

A Buchanan Family

Descended from
William Buchanan

and his wife

Margaret Mc Intyre

of

Somerset County, PA

Courtesy of Fort Vance Historical Society



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GAHAGEN

BUCHANAN

McINTYRE

FLEMING

SHAEFER

CALDWELL

RODGERS

BORDER

DAYTON

HAMER

MASON

VEIL

COMFORT

UNRUH

DONNELLY

BLOUGH

DEMPSEY

WEIMER

WACHOB

COULTER

A BUCHANAN FAMILY

DESCENDED FROM

William Buchanan

AND HIS WIFE
WHO WAS

Margaret Mc Intyre Fleming

OF

Somerset County,

Pennsylvania

FOREWORD

This family record is the result of a great deal of cooperation on the part of a great many people. Primarily, it is a testimonial to a man whose lifetime interest in his family prompted him to gather most of the data contained within these pages — much of it from the aforementioned cooperative people. This man is my maternal uncle, Harry M. Hamer, of Ferndale — a borough adjoining the city of Johnstown, Pa.

Although I knew of Mr. Hamer's interest, I had no idea of the wealth of material he had assembled until recently — material far too valuable from a genealogical point of view to remain filed away in a mahogany desk. It was obvious to me that it should be organized and published. When I offered to assist my uncle in preparing some sort of a formal record, he obligingly surrendered his carefully edited notes to me — a questionable move, perhaps, since I am neither writer nor genealogist. If I may express one dominant hope, it is that I may have compiled a history of his family that will do justice to his efforts. It has not been possible to develop all he has learned or recorded. After all, there are reasonable limitations which must govern the scope of a presentation of this type.

The problem was not so much where to begin, but where to end. One begins easily enough, with the person or persons about whom a record is to be developed. Next, one makes note of those who owe all or part of their existence to these principal persons. In turn, one coaxes from the past some facts about the people who merged to bring these principal persons into being, from the most remote discernable, forward. Lastly, one attempts to discover all of the persons for whom the remote ancestors were responsible, in whole or in part, by way of establishing family relationships and developing a record of greater genealogical value. This is not only most difficult, but after a few generations, somewhat impractical. The objective, then, has been to stay within practical limits, yet present as much detail as possible to bring the past to within the knowledge of living generations, near and remote.

Genealogy has been defined as a deliberate attempt to bring into the open the circumstances of people who probably never wished to have their circumstances brought into the open. But these people represented a way-of-life in a changing world which should not be forgotten. One cannot discover their way-of-life without developing a profound admiration for their courage and resourcefulness. They were truly wonderful people — too wonderful to be known only by meaningless names etched on slabs of marble or granite. They were the people who shaped our destiny, in part. Where we may be on the face of the earth and, to a certain extent, what we are, was determined by their interests, skills, ambitions and reactions to opportunities, ideas, impulses or calculated risks — hopeful of a better way-of-life for themselves and for those who should surely follow.

In deciding where and with whom to begin, it seemed logical that this record should be built around my maternal grandparents, John and Sarah Helen (Buchanan) Hamer. By no means does their selection as the central figures imply that John and Sarah were outstanding among their brothers and sisters.

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They were wonderful people, to be sure, but their prominent position in this record arises from the simple fact that they were my uncle's and mother's parents. Moreover, this record was written primarily for their descendants, secondarily for other interested persons. What has been written about their ancestries is equally applicable to their brothers and sisters — partially so to their cousins. The format of the writing is such that other appropriate names may be substituted for theirs and these records adopted and continued by members of related families as desired.

The format adopted for this record is not unlike that employed in a comparable record I recently completed in the names of my paternal grandparents. The major families have been developed as far as the generations which gave us John Hamer and Sarah Helen Buchanan. These families are Hamer-Custer, and Buchanan-Gahagen. Where information is available about other families which properly deserve a place in these records through intermarriage, pertinent comments are given. ****

It is not considered practical to identify by name the numerous members and friends of the families descended from John Hamer (II), the elder John Custer, William Buchanan, or Thomas Gahagen, Sr., who made contributions of greater or lesser importance. Each item used was essential to completeness and was gratefully received. The writer, however, does wish to pay tribute to the memory of his father, Henry Albert Coleman, who assisted in the collection of important historical data. The three surviving children of John (III) and Sarah Helen (Buchanan) Hamer — Harry M., Samuel V., and Cora (Hamer) Coleman — especially the first named — made the most extensive contributions. To them, and to the memory of their brothers and sisters: Robert, Elizabeth (Hamer) Rhoads, and Emma, Grace, and Helen Hamer; this record of their family is respectfully dedicated.

Ernest Hamer Coleman, M. D.
State College, Pennsylvania

October 14, 1957

THE RELATED FAMILIES

This section, in four parts, is the end result of many years of spare-time research by Harry M. Hamer, of Johnstown, Pa. It is taken from a record of his parents and their family entitled "The Ancestry and Family of John and Sarah Helen (Buchanan) Hamer" and is a collection of short histories of the four families represented by the parents of this couple, viz., Hamer (or Hamar), Custer, Buchanan, and Gahagen (or Gahagan). These are the "Related Families". Within each specific family record there are references to other related groups -- the so-called "minor" families. It will have been observed that this section begins with page seventy-five. Those persons who do not have the entire record should understand that the prior pages conformed strictly to the title, as mentioned above. The pages to follow, however, represent an effort to portray lines-of-descent; inter-relationships between; and to a limited extent, the circumstances of other groups within these related families.

