

KNOW YOUR ROOTS

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 2 ISSUE FREE/ELSON MARCH

THE BIG MYSTERY WHO IS WILLIAM FREE'S FATHER? A, B, OR C?

(ED. NOTE-Rebecca Jane Free, daughter of William Free, wife of James Durland who is son of Robert Durland and Mary Ann Crane.)

REBECCA'S HANDWRITTEN NOTE

Births
 Elizabeth W Free Sept 6th 1835
 Milton W Free Oct 14th 1837
 Mary J Free Aug 27th 1841
 Abigail M Free Jan 8th 1844
 Rebecca J Free July 26th 1848

Free Robins
 Hannah Free
 Nancy Free
 Jane Free
 Elizabeth Free
 John Free
 Elijah Free
 America Free
 William Free German
 Mother Scotch Irish

*Richard and Eleanor was Miss
 Hannah Stewart*

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A DESCENDANT OF HANS JACOB

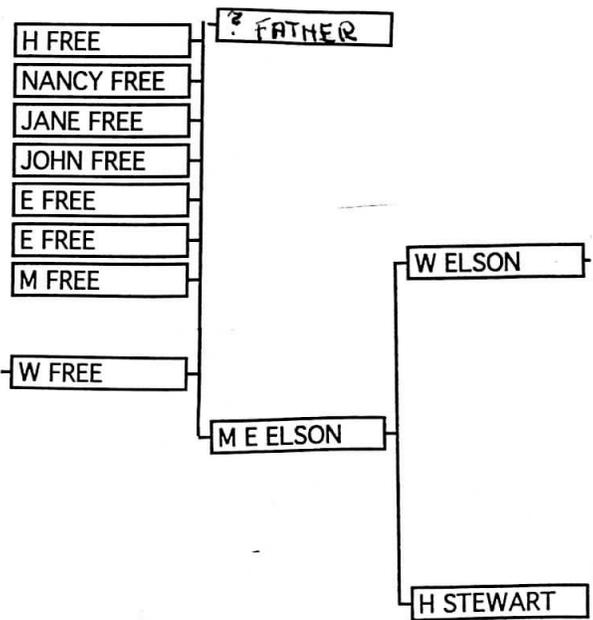
B DESCENDANT OF ABRAHAM

C DESCENDANT OF HESSIANS

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WILLIAM FREE
1796



According to the many census records, William Free was born in 1796 in Pennsylvania. That, and the information from the handwritten note of his daughter Rebecca, are the only data that give any information at all about his early years. If the note of Rebecca which is printed on page 1 is correct, it lists her siblings and those of William. Accordingly he had many sisters and only three brothers.

The 1790 census (the first one taken in the newly formed country), the only family in Pennsylvania with that many children is a John Free. There were only three Free families in Pennsylvania at that time. The census at that time does not give the name of the wife and mother but gives only the number of males and females in the family. However, since we know William was not born until 1796, just by elimination, the conclusion is, from the number of siblings, that the family lived in Radnor Township, Delaware County.

On this assumption, all the research was begun in this area but nothing has turned up to prove this relationship.

The search was on. When and where was John married, who is the mother to all these children and is he an ancestor of William?

Finding nothing at all in that time period that could determine parentage, the decision was made to go as far back as possible and then move forward hoping for a link. What were the possibilities?

The first Free that was found was on a list of Palatines from Germany who arrived in Philadelphia in 1739 on the ship LYDIA. These Germans, from a very distressed area, were poor peasants who found their way down the Rhine, past innumerable tolls and custom barriers, first to Holland, then to England, and then to America. At every state they encountered cheats and oppressors, and the ships which carried them to America (in return for selling them as indentured servants when they arrived) were known as "coffin ships." -ed note-more about the Palatines if a link is established.

See below the first possibility A. Hans Jacob Free could have been the original Free in America. Hans is very often John and as you will see there are many John's in the family. The custom seems to be that the first male is always John. Hans Jacob Free was 30 years old when he swore allegiance to the King of England and landed on these shores.

