

F
232
.L8G6





BRISCOE GOODHART,

THE GERMAN SETTLEMENT.

Early History of This Interesting Section of Loudoun County. Va

Written for the TELEPHONE by Briscoe Goodhart.

That portion of Loudoun County Virginia bounded on the east by Catoctin Mountain, on the west by the Short Hill Mountain, on the north by the Potomac river, on the south by the village of MORRISONVILLE is known as The German settlement—a people who came from the Palatine states of Germany, about 1727. Why they left their fatherland and migrated to America is not exactly known, although there were several causes that hastened such a conclusion. First, There has always lurked in the human breast a desire to chase the Star of Empire westward; but there were other causes, more potent, that induced this people to seek a home in the Western World, The Germans are preeminently, a liberty-loving people. They are not surpassed by any nationality in rendering allegiance to those principles which underlie all free governments.

Germany had long been dominated by many petty rulers, the landed aristocracy, who compelled the yeomanry to work their lands free, a system little less than human slavery. Whatever Napoleon may have been guilty of in his march of conquest through Europe, he certainly lifted the burdens of many German tillers of the soil. On his entry into Germany, he found eight hundred petty tyrants sapping away the life of the people. A decree was issued reducing the number to thirty three, thus throwing off the yoke of bondage and partially, at least, liberating the people. Still the Palatine states along the Rhine were over-run by the French, who despoiled the homes of these peaceful people and wasted their substance. Their cities were destroyed and their churches dismantled. Even the beautiful Castle of Heidelberg was pillaged and plundered. The Germans were the bulwark of the Reformation and, of course, a target for ignorance and superstition that had been lurking in darkness for centuries, but was then let loose to torment this people whose faces were turned

towards America, where liberty of both mind and body was guaranteed to all. It is readily conceded by all that the Germans did not come to America simply to make money or for worldly gain, but for liberty pure and simple, as has been stated. The first immigrants came from Germany, but many of them had sojourned in Pennsylvania for a year or more, and it is probable that their exodus to Virginia was hastened by the Indian wars that were devastating some of the beautiful valleys of that state. In 1730 the Indian raids in the Colebrook valley and the attacks in Falkners Swamp and Goschenoppen settlements, burning cabins and grain, driving off stock and murdering the settlers had become unbearable. Governor Gordon was petitioned for protection, which was promised, but was slow in coming. These depredations were continued at intervals for about two years. In the meantime glowing reports had come from the fertile valleys of Virginia, and as a result many Germans left Pennsylvania and located in the Shenandoan and other valleys of this state.

This was doubtless the Genesis of the German settlement in Loudoun county—or Prince William, as it was then. Other immigrants immediately followed, from Germantown and Burks, and other counties of Pennsylvania.

The coming of the Germans to Loudoun county, in an organized capacity, to become permanent residents, occurred in 1734, although there is some evidence that German traders visited this locality several years previous. Capt. Henrich Batte, a German explorer, traveled from Tidewater on the Potomac, crossing the Allegheny to the Ohio river, in 1607, and, of course, passed through this section. The first influx of Germans to Loudoun consisted of sixty families or more. This was necessary for several reasons; first, for protection, as the Indians were at that period, and have been since, treacherous. A smaller number would have invited annihilation. Another reason, the German would find it exceedingly inconvenient to be located in a community where his language could not be understood. In coming in a colony of that number, nearly all branches of industry were represented, thus helping each other. There were carpenters, blacksmiths, shoemakers, leather dressers, weavers, loom makers, millers, clock makers, silver smiths, kettle makers, tanners, cabinet makers, hatters, tailors, boat makers, chair makers, distillers and preachers. This array of artisans made the colony strong, independent and self sustaining, from the very beginning. The forest was rapidly cleared and generally one-room cabins were erected and a system of small farming inaugurated at once. The first sheep were brought to the County by these settlers. The fair daughters were experts with the wheel—not bicycle, but spinning wheel, and supplied yarn for stockings, and with the loom made blankets for bedding and





L. W. SLATER,



JAMES W. GRUBB.

THE GERMAN SETTLEMENT.

Early History of This Interesting Section of Loudoun County.