It is believed that only a few of the descendants of John and Sarah Helen (Buchanan) Hamer will wish to possess other than that part of the complete record which pertains to their family unit, or, the first seventy-four pages. There are indications, however, that there are persons who are members of one or more of the major families named above who are interested in appropriate parts of this "Related Families" section. A limited number of individual family records are being made available - at cost - however, subject to certain conditions. To assist in controlling production costs and to avoid unnecessary re-duplication, appropriate pages from the first seventy-four have been re-used. It is true that they were written to portray the ancestries of John Hamer and Sarah Helen Buchanan, but they contain family data of general applicability. Moreover, the writer believes that the few references to John and Sarah may assist with orientation -- to make the records easier to follow. In addition, the writer has employed a common title page and has re-used the original foreword. Finally, attention is called to the symbol "Ø". This indicates that there are comments on the "Addenda" pages which modify, amplify, or correct the text -- generally representing data received after the text was written.

From a genealogical point-of-view, this section is probably the most important in these records. The writer approaches its presentation well-aware that he is treading on somewhat uncertain ground. Here, family lines are more remote. Especially this section is based on information largely contributed by others. Some of it will represent fact. Some will be based on hearsay or presumption. Some will be traditional. As a consequence there will be errors -- unavoidable ones -- since little of the data can be checked for accuracy. No apologies will be made for those which may appear. Conscientious effort was made to prevent them.

It may be fairly stated that most of Mr. Hamer's efforts throughout the period of time he has been assembling family data will find expression in this section. While Mr. Hamer acknowledges that he has not attained perfection -- a circumstance that is only theoretically possible -- the writer believes that a commendable level of completeness and accuracy has been reached, considering the vast amount of data and the multiplicity of its sources. By its very nature, this section has been the most difficult to assemble. As it evolved it is presented here.

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BUCHANAN FAMILY

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BUCHANAN ANCESTRY

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William Buchanan, born 1760-1765, probably in County Donegal, Northern Ireland, and his wife Margaret, also born in Ireland, 1765-1770, are the first known ancestors in this major family. Both have been considered in detail in the section devoted to the ancestry of Sarah Helen (Buchanan) Hamer, one of their many grand-children, and to which reference is invited. It is sufficient to record here that Margaret's maiden name was Mc Intyre; that she was allegedly the daughter of an Irish nobleman; that she was the widow of one James Fleming, Sr., when she married William Buchanan; and that she was the mother of James Fleming, Jr., and another child (name not known) who died and was buried at sea while the family was en route to the U.S.A. It is traditional that William was a member of the same, relatively immediate Buchanan family as James, the fifteenth President of the United States.

The circumstances of William and Margaret Buchanan prior to 1802 are not well known. Their first child (Robert) was born about 1794. They lived in Ohio, probably in the so-called "Stillwater" district, late in the 1790's and early 1800's, returning to Pennsylvania about 1802. At that time they acquired a farm in what was to become Shade township (then Stony Creek township), Somerset County. The move from Ohio took place when their daughter Nancy, born in November, 1795, was six years old (this being a recollection of Della (Shaffer) Zimmerman, one of Nancy's grand-daughters).

The farm the Buchanans occupied contained 225 acres. It was originally warranted to one Samuel Statler on March 17, 1786, and was deeded to William Buchanan on October 13, 1808. It was located near the headwaters of Oven Run, not far from Buckstown. It also lay along the old Forbes Road, about four miles east of Stoystown, near the site of a fort or breastworks erected by the Forbes expedition in 1758.

William died at his home in Shade township, probably in November, 1841. He was buried in a small cemetery on a knoll on his own farm. His wife, Margaret, spent her last years at Somerset with her son-in-law and daughter, Frederick and Margaret (Peggy) Weimer. She died in February or March, 1855. Because of adverse weather she was buried in the Husband Cemetery at Somerset, rather than with her husband, at the farm. This couple has been credited with nine children, all of whom are known by name. Except where a matter of record, their approximate dates of birth were calculated from a study of William Buchanan's census records for 1810, 1820, and 1830; and from the Somerset County tax assessment lists. In what is believed to be a correct sequence of birth, they are:

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- I. ROBERT BUCHANAN This son was born c. 1794, and is believed to have been the oldest of the children. He is probably the male aged 16-26 in his father's 1810 census record. He was in New Orleans in 1822 but was not heard from afterward. From a legal point of view he was considered "deceased" in 1855 when his parents' affairs were settled. It is traditional in the branch of the family originating with his sister Nancy, that either he or his younger brother, William, became "immensely rich," being "one of the sons who either remained a bachelor or was not married until later in life." The source and disposition of this presumed wealth have not been revealed.

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II. NANCY BUCHANAN Born November 1, 1795, by calculation from her tombstone data which states that she died January 26, 1876, aged 80 years, 2 months and 25 days. It has also been recorded that she died between the hours of 9 and 10 A.M. She is probably the female aged 10-16 in her father's 1810 Census record for Stony Creek township (before erection of Shade). She was twice married: first, to J. WACHOB; second, to JAMES COULTER. The locale of her early married life is not known but sometime after her marriage to James Coulter the family lived in Zanesville, Ohio. With James Coulter's death (possibly about 1840) Nancy and family returned to Shade township to take up temporary residence with William Buchanan and family. After William died, Nancy and family moved into a house "along the pike, near Buckstown" where she acquired a loom and weaved carpet to support herself and her family. Four known children: one to her first marriage; three to her second:

- A. MARY JANE WACHOB Dates of birth and death not established. Married CHARLES RODGERS, who died November 10, 1896, aged 74 years. Nine children: Newton; Alonza (m. Clara Von Lunen); Jane (m. William Daley); Amanda (m. Norman L. Berkebile); Emma (m. William E. Inscho); Susan (m. Austin J. McClain); Albert (m. Elizabeth Gahagen); Annie (m. Ananias Kring); and, Ida.

Note: Following Mary Jane's death, Charles Rodgers remarried and had two children: Araminta (m. Harvey F. Blough); and Charles.