POSSIBILITY A



Court House at Philadelphia, in which Oath of Allegiance was signed (From Drawing in The Historical Society of Pennsylvania)

274 Pennsylvania German Pioneers

Hans Jacob (X) Frie	Caspar (X) Fric
Ulrich Spinner	Joannes (S) Hakie
Hendrick (±) Seeds	Hans Ulrick (H) Weber
Hendrick (X) Seeds, Junr	Hans Bär
Hans Jacob (+) Croop	Henrich Bär
Johannis Schleipffer	Hendrick (X) Bonie
Bart. Rudolp Bär	Joannes (X) Reytentar, Senr
Joannes (+) Weber	Joannes (X) Reytentar, Junr
Hendrick (X) Hober	Joh. Conradt Fromm
Hend ^{ik} (+) Croop	

[List 74 C] At the Court House of Philadelphia, December 11th 1739.

Present: The Honourable George Thomas, Esq', Lieutenant Governour, Edward Roberts, Esq', Mayor.

The Palatines whose Names are underwritten, imported in the Ship Lydia, James Allen, Com', from London, did this day take and subscribe the Oaths to the Government, viz.,

Hans Jacob Houser	Henry (X) Hobert
Ludwig (+) Frick	Henry (X) Grub
Johanes (±) Frick	Caspar (+) Frick
Andreas (X) Kruk	Johannes (H) Hagy
<u>Hans Jacob (+) Free</u>	Hans Ullerik (H) Weber
Ulrich Spinner	Hans Bär
Henry (±) Seetz	Henrich Bär
Henry (X) Seetz, Junior	Henry () Bony, sick
Hans Jacob (+) Grop	Johannes (+) Reittenar, Senior
Johanis Schleipfer	Johannes (X) Reittenar, Junior
Bart. Rudolf Bär	Joh. Conradt Fromm
Joannes (+) Weber	

PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN PIONEERS-

*At the Court House of Philadelphia December 11th 1739
The Palatines whose Names are underwritten, imported in the Ship
Lydia James Allen Com' from London, did this day take and subscribe
the Oaths to the Government viz.*

*Hans Jacob Houser Johannes d' Hagy
Ludwig + Frick Hans & Ullerik Weber
Johanes + Frick Grop
Andreas + Kruk Grop
Hans Jacob (+) Free Henry Bony
Ulrich Spinner Johannes + Reittenar
Henry + Seetz Johannes + Reittenar
Henry + Seetz junior
Hans + Jacob Grop
Johannes Schleipfer
Bart. Rudolf Bär
Johannes + Weber
Henry Hobert
Henry + Grop
Caspar + Frick*

POSSIBILITY B. The will below is interesting for many reasons. First, it was indexed under the name John and William, both names that were being researched. The actual person making the will is Abraham but he names his children John, William, Abraham, Mary, and Martha. It takes some patience to read the document because it is written in 1738 when the area still belonged to England.

The area is Newtown, Chester County which is the mother county of Delaware.

Abraham seems to be a man of means because he not only has property in this county but a plantation in Philadelphia County.

So now, is he the ancestor of William, father of Rebecca?

Again, the names are significant. John is the first child mentioned. William is the second. Both of these names are family names but where does Abraham come in? In the illustration of the 1790 census you will see that Abraham is also in Newton Township in Delaware County.

Usually members of the same family buy land and farms close to each other and from the number of women and female siblings of Williams, Rebecca's father, the only John with so many females, is the one in Radner Township which adjoins Newton Township.