Written for the TELEPHONE by Briscoe Goodhart

[Continued from last week.]

As good farms were established and buildings erected, a desire came to own a homestead. The deed to land from Lord Fairfax was never regarded as the best, largely caused by the uncertainty of the British Crown to confirm a transfer of a grant from one party to another. A word about the Fairfax grant. In 1684 a grant was made to Lord Hopton, by King Charles II. of the Northern Neck of Va. The patentee sold it to Lord Culpeper. This sale was confirmed by letters patent of King James II, in 1688. This tract contained all land between the Rappahannock and Potomac rivers, from the head waters of these streams to the Chesapeake Bay. This tract descended to Lord Culpeper's only daughter, Catherine, who married Lord Fairfax, from whom it was entailed upon the oldest son, Thomas. Lord Thomas Fairfax came to Virginia in 1745, because, it is claimed, of being disappointed in love; and single blessedness must have agreed with him, as he lived to be 91 years old.

He employed George Washington, then 17 years old, to survey the land and lay out farms, so that the proprietor could collect rents and give titles to purchasers. His Royal Highness erected his mansion (Greenway Court) about twelve miles south-east of Frederickstown, now Winchester, where he resided until his death, in 1782. He left no issue to inherit this vast estate, but bequeathed it to Rev.

Denny Martin, his nephew, in England, who in turn left it by will to Gen. Phillip Martin. In the meantime a legal fight was in progress, in the courts of Va., between Lord Fairfax's heirs and John Hite and others, and continued for over fifty years. Finally the Fairfax interest was purchased by Chief Justice Marshall, Raleigh Colson and Richard Henry Lee. (Leesburg was named in honor of the latter.) It will thus be seen that the Fairfax grant retarded the settlement of this section of Va., while the title to the land invited a suit in court from the first; and after the United States had gained independence, the value of a Fairfax deed furnished a fertile field for litigation until finally the entire estate was swallowed up in lawyer's fees, as is shown above. This litigation began in 1736 and continued until 1786, when all the original parties were resting in their graves. John Wm. Compher, residing near Waterford, has a deed given by Lord Fairfax, and there are doubtless many others in the Settlement. The uncertainty of a clear title to the land caused many of the early Germans to emigrate to Ohio and Kentucky, during the latter part of the 18th century.

Lord Fairfax was a kindly-disposed man, but rather sporty. He is said to have kept 50 fox hounds and loved to follow them with numerous invited guests. He gave land to every church in his domain, regardless of creed, to build a house of worship on and then gave all the material to construct the building. He had a gorgeous mansion, with a labyrinth of rooms, but no one to occupy them but himself, servants and invited guests—they were legion.

The Germans of Loudoun, like those in the other American colonies, were intensely loyal during the Revolutionary war, and did not hesitate to show their faith by their works. Armand's Legion, recruited by authority of Congress during the summer of 1777, was composed of men who could not speak English, and contained many of the Germans of Loudoun. Many of the Germans of the Shenandoah Valley also belonged to this command; and later, during the war of 1812, many of the Germans of Loudoun served in the regiment commanded by Gen. Mason. The latter was also a resident of Loudoun and lived two miles north of Leesburg. He was later United States senator from Virginia and was killed in a duel, at Bladensburg, near Washington Feb. 6, 1819. His Regiment took part in the battle of Baltimore, in the war of 1812. The grandfather of the author of this sketch belonged to Gen. Mason's command.

It may not be out of place here to state, that the success of the Revolutionary war was largely due to the German soldiers in the war; and even before the blow was struck in 1775, Gen. John De Kalb, the hero who fell at Camden, S. C., was sent by the French Minister Choiseul, to investigate the relations existing between

Great Britain and the American colonies, and that report was of vast importance in shaping the later policy of France, under Vergennes, when LaFayette was sent with material and effective aid to the assistance of the sorely beset Revolutionists. Gen. DeKalb's influence in that report was a more powerful factor in shaping the action of the French Government than the present generation is probably aware of.