- B. WASHINGTON COULTER This son was a cripple and died young. No other known circumstances.
- C. ELIZABETH COULTER Born about 1826 or 1827. No other known circumstances.
- D. AMANDA COULTER Born July 25, 1834. Died October 12, 1923. This daughter was about seven years old when brought to Shade township by her mother. She was married "from the house along the pike" to JACOB SHAFFER. Four children: Alvin (m. Rebecca Leasure); Adela (Della) (m. James Zimmerman); Florence (m. 1st, Fred Schaefer, 2nd, William L. Byers); Jacob (m. Amanda Custer).

Note: These four children were half-brothers and half-sisters to David Shaffer, George Shaffer, Mary (Shaffer) Ling; and Hannah Shaffer (m. Jacob Leasure) — children born to their father's prior marriage.

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III. JOHN BUCHANAN This son of William and Margaret Buchanan was probably born before 1800. He is believed to have been the male aged 10-16 in his father's 1810 census record and may have been the oldest of the three males aged 18-26 in the 1820 record. The Somerset County tax assessments reveal him as a married man in 1822. It is understood that John first settled in Huron County, Ohio. If so, he may have been the John Buchanan, aged 30-40, who lived in Bronson township, Huron County, at the time the 1830 census was taken. With him were two other males: one aged less than 5 years, and one in the age group 10-15. There were four females in the household: one aged 20-30

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who was probably John's wife, and one each in the categories 10-15, 5-10, and less than age 5. His wife, it is known, was MARY DEMPSEY, a daughter of Patrick Dempsey, who was an early Shade township resident. John and family did not remain in Ohio but migrated again, to the State of Indiana, to the vicinity of present day Huntington. It is not known when this move took place but it has been recorded that they were Indiana residents in April, 1855, when the estate of Margaret Buchanan was being settled. It is understood that John had a large family but only one son is known:

- A. SAMUEL BUCHANAN Maiden name of wife unknown; given name KATE or KATHERINE. Four known children: Gertrude, George, Samuel, and Katherine (or Kate).

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- IV. WILLIAM BUCHANAN This son of William and Margaret Buchanan was probably born about 1801. He was first listed in the Somerset County tax assessments for the year 1822, as a single freeman. He remained in this category and appeared annually in the assessment lists through 1826. He was undoubtedly one of the three males less than 10 years old in his father's 1810 census record; also one of the three males aged 18-26 in the 1820 record. It is understood that he, too, went to Huron County, Ohio, and from thence to Huntington County, Indiana. He was an Indiana resident in April, 1855, when his mother's estate was being settled. Reference is invited to a comment which may or may not pertain to this man in the short article about his oldest brother, Robert. No other traditional or known circumstances.

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- V. JOSEPH BUCHANAN This son was probably born in 1802. The 1823 assessment lists for Shade township, Somerset County, carry his name for the first time as a single freeman. He remained in this category through 1825. Joseph was no doubt another of the three males less than 10 years old in his father's 1810 census record and, in 1820, one of the three aged 18-26. His wife was ROSE DEMPSEY, a sister of Mary Dempsey who married his brother John, and a daughter of Patrick Dempsey of Shade township. Joseph, Rose and family came to live in Huntington County, Indiana. This location was identified in April, 1855. Contact with this branch of the family has been better preserved than with the others in Indiana due, in part, to Louise Buchanan, a daughter of Joseph's youngest brother, David, who visited with and became well acquainted with her cousins. There is evidence that David's wife, Elizabeth (Gahagen) Buchanan, also visited these kinfolk for a photograph of her is extant, taken in a Huntington, Indiana, studio. This family was staunchly Catholic. Six children whose names are known out of a possible total of nine:

- A. ANTOINETTE BUCHANAN This daughter, a devout Catholic, became a Mother Superior.
- B. FRANK BUCHANAN Married EMMA DONNELLY. Eight children, several of whom were personally known by their Eastern cousins: Joseph, Mary, Marie Antoinette, Ferdinand, Henry, Rosemary, Albert, and Julia.
- C. OWEN BUCHANAN No known circumstances other than that he was unmarried.

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- D. WILLIAM BUCHANAN Married MARGARET COMFORT. No children known to have been born to this marriage.
- E. KATHERINE or KATIE BUCHANAN Unmarried. No other known circumstances.
- F. ROSE BUCHANAN Unmarried. No other known circumstances.

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Note: There is some indication that there were three other daughters, all Catholic Nuns, one of whom was known as Sister Bernard.

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- VI. MARY (POLLY) BUCHANAN This daughter of William and Margaret Buchanan was probably born between 1803 and 1806. It is believed that she was the female less than ten years old in her father's 1810 census record; and the girl aged 16-26 in 1820. She married WILLIAM DEMPSEY; a son of Patrick Dempsey of Shade township, and a brother to Mary and Rose Dempsey who married Mary's brothers John and Joseph. This daughter came to reside in California. She was deceased as of April, 1855, however, the specific date of her death is not known. One child:
- A. JOHN DEMPSEY No known circumstances.

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- VII. SAMUEL BUCHANAN This son was probably born about 1809. The Shade township assessment lists for 1830 carried his name for the first time, as a single freeman. He probably was the youngest of the males less than 10 years old in his father's 1810 census record; the male child aged 10-16 in 1820; and in the age category 20-30 in 1830. The given name of Samuel's wife was SUSAN; family name unknown. This son and family (with the possible exception of his oldest son) came to live in Huron County, Ohio. This location was specified in April, 1855, when his parents' estate was being settled. It is understood that Samuel was a spiritualist. Two known children:
- A. SAMUEL BUCHANAN Born and, it is believed, reared in Shade township. One known child: James.
- B. KATHERINE or KATE BUCHANAN No known circumstances.