I Abraham Free of Newtown in the County of Chester in the Province of Pennsylvania Cooper being weak of body but of sound mind and Memory Please be given to almighty God for the same Therefore knowing the Mortality of my Body and that it is appointed for a moment to Die and being desirous to settle my Estate in order to make and obtain his my last Will and Testament in manner following that is to say First and Chiefly I Recommend my soul into the hands of God who gave it and my Body I Commit to the Earth to be Decently Buried at the Discretion of my Executor hereafter named and as for what Temporal Estate hath pleased God to bestow upon this World give and Dispose of in the order following: I Give I Give unto my Will that my last Debts and Funerals Expences be first paid and Discharged: I Give and Bequeath unto my Well Beloved Wife Ann Free all my Good Chattels and Moveables of all kinds whatsoever Money in any Chests Bonds Bills and Outstanding Debts of any sort only Excepted and Reserved: I Give and Bequeath unto my said well Beloved Wife my Mesuage Plantation Tract and Parcel of Land situate in Newtown aforesaid during her Widowhood or while she shall Remain unmarried: I Give and Bequeath unto my said Beloved Wife the sum of Twenty Pounds of Current Money of the said Province to be paid unto her out of the Money that shall arise on the sale of my Land situate in the County of Philadelphia here in Directed to be sold, at which the above said Request to be made and read of her Heirs and Descendants of my Estate both Real and Personal: I Give order and Direct that my Executors or the Survivors of them do sell Alien and Convey all that my said Tract and Parcel of Land situate in the said County of Philadelphia with the appurtenances containing by Estimation two hundred and fifty acres be the same more or less: I Give and Bequeath unto my Executors all that my said Mesuage Plantation Tract and Parcel of Land situate in Newtown aforesaid with the appurtenances, and to the heirs of the survivor of them for to be sold Alien and Conveyed by my Executors or the survivor of them and in default of such Alienation by my Executors or the survivor of them then in that case that the said Mesuage Plantation Tract and Parcel of Land with the appurtenances be sold & Conveyed by the heir or heirs of such surviving Executor but always excepting Reserving unto my said Wife the aforesaid printed sum of Twenty Pounds in the said Mesuage and Plantation: I Give and Bequeath all the moneys arising on the sale of my said two Tract and Parcel of Land her by Directed to be sold as aforesaid the rest and residue of my Personal Estate not herein before bequeathed after the said Twenty Pounds given unto my wife Debts Incumbrances and Demands on the said Lands being paid and Discharged unto my dear and Beloved Children to wit John, William, Abraham, Mary and Martha Free to be Divided only that the Share or Decent of my said Sons be made Ten pounds a pecke more then the Share

Share or Portion of Each of my said Daughters, and it is my Will that if it shall happen that one or more of my Children before his or her age of Twenty one Years or Marriage that then his or her or their Share or Portion be Equally Distributed amongst the Survivors of them: I Nominate my dear and Beloved wife Ann Free my faithful Friend Mordcaai Lewis of Newtown aforesaid Yeoman to be Executor of this my last Will and Testament giving and granting unto them and to the survivor of them full Power to act thereon according to the true Intent and Meaning hereof: I Nominate Lewis Rice of Newtown aforesaid Yeoman and David Lewis of Radnor in the said County of Chester Yeoman as Trustees Deferring them to be appointed to my Executors and see that this my Will be faithfully and punctually observed and performed AND Sincerely I Declare to be Valid and True as former and other Wills or Testaments by me made in word or Writing & Declare this only to be my last Will and Testament. In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this the fourth day of the month of October last past and in one thousand seven hundred and thirty eight

Signed sealed and Published by the said Abraham Free to be his last Will and Testament after the words I bequeath and the words my said Children were subscribed in the presence of us whom he desired to be Witnesses

Lewis Rice
David Lewis
Pres. Howard
Gaber Lewis
Chester Oct. 4 1738
Then personally appeared Lewis Rice & David Lewis of the Witnesses to the within written Will who on their solemn Oath affirmations do declare that they were present and saw the Testator then and there in full and perfect Memory and sound Mind and that the said Will was by him made and signed and that the said Witnesses at the time of their being sworn did not know the Testator and that they were sworn to the best of their knowledge and belief

Another similarity is the name of Abraham's wife, that is - the Abraham in the 1790 census. Ruth was found to be the first child born to William and his wife Mary Elizabeth Elson which means that she could have been named after the Ruth, wife of Abraham mentioned above. Ruth child of William also appears on the 1860 census in Jersey County, Illinois although she does not appear on the 1870 census in Flora, Illinois. The supposition is that she died between the two decades and the handwritten note of Rebecca was made after Ruth died.

