandma's.

Pictured above is Mina Cassidy Kerns, youngest child of Joseph and Margaret Ellen Headington Cassidy - sister of Jane Isabelle (Jennie) Cassidy Clarke and John Robert Cassidy - and granddaughter of Robert and Isabelle. Mina married Thomas Kerns, a handsome, talented man who was unexcelled in musical ability. She was reared by her aunt, Isabelle Headington Wiggins, on the John Wiggins, Jr. property, later known as the Dailey home on Cross Creek.