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- VIII. MARGARET BUCHANAN Born June 18, 1811. Died September 22, 1878, aged 67 years, 3 months, and 4 days. This daughter remained with her parents at the farm in Shade township and was requested by her father, in his will, to continue responsibility for the care of her mother. After her marriage to FREDERICK WEIMER, she and her mother became residents of Somerset. In keeping with her father's request, the Weimers provided a home for William's widow until her death. Frederick Weimer was born February 14, 1805, and

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died January 21, 1880, aged 74 years, 11 months, and 7 days. Margaret Buchanan was his third wife. He had previously been married to Magdalene Spiker, who died August 29, 1843; and to Mary Barron, who died March 28, 1846. Frederick became administrator of the William and Margaret Buchanan estate and in that capacity, on April 1, 1856, sold 145 acres of the farm, including the original log dwelling house, and the stable, to Jonathan Wagner. Two children with his wife, Margaret:

- A. EMMA WEIMER Married PARK DAYTON. This couple became the parents of six children: Harry, Darl, Rose, William, Fred, and Carl.
- B. AMANDA WEIMER Married HARRY MASON. No other known circumstances.

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Note: The next section will be given in greater detail since the David Wesley Buchanan branch includes the writer's family and more closely related kinfolk.

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IX. DAVID WESLEY BUCHANAN Born November 27, 1814, in Shade township, Somerset County, Pa. Died February 5, 1879. Married, on May 31, 1840, to ELIZABETH CROCKET GAHAGEN, a daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth (Miller) Gahagen, born April 22, 1823; died July 23, 1904. (See Gahagen records). Eleven children:

A. THOMAS G. BUCHANAN Born and died on May 19, 1841.

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B. MARGARET EMMA BUCHANAN Born April 21, 1843. Died August 12, 1845.

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C. ELIZABETH CLARA BUCHANAN Born October 4, 1845. Died September 2, 1867. Married, on March 15, 1864, to DANIEL BORDER. One child:

1. FRANKLIN BORDER Born March 21, 1867. Died April 11, 1867.

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D. SARAH HELEN BUCHANAN Born March 29, 1848. Died June 10, 1926. Married, on March 26, 1868, to JOHN HAMER, born February 26, 1839; died September 2, 1905. This couple and their family have been extensively considered elsewhere. (See Hamer records). Eight children:

1. THOMAS ROBERT HAMER Born March 12, 1869. Died June 7, 1921. Was twice married. On November 10, 1901, married FRANCES CATHERINE (HORNER) WOODS, who died January 7, 1908. Married, second, LUELLA MILLER, who died October 3, 1948.

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2. ELIZABETH CROCKET HAMER Born June 4, 1871. Died July 22, 1920. On December 25, 1892, married MARTIN LUTHER RHOADS, born May 20, 1859; died March 27, 1929.
3. EMMA HAMER Born and died on April 11, 1873.
4. SAMUEL VINTON HAMER Born April 24, 1874. Was twice married: first, on February 4, 1896, to MELISSA SHAFFER, who died December 21, 1903; second, to ANNA YORK, who died June 1, 1947.
5. HARRY MILTON HAMER Born August 11, 1876. This man collected essentially all of the data reproduced throughout this entire record. Unmarried.
6. EDNA GRACE HAMER Born February 7, 1879. Died October 12, 1881.
7. CORA MAY HAMER Born March 23, 1882. On October 12, 1904 married HENRY ALBERT COLEMAN, born January 30, 1879; died November 9, 1954. These persons are the writer's parents.
8. HELEN SARAH HAMER Born August 30, 1884. Died May 1, 1899.

- E. MARY JANE BUCHANAN Born October 1, 1850. Died November 2, 1940. Married, on June 4, 1874, to JOHN H. VEIL, born March 16, 1851; died May 24, 1927. Five children:
1. RALPH L. VEIL Married SUSAN WEAVER.
 2. BESSIE M. VEIL Died August 15, 1946. Married JOSEPH MILLER.
 3. JOHN W. VEIL Died April 19, 1958. Married ELEANOR PRITTS.
 4. HENRY POLING VEIL Married MADELINE McCARTNEY, who died June 11, 1950.
 5. MARGARET VEIL Married JERRY M. JAMES.

- F. LOUISA VICKROY BUCHANAN Born April 5, 1853. Died March 2, 1922. Unmarried.

- G. GEORGE CONRAD BUCHANAN Born May 27, 1855. Died October 19, 1855.

- H. MARGARET WEIMER BUCHANAN Born March 31, 1858. Died February 7, 1942. Unmarried

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I. JOSEPH WILLIAM BUCHANAN Born May 9, 1860. Died December 5, 1925. Married, on May 8, 1884, to CLARA A. UNRUH, born December 8, 1852; died May 1, 1943. Four children:

1. ETHEL E. BUCHANAN Married MILTON MACKEL.
2. CLYDE W. BUCHANAN Married PANSY BLOUGH.
3. D. DWIGHT BUCHANAN Married SARAH ELDREDGE.
4. ELIZABETH BUCHANAN Married JOHN RIDDELL, who died October 10, 1955.

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J. FRANKLIN B. BUCHANAN Born June 25, 1863. Died November 14, 1904. Married ELLA BLOUGH, who died June 9, 1949. Seven children:

1. ANNA LOUISE BUCHANAN Was twice married: first to ___ COMFORT; second, to PHILIP GODFREY.
2. HOWARD BUCHANAN Died in infancy.
3. MAURICE BUCHANAN Died in infancy.
4. ISAAC BUCHANAN Died in infancy.
5. GRACE BUCHANAN Died in infancy.
6. ALICE RUTH BUCHANAN Was twice married; first, to CHARLES ELLIS ELLIOTT; second, to ___ ADLER.
7. FRANK DARLING BUCHANAN Died in infancy.

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K. IDA MAUD BUCHANAN Born March 9, 1865. Died March 12, 1872.