With all these name similarities: first male child named John, the Abrahams, Ruths, and Williams, it would seem that Possibility B is the probable one. However, with no proof of what happened in the intervening years there is no way of knowing.

Other siblings of Rebecca who remained in Ohio also do not appear in the note. All in all, William and Mary Elizabeth Elson Free had nine children after their marriage in 1822 in Ohio and only those who lived in Flora are noted in Rebecca's note in spite of the information about William's siblings. See page 1 for her note and below for the 1850 census in Ohio.

Then there is Possibility C to consider. William's father could have been one of the Hessians who came to help the British in the Revolutionary War.

From the account that follows written in another family's book, the name of Frederick is the earliest ancestor. The name, the time, the county (York) just do not jibe with any of the names nor the places but the possibility cannot be discarded until more information is available.

The mystery goes on for the time being.

Year 1850 1850-1860 CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES

OHIO
CARROLL COUNTY BROWN TWP
Place of Enumeration:

Page	Dwelling No.	Family No.	Names	Age	Sex	Color	Occupation, etc.	Value - Real Estate	Value - Personal Property	Birthplace	Married in yr.	School in year	Can't Read or Write	Enumeration Date	Remarks
191			WM FREE	54	M	W	FARMER			PA					
			MARY E. EISON	44	F	W				Verg					
			RUTH - B1825	25	F					Ohio					
			JOHN - B1827	23						Ohio					
?			WM H. - B1829	21	M					Ohio					
			ELSON - B1830	20	M		living with E. Elson & Mary Elson - Carroll			Ohio					
			ELIZABETH B1835	15	F					Ohio					
			MILTON (W) B1837	13	M					Ohio					
			MARY GORS B1843	7	F					Ohio					
			ALWILDA M B1845	5	F					Ohio					
			REBECCA J B1848	2	F					Ohio					

727. KIVADY VY
GENEALOGY OF THE VALE, WALKER, LITLER
AND OTHER RELATED FAMILIES
FREE BY GEORGE W. VALE

The writer's ancestral family of Free is of German origin and has been traced back to the time of the Revolutionary War in America. The earliest ancestor known, Frederick Free (No. 1475), was among the thousands of Hessian mercenary soldiers brought by the British Government to fight with the Redcoats against the American colonists during the latter's struggle for independence. It will be shown hereinafter that Frederick Free deserted the British armed forces, espoused the American cause, married, and settled eventually in Ross County, Ohio, where he became a respected citizen. His surname in his native Hesse Cassel is not known. It could have been the German equivalent of Free which he could have anglicized when he came to America. There is also the possibility that he adopted the name as an alias when he deserted the Hessian ranks or to exemplify his freedom in the new country.

Because of our ancestor's background and the stigma which many historians have created in writing of the role played by the Hessian mercenaries, diligent efforts were made to find a fair, reasonable and unbiased account (1) of the manner in which they were exploited by their despotic native rulers in hiring them out to a foreign government for greatly-needed revenue and (2) of the absorption into the American way of life of thousands of them who were not returned to their homeland at the end of the Revolutionary War. Such an account seems to be the following quoted from the chapter "British and Hessian Prisoners," in the "History of York County, Pennsylvania," by George R. Frowell, published in 1907:

"The surrender of Burgoyne to Gates at Saratoga, October 18, 1777, placed in the hands of Congress, then in session at York, the disposition of nearly 6,000 prisoners of war. Sir John Burgoyne, the famous British general, with a well-equipped army, had passed up Lake Champlain from Canada and down the Hudson intending to join Sir Henry Clinton at New York City. After two unsuccessful attacks upon the American army, under General Gates, he fell back to Saratoga, where he surrendered his entire army, including his two major-generals, William Phillips and Baron Riedesel. The former had commanded the British troops comprising the right of Burgoyne's army, and the latter the German troops on the left. An official report states that 5,800 troops surrendered at Saratoga, of whom about 2,400 were Germans and the balance British. According to the terms of surrender, known in English history as the 'Convention of Saratoga,' the British and Hessian prisoners were to be marched to Boston and from that port sent to England. The British forces were placed under command of Phillips and the Germans under Riedesel, while the entire army on this march was guarded by two brigades of American troops. If any of these prisoners desired to take the oath of allegiance to the American government, they were permitted to desert. About 100 Germans and nearly the same number of British took advantage of this opportunity before they reached Boston. As the prisoners expected soon to be released, strict discipline was enforced and the best of decorum displayed while on this march.

422

POSSIBILITY C

HESSIANS

Conrad Free, a butcher, is listed as a citizen of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in a directory of that city compiled in 1780 from the assessment-roll of that year, giving "a complete view of the business interests and trade occupations of the time."

In the "History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania," by Franklin Ellis and S. Evans (1883), is mentioned Laughlin Free as an early settler whose name appears on the list of taxables in 1780. It also contains the following:

"Leacock Township. Settlement. The following is a list of the landholders of the township in 1782, taken from an old list of taxables, etc., and returned for that year: * * * Isaac Free (2 negroes), Jacob Free (3 negroes, 1 servant), Eman Free (1 servant).

* * * * *

"Strasburg Township. Assessment-roll of Strasburg township for 1780, at which time it included the present township of Paradise: * * * Israel Free, Cornelius Free (1 negro), John Free (1 negro), Isaac Free (1 negro), Philip Free, John Free, farmer (1 negro), David Free, Joseph Free, Daniel Free, William Free."

The Federal Census of 1790 lists the following persons as "Heads of Families:"

Pennsylvania

- Free, Abraham - Delaware County
- Free, John - " "
- Free, George - Bedford County
- Free, Peter - York County
- Free, Jacob - " "

Maryland

- Free, Nicholas - Montgomery County
- Free, Alexander - " "
- Free, Nicholas - Prince Georges County
- Free, Charles - " "
- Free, John - " "

The "Archives of Maryland - Muster Rolls and Other Records of Service of Maryland Troops in the American Revolution, 1775-1783," published in 1900 by the Maryland Historical Society, lists a George Free as having been "Enrolled by Capt. Jacob Good, Lieut. John Battis Thompson, Lieut. John Ghiselin and Ensign John Smith. Reviewed and Passed by Baker Johnson, July 20th, 1776."

Private Nicholas Free is reported in the "Musters of Maryland Troops" as having drawn pay on December 18, 1782, while serving in "2 Co., 3 B. Capt. Jas. W. Gray," and having been discharged on November 29, 1783.

In the "History of Western Maryland," by J. Thomas Scharf, A. M., (1882), George Free is reported to have received a land-grant of 13 acres, known as "Hard Bargain," in Frederick County, Maryland, in 1788.

2 Mares 1/4
2 m 1/2
FF

1 Mare 1/4
3 M 1/2
FF

THE SCOTCH IRISH

In Rebecca's note on page 1 is the reference to her mother, MARY ELIZABETH ELSON, being Scotch Irish. Over the years this name has been the subject of much controversy. Discussions were carried on principally by the American-Irish Historical Society and the Scotch-Irish Society of America. Whether these immigrants were really Irish or truly Scots is important only if ones' origins lay claim to the term. The Scotch-Irish left from Ireland, hence the controversy.

For this reason, a brief history will help in the interpretation of Rebecca's statement. There is no doubt that these 18th century immigrants from Northern Ireland are different people from the Irish who fled famine and persecution to come to America in the 19th century.