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X. JAMES FLEMING This man was a half brother to the children of William and Margaret Buchanan through their mother's prior marriage to James Fleming, Sr. James, Jr., was born in Ireland — date unknown. He was the survivor of two children who accompanied their mother; their paternal aunt, Margaret Fleming; and either their own father (probably) or step-father, to America, in the latter part of the 18th Century. It has been said that James, Jr., was about four years old when his own father died. After his mother's remarriage he became a member of William Buchanan's household. About 1800, he and his Aunt Margaret returned to Ireland. There he reached maturity, married Ann Caldwell, and became the father of a daughter, Charlotte, born in 1821. About 1824, James, Jr., and family came to America. They proceeded to Shade township and briefly settled there, with or near the William Buchanan family, before continuing on to what became

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East Wheatfield township, Indiana County, Pa., near Armagh. The vital statistics of James, Jr., and his wife, Ann, have not been determined, nor has their place of interment been established. Seven known children, probably not in order of birth.

- A. CHARLOTTE FLEMING Born July, 1821. Married HORACE HITCHCOCK. Two known children: A daughter (m. Thomas Campbell), and William.
- B. JOHN FLEMING Lived at Armagh, Pa.
- C. JOSEPH McINTYRE FLEMING Two children whose names are known, otherwise no established circumstances: Alberta, and Joseph.
- D. MARGARET FLEMING No known circumstances.
- E. HENRY FLEMING Lived near New Florence, Pa.
- F. MARY ANN FLEMING No known circumstances.
- G. JAMES FLEMING Remained at home and assumed operation of his father's farm. Died suddenly.

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Ohio, or did they pause somewhere en route in their search for a place to establish a home?

Possibly more than a score of men by the name of William Buchanan were investigated - men who lived in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia during the last several decades of the 18th Century. All were followed to the conclusion that they were not of direct interest to the family of John and Sarah Helen (Buchanan) Hamer, with the possible exception of two. These two William Buchanans lived briefly in Huntingdon township, Westmoreland County; appearing there about the time a sizeable Scotch-Irish migration was taking place into Fayette and Washington Counties and, possibly to a lesser degree, into Westmoreland County. Included were many Buchanans, most of whom are believed to have migrated from Cumberland County but some no doubt came from neighboring counties, and some were probably recent arrivals in America.

In re: the Westmoreland County William Buchanans, one was identified as William, Sr., which leads one to conclude that he had a son, William, Jr. The writer suspects that William, Sr., is the William who first appeared in the Huntingdon township tax records for 1783 as the occupant of 300 acres, not then warranted to him or surveyed. On June 2, 1786, this man received a warrant for his 300 acres and which were surveyed for him on September 11, 1786. His tract was found to contain 261 acres, plus "allowances", and was declared situate on the waters of Jacob's Creek. Westmoreland County records reveal that a sizeable portion was subject to a dispute since it was claimed by a neighbor. For reasons unknown, unless the controversial land was a factor, William did not obtain a patent for his property and, as of 1790, when the first Census was taken, he had disappeared from the county. No records have been found to show when, or if, he conveyed his interest in the property to another person.

In 1786, the other William appeared on the tax lists for the first time, however, no records for 1784 or 1785 were found, to determine if he had been taxed earlier. He was not on the tax lists for 1783 nor was he a landowner in 1786. He, too, is missing from the 1790 Census records. A question: Were these two Williams father and son, and did they leave the county and township together? The writer considers that the younger William is a prime candidate for the William of this record. When one reflects that our William was born between 1760 and 1765, it follows that he would have become a taxable person in 1781-1786. The tax record of William of Westmoreland County (the younger) suggests a man born in 1764-1765, or a year or two earlier should his name have appeared on the apparently non-existent records for 1784 and 1785. Moreover, that record implies that he was a single man as of 1786, which our William probably was. The writer acknowledges that the above is pure speculation but must state that of all the William Buchanans scrutinized, he, alone, has survived the process of elimination. But, was he our William?

Of the other more promising William Buchanans investigated, one was born in Mercersburg, Pa., a son of one Alexander Buchanan. This Alexander was allegedly a cousin of President Buchanan's father (Evert's History of Clermont County, Ohio, p.366). This William first moved to Fayette County, Pa., then to Kentucky, and finally to Clermont County, Ohio. His year of birth (1770) and well-known history eliminate him from consideration. Another William, whose sister, Elizabeth, was declared a cousin of the President's father, was a son of one Walter Buchanan of York and Cumberland Counties. He was probably born at least 20 years before our William. Moreover, it is doubtful that he could have been our William's father,

since his relationship with the President's family appears more remote than is believed to be the case with our ancestor.

Some interest centered about a William Buchanan who married Elizabeth McCrae about 1782. He was declared in several accounts to have been a brother of the President's father. The President refutes this allegation, as will be noted later. The writer believes he can be dropped from consideration at once, despite some historical similarities. One of his daughters and four of his sons had names similar to one daughter, three sons and one step-son in our William's family. One of these children, also named William, had two sons known to a kinsman as "Cousin James and Cousin Bob." The daughter, Mary, is said "to have married a Catholic and raised a family row." Our William had a daughter, Mary, who married a Catholic but there is no legend of any family "row." On the negative side, the chronology is not compatible; our William married Margaret McIntyre Fleming; and the names of the children in the two families are otherwise dissimilar. The writer was also interested in a William Buchanan, born in 1764, according to a reference found among the writings of Egle, noted Central Pennsylvania genealogist and State Historian. Unfortunately, the exact source was not recorded and the reference has not been re-discovered. However, this reference would be of dubious value since there were no other particulars.

Returning to late 18th Century Westmoreland County for the moment, several other Buchanans were scrutinized at the same time the two Williams were evaluated. One of these was a David Buchanan, first taxed in 1783; a landowner in 1786; and a resident of South Huntingdon Township in 1790 according to the census for that year. Our William had a son, David - one of the few Buchanans who did. Was he the namesake of the Westmoreland County man? In 1786, a John Buchanan was on the tax lists. He lived in nearby Hempfield township and was a single man in that year. In August, 1785, a Thomas Buchanan became a 300 acre land warrantee in Westmoreland County (township unknown). He, too, is missing from the 1790 Census records. It is of some interest that a Thomas Buchanan was living in Huron County, Ohio, as of 1830 - the same county to which three sons of our William migrated. In fact, John, the oldest of these three sons was also living in Huron County as of 1830. Whether Thomas of Westmoreland County and Thomas of Huron County were the same man is open to question. If so, the former was a very young land warrantee for the latter was listed as aged 50-60 in 1830. It should be noted, however, that ages 14-15 were not unknown among land warrantees. More questions: Were some, or all, of these Buchanans close relatives? Did several of them come into and leave Westmoreland County at the same time? As of 1790 there were only two taxable Buchanans listed in the County: David, and an older John - not the John mentioned above.

Another Westmoreland County man aroused some interest - a man named Archibald Scott. There is reason to believe he is the man found in the Cumberland-Franklin County tax records from 1778 through 1786, who lived near Mercersburg. In 1787 he was no longer in Franklin County but in 1787 a man of that name became a resident of South Huntingdon township, Westmoreland County. He was an older man with a well-established family, as revealed by the 1790 census. Unfortunately, in a sense, he was but one of several men of that name in those early days. One was a Virginian "licensed to celebrate matrimony." Another was a 40 acre landowner in Washington County. Still another lived in or near Lancaster, Pennsylvania but may have been one of the three aforementioned men. Archibald Scott becomes a man of interest because he plays a role in another Buchanan

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legend that is incomplete. Whatever else, Archibald was an acquaintance of President James Buchanan and of William's wife, Margaret.

For reasons unknown, James Buchanan, before he became President of the United States, allegedly delivered to Margaret Buchanan a "demit" issued in the name of one Archibald Scott. This document is still in existence and has been handed down from generation to generation in the family of Margaret's youngest daughter. It is now held by Mr. Fred Dayton of Kittanning, Pa. It certifies that an Archibald Scott had been a Passed Master of a Masonic Lodge at Magheraeregan, a town probably in Londonderry County, Northern Ireland. The demit was dated June 10, 1795, and was no doubt issued so Archibald might affiliate with a Masonic group in America. There is no way of knowing whether it was issued at the time this Archibald departed for America, or many years later. Mr. Dayton kindly furnished the writer with excellent photographic copies, one of which was sent to Ireland in an effort to learn more of Archibald's history, also, whether it might be a key to additional family history. Regrettably, no reply has been received from Magheraeregan, or elsewhere in Ireland. It would be interesting indeed, to learn what Archibald, Margaret, and James had in common.

The writer acknowledges that much that has been written in the foregoing paragraphs is pure speculation. Perhaps everything that is not historically proven should have been omitted. But, as often seems the case, theory may be a stepping-stone to fact. If nothing else, the results of research to date have been summarized; unrewarding as they seem to be at this time in terms of a precise, irrefutable lineage for William. They may include the names and circumstances of persons who have no place in this record. But, it now appears timely to turn to what is known about our William and his family.

In 1801-1802, William and Margaret Buchanan, with at least four of their children, became permanent residents of Stony Creek township, in that part which became Shade township in 1816. They came to occupy a 255 acre farm, not far from Buckstown, and near the headwaters of Oven Run. This tract of land was originally warranted to one Samuel Statler on March 17, 1786. William was given a deed to this property on October 13, 1808. Here, he lived until his death in 1841. Early in his ownership he sold a portion, and in 1856, after Margaret's death, their son-in-law, Frederick Weimer, obtained a court order to sell an additional 145 acres. Previously, or on March 15, 1849, Margaret obtained a warrant to an additional 50 acres, a tract of land originally warranted to J. B. Richardson on February 19, 1849. On August 27, 1850, Margaret assigned her interest in the warrant to her grand-daughters, Clara E. and Sarah H. Buchanan, "to have and to hold unto Elizabeth C. Buchanan," her son David's wife.

William and Margaret (McIntyre) Fleming Buchanan became the parents of nine known children, namely:

Robert	born c. 1794
Nancy	born November 1, 1795
John	born c. 1798
William	born c. 1801
Joseph	born c. 1802
Mary	born c. 1803-1806
Samuel	born c. 1809
Margaret	born June 18, 1811
David Wesley	born November 27, 1814

The birth years of a majority of these children are approximations derived from a comparative study of the early Somerset County tax records and the census records, 1810 through 1830.

Of these children, Robert was in New Orleans in 1822. When his mother died in 1855, a statement was made that he had not been heard from in 33 years. Nancy married, first, J_____ Wachob; second, James Coulter. John was a married man in 1822. His wife was Mary Dempsey. William was listed as a single freeman in the Somerset County records from 1822 through 1826. He ultimately married but his wife's name is not known. Joseph, listed as a single freeman from 1823 through 1825, married Rose Dempsey. Mary, or Polly, married William Dempsey. Samuel was a single freeman in 1830. His wife's first name was Susan but her family name is unknown. Margaret married Frederick Weimer. David Wesley married Elizabeth Crocket Gahagen. A separate section will be devoted to David and Elizabeth since they were Sarah Helen Buchanan's parents. The circumstances of the other children will be considered among the related families.