The story of the name Scotch-Irish really starts about 1600 when King James I became King of both Scotland and England.

At about this time, religious fervor in Scotland was at a staggering pitch. Religion was a primary reason for part of the migration of these dissenting Scots to Ireland mostly to Ulster in Northern Ireland and it gave the Scot-Ulster immigrants a distinctive character that they never lost, not even after the later migration to American.

Whether or not the ancestor of was one of these has not yet been established. The name ELSON is on none of the lists in Ulster, Northern Ireland. So the question remains when did her ancestors migrate to Northern Ireland from Scotland and then eventually to the U.S.

While religious liberty was a motivating force in the beginning, it has to be noted that all of those who left

Ulster and migrated to the U.S. were Presbyterians as opposed to Catholics, the predominant religion in Ireland at that time.

While many moneyed citizens did leave Ulster, many of the poor did also. The one deterrent was the cost of the passage. This was overcome by many who sold themselves as "Indentured Servants" to pay for their passage. Without this type of payment for passage, many might otherwise could not have made the trip.

The Scotch-Irish migration to these shores began in the 1730's. They were farmers, deeply religious and dedicated to freedom. Most of them were literate and hardworking.

The earliest research on the Elsons of Rebecca's family falls within these perimeters.

Rebecca's mother, Mary Elson, was born in Virginia. Her grandfather, William Elson, was also born in Virginia although he died in Ohio. In the will abstracts of Brook County, West Virginia, this William, (not to be confused with Rebecca's father, William Free) is mentioned as the son of Richard Elson, who died December 4, 1804. (West Virginia earlier was just the State of Virginia)

One of the earliest mentions of Richard Elson is in the Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia, a book which extracts court records of Augusta County, Virginia 1745-1800. The Scotch-Irish settlement in Augusta was the largest.

Also, another book of Virginia Court records mentions that Richard was appointed constable in 1776.

(continued)

SCOTCH-IRISH CONTINUED.. Through family legends, Rebecca is known to be very God fearing and very strict. She was a pillar of the First Methodist Episcopal Church in Flora, Illinois. Therefore, her influence from her mother, Mary Elizabeth Elson, certainly was handed down through the Elson family to the Free family. Truly Rebecca inherited the Scotch-Irish Heritage.

From Harry to Rebecca to Mary Elson to William Elson and from Richard the traits through genes have always been there.

FROM THE EDITOR-This issue, having had more time to work on it, is more likewhat those in the future will be.

I would like to have some feed-back on what you think. The "Mystery Story" was it clear? Did you like it?

Also, the story on the Scotch-Irish, did you consider that it meant more Scotch than Irish?

If you want to take the time, I would appreciate letters of comments. Perhaps the Newsletter did not meet your expectations. I would want to know that.

I had a wonderful call out of the blue from Jimmie Ferguson (address below) whose wife is related to Robert Durland and Mary Ann Crane through Wiliam, one of the brothers who ran the Hardware Store, the only brother that I had no material on. He is a controller of the

airlines after having been a pilot in the Army for many years. He's young, the age of Gini. Anyway it was great to have him call and we were both happy to have found each other. This is the fun part of doing genealogy, finding kin all over the States.

The Schueneman Newsletter will be late in May because I am going to Germany April 30 and won't return until the 22nd of May. Since I am going to the area where I think the ancestors came from, I want to wait until I return to report ~~on my~~

My first stop will be HERNE which is the area that I think the family is from. The second is HANOVER. From there I hope to take several train trips and one particularly to Berlin as I have never been there. I'm also hoping to get to the places that will give me information on the ancestors' families. This is a home-stay program so I'm hoping that my hosts will help me out. At any rate, this is a trip that I have wanted to take for a long time.

I spoke with our Free cousin in California (address below) and we have made tentative arrangements to drive to Oklahoma together. She is the one whose grandmother Alwilda is the sister of Rebecca. The two maiden sisters lived there with their brother and his children and I'm hoping the children will still be somewhere in Oklahoma.

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