The William Buchanan of this record was a farmer. He was so engaged throughout his known history. He probably died in November, 1841, since, on the 22nd of that month, Margaret renounced her right of administration of the estate in favor of her son, David. William's will is dated July 17, 1841. In it he expressed the sentiment that "his wife may have the plantation for her maintenance so long as she lives," but, he was willing that "the heirs may do with the place as they think proper." He appointed his daughter Margaret to take care of her mother and bequeathed the household furniture to her for her anticipated compliance. He also placed the livestock under her custody "to sell as she thinks proper to pay his debts." He directed that the balance of his estate should be divided equally among his heirs. When he died he should have been 76-81 years old. He was buried in a small cemetery on a knoll on his own farm. His grave appears unmarked unless by simple field stones.

Margaret Buchanan remained on the farm for at least five years after William died. After her daughter Margaret married, she dissolved the household. She spent her remaining years at Somerset with Margaret and husband, Frederick Weimer. She died in February or March, 1855, at which time she should have been 85-90 years old. She was buried at Somerset. Bitter weather and distance precluded interment at the farm, beside her husband.

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Before William Buchanan's record is terminated, it seems proper that consideration should be given to his presumed relationship with the family of President James Buchanan. There seems to be little doubt that there was kinship, but how near, or how remote, remains unanswered.

That James Buchanan, before he became President, made two visits to the home of William Buchanan in Shade township seems well-certified. William's son, David, is said to have told his children, including Sarah Helen, that he well-remembered James' visits although he was quite young at the time. It is traditional that James was known to William's family as "Cousin Jimmy."

Why did James Buchanan visit William? The writer believes that a portion of a letter in the archives of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia, furnishes a clue. This letter was written by

Charles W. Russell, a maternal kinsman, and is dated April 10, 1858. It is obviously a letter of reply to one of inquiry, in re: James' kinfolk in Ireland, and possibly in America, as well. The writer suspects that James was either trying to locate bona-fide kinsmen in this country by inquiring whether any of his father's close relatives had come to America, or, he was gathering evidence to refute the allegations of those who professed to be his near relatives. Portions of Mr. Russell's letter deserve reproduction if for no better reason than that they cast some doubt on a conclusion entertained in some genealogical circles that the President's father came from a large family.

The portion of the letter that remains, begins, "was taken at an early age, it is said, at about two years of age by his mother's parents to live with them. They brought him up, giving him the best education, etc., and when he was grown they fitted him out for America. He was met by his uncle (Joshua Russell) at the ship in Philadelphia." That Mr. Russell was writing about the President's father is unquestioned. He continued:

"My informants knew more of your father than of the other members of his family because he had been brought up among their own near relatives. They could only say for the rest that he had a brother, John, who succeeded his father on the farm and who had children and they are not aware that any of your family of Buchanan except your father ever came to America. There were other families of Buchanan in the same part of Ireland, but not related to yours as it is believed."

"Samuel Russell, above named (probably named in the missing portion of the letter), had four sons: Sam'l, Wm., Ia's, and Joshua, of whom the three last came to the United States and are now represented by numerous descendants. The other, Samuel, who was my grandfather, never left Ireland. He lived with his father and mother until they died and was with them while your father was an inmate of the family. All of his children came to this country at different periods (Samuel's children) and I have heard my aunt speak of your father from personal recollection of him in Ireland. Of course, she was very young when he left there but she well-remembered his departure and some previous incidents."

The implications of this letter are certainly at variance with existing data to be found in various books and historical society archives. Especially the Franklin County Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, has the largest list of brothers and sisters of the President's father that has come to the writer's attention, or: Sarah, William, Samuel, Thomas, John, Jane, Alexander, Walter, and Margaret - none of whom came to America according to that record.

Dr. Philip Klein, of the Pennsylvania State University faculty, a long-time student and authority on President James Buchanan, has quoted the President as saying that he could trace his ancestry with certainty no farther than his father. Dr. Klein finds that the President's grandfather's name was John, but of Omagh and not of Ramelton, as is the prevailing thought. His researches have led him to believe that John was a sea captain who disappeared for unknown reasons about 1761; that the President's father was one of five children and a surviving twin; and that his mother died at the time he was born. Dr. Klein and Mr. Russell do not concur about the grandfather's occupation (John). Another record claimed that the President's father, whose name also was James, had a brother John who died in Texas. Other records indicate a brother William, to whom the writer made reference

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earlier in this section. As may be gathered, there are great discrepancies in existing concepts of the President's ancestry.

What does the President himself have to report? In the Buchanan Book, a letter he wrote to one Thomas Rockwell in 1868 is reproduced. In it, the President refutes kinship with other Buchanans but states he tried to establish relationship with many of them. Miss Jessica Ferguson, former Pennsylvania State Genealogical Librarian, reported: "From a confidential source in State Library files, the President, in a letter written in 1868 (no doubt the one quoted above), stated tacitly that his father had but one brother, John, who died in Ireland, presumably without issue." Therein resides another variable, for Mr. Russell wrote that John, who succeeded his father on the farm, had children.

At this point the writer would like to pose two questions: How close a kinship was the President trying to establish (?) and; how close a relationship is implied by the otherwise unqualified word, "cousin"?

When the writer was possibly 8 or 9 years old, the name of James Buchanan was mentioned in school in connection with an elementary study of the Presidents. Because the name "Buchanan" was so well known at home, curiosity led to the question, "Are we related to him?" Grandmother (Sarah Helen) said we were. There are vague recollections that Grandmother said her father was the President's second cousin; that their relationship was compared with one the writer enjoyed with a second cousin and frequent childhood playmate (Kenneth Hamer); and that the writer's teacher and classmates were duly informed of this momentous discovery on the next school day.

Setting aside Dr. Klein's conclusions for the present, and looking at the line-of-descent long-popular among genealogists - the President's Buchanan grandfather is said to have been John, of Ramelton. If James and David were second cousins, their Buchanan grandfathers were brothers, and their Buchanan great-grandfather was the common ancestor. Was that man Thomas of Ramelton, the son of George (who migrated from Scotland to Ireland), and a grandson of John of Blairlusk?

The writer finds that there is a span of years between Thomas of Ramelton, born in 1680, and the President's father, born in 1761-1762, wide enough for two intervening generations. One of these would be represented by John of Ramelton. Two different sources have reported an older generation placed between those represented by John and Thomas - the former's father; the latter's son. One source reports his name to have been Alexander; the other, William Alexander. The introduction of the name, Alexander, into the family of the President, calls to mind the Alexander Buchanan who lived in Fayette County, Pa., Kentucky and Ohio, and who was allegedly a cousin of the President's father. Was Alexander a family name? Were this Alexander and our William's father (William?) brothers, and, may they have been brothers of John of Ramelton? Was "Cousin Jimmy" merely a figment of speech in the households of our William and his children? Unfortunately, the Past has hidden its secrets too well!

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DAVID WESLEY AND ELIZABETH CROCKET (GAHAGEN) BUCHANAN

David Wesley Buchanan, born November 27, 1814, in Shade township (then Stony Creek township), Somerset County, Pa., was the ninth and last child of William and Margaret (McIntyre) Fleming Buchanan. He was married on May 31, 1840, to Elizabeth Crocket Gahagen, born April 22, 1823, a daughter of Thomas, Jr., and Elizabeth (Miller) Gahagen.

David's entire life seems centered in the region where he was born. As a youth he assisted his father on the farm. Elizabeth lived nearby in the same township. She was evidently a conscientious and religious person. Several relics of her younger days are extant, one of them being a certificate signed by her instructor, A. R. Chapman, which reads: "This will certify that Miss E. G. Gahagen, by diligence and good bahaving, merits the appreciation of her friends and Inst. at the end of the quarter." Another small, ornamental card bears her name and the date, November 25, 1849. Its significance is unknown.

The marriage certificate of this couple is also extant but is not so ornamental. It is a hand-written document on plain, yellow-tinted and aged paper, reading: "This is to certify that on the 31st Day of May in the Year of our Lord, 1840, before me John Reel, Esq. of Summarset County, Pa., David W. Buchanan in said county and Elizabeth Crocket Gahagen in the county aforsade were legally joined in marriage, each of them being of full age and disalowing themselves free from prior engagements or other lowfull enpediments in witness thereof as I the sade Justice and other the witness present have hear unto subscribed our names the again year aforesaid." Witnesses: John Reel, Esq., D. W. Buchanan, E. C. Buchanan, J. B. Richardson, John Y. Gahagen, Wm. Richardson, Joseph Leasure, T. Gahagen, E. Gahagen, Samuel Brown, and George B (?).

Several years after their marriage, David and Elizabeth came to occupy a home built on the south east corner of an intersection of the so-called "Ridge Road" and the lane leading to the William Buchanan home. This location is depicted in an old Somerset County atlas published by the Beers Company. Several of their older children were born in the old homestead, where William Buchanan lived; the others after the family moved to their new home at the Ridge Road.

David and Elizabeth (Gahagen) Buchanan became the parents of eleven known children, namely:

Thomas G.	born May 19, 1841
Margaret Emma	born April 21, 1843
Elizabeth Clara	born October 4, 1845
Sarah Helen	born March 29, 1848
Mary Jane	born October 1, 1850
Louisa Vickroy	born April 5, 1853
George Conrad	born May 27, 1855
Margaret W.	born March 31, 1858
Joseph William	born May 9, 1860
Franklin B.	born June 25, 1863
Ida Maud	born March 9, 1865

Of these children, Sarah Helen married John Hamer (III). Since she and her husband have been made the central figures in this historical record, a separate section has been devoted to them and their family. The circumstances of the other children will be given in the related families section.

Available information about "life at home" is very meagre. It is known that the Buchanans were Presbyterians but because of the non-availability of a church of that denomination, the family early affiliated itself with the Evangelical Church. It is also known that the home along the Ridge Road (no longer standing), near Buckstown, was of wood construction and was heated by a Hathaway wood-burning stove.

David Buchanan was evidently a shrewd and aggressive man. He was the executor of his father's estate from the latter's death in 1841, until relieved in 1848. He purchased a portion of his father's farm from the estate, where his family lived until 1883-1884 - several years after his death. To this, in a sense, was added the 50 acre tract his mother had assigned to two of David's children in 1850, and which they, in turn, assigned to their mother in 1868. On March 15, 1867, he was elected Shade township assessor and is known to have been serving in that capacity on April 3, of that year. In 1875 he was serving his township as Justice of the Peace.

Elizabeth, or "Crocket", as she was generally known, ran the household with a firm hand. Incidentally, the origin of the "Crocket" in her name is now unknown. There is a suspicion her parents may have used it to honor an old friend. Research has failed to uncover any direct kinship with the Crocket family. Elizabeth was an expert tailloress, specializing in men's suits and shirts. She also operated a huge loom in the home, on which she made carpet. It has not been established how she acquired those skills. It is understood that her activities in the home were otherwise rather limited. She baked the bread but her daughters were held responsible for the balance of the household chores. It appears that she, like Catherine Hamer, enjoyed visiting her friends or receiving them in her home. She survived her husband by many years. When the farm was sold in 1883-1884, she and two unmarried daughters, Louise and Margaret, moved to Scalp Level, perhaps to be near another daughter, Mary Jane, who was married to John Veil. Elizabeth became Postmistress at Scalp Level. With her death, her daughter Margaret became Postmistress.

David Wesley Buchanan died on February 5, 1879. He was first buried in the cemetery on his father's farm. Elizabeth (Gahagen) Buchanan died on July 23, 1904. She was first buried in the Lutheran Cemetery at Scalp Level. Later, the remains of both, and of others of their family, were removed to a family plot in the Richland Cemetery, Richland township, Cambria County, Pa.

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