Gen. VonSteuben, the German Martinet of America, rendered valuable service in the American cause. During the early period of the war the army was laboring under great disadvantages owing to a lack of discipline and cohesive organization. The colonial armies, drawn from the farm, without military education and training, were a band of courageous patriots, lacking that rigid discipline that always marks the true soldier. Fortunate at this period, came William August Frederick Von Steuben, a German soldier by profession. He learned the art of war under the greatest of European generals, Frederick the Great, King of Prussia. It was then Gen. Steuben came, says Scudder, and with wonderful skill, trained and drilled the raw regiments. The camp was transformed into a great military school, and before the winter was over he had made a solid, well disciplined army; and that rigid thoroughness, characteristic of the German school, has made the American army invincible on many a field of battle since. The American Congress and Gen. Washington had keenly felt the need of a military genius and were fortunate in procuring the services and wise counsel of Gen. Steuben. See Washington Irving's *Life of Washington*, page 355—56, Vol. 2.

After the war Gen. VonSteuben was made Inspector General of the army, and upon his retirement to private life, Congress presented him with a costly gold hilt sword, and granted him a pension of \$2500 per year, largest pension granted at that period. The states of Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York voted him tracts of land. It is no news to the readers of the TELEPHONE to state that the British flag, at Yorktown, was first lowered to Gen. Steuben.

The Rev. General Peter Muehlenberg was pastor of the Lutheran church at Woodstock, in the Shenandoah valley. When the war began he heard the call to arms and announced a patriotic service at his little church, and preached from the text: "There is a time for everything," and solemnly added, "this is the time to fight." A wave of patriotic fervor swept over the audience, and after the sermon he laid off his ecclesiastical robes buckled on his sword and invited his hearers to follow him. One hundred and sixty two responded. A company was immediately organized, with their pastor as captain. Upon the recommendation of George Washington and Patrick Henry, Capt. Muehlenberg was commissioned Colonel of the 8th Va., Reg.,

by act of Congress, Feb. 21st, 1777. He was promoted to Brig. Gen. with 3rd and 5th Va. assigned to his brigade. The command was largely composed of Germans. The brigade took part in the battles of Brandywine, Germantown and Valley Forge, and entered the campaign of South Carolina and Virginia and bore a conspicuous part in the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, of Yorktown. After the surrender, Gen. Washington appointed him Military Governor of Virginia. In later years he was elected to Congress and died in 1807, full of honors. There were others of less note—Generals Von Der Weedon, Stark, Stephens, Darke and many others of German blood, whose services were an important factor in securing American Independence. But this is a slight digression, and we will return to our subject.

The Germans of Loudoun were opposed to slavery which they evidenced both by precept and example. Probably not more than one dozen slaves were ever owned by the Germans of Loudoun. Nor were they politicians; and comparatively few of them ever aspired to hold office, but they seldom failed to vote; and to this day, a larger vote is polled in the German Settlement, according to population, than any other portion of the County; and while they generally vote the Republican ticket, their love of liberty is too strong to be partisan. When the question of Secession confronted them, in 1861, they were emphatic in their opposition to the movement; and later, when compelled to take sides, you could count upon the fingers of your left hand those who entered the Confederate army, while many of them followed the flag of the Union.

While this article is historical, rather than political, it may be of interest to some to give the vote of the last presidential election at the principal precinct in the Settlement. The vote, as returned at Lovettsville, in 1896 was: McKinley 226, Bryan 74. And if the voting had been at this same ratio throughout the state, it would have given McKinley a majority of nearly 300,000. And to carry the comparison still further, if the vote throughout the United States had been cast at the same ratio as at Lovettsville, the majority for McKinley would have been nearly 8,000,000.

Several young men who belong to the German Colony of Loudoun went west to "grow up with the country," and have exerted more than a passing influence in the states of their adoption. W. B. Shutt, late U. S. Attorney for southern Illinois; Mr. Wolford, who served his district as M. C. from Kentucky; Attorney General Axaline, of Ohio are all from the German Settlement of Loudoun county.

Axline

By rigid economy the settlers soon became prosperous. The wants of the people were few and money was plenty. Stock was fine and plentiful, The nearest market was Alexandria. Large quantities of grain were raised and a large proportion was made into whisky, more from necessity than preference, as it could be marketed more easily. That was before the day of the festive revenue officer. The settlement supported about eight still houses, and all did a thriving business. There were eight flour and grist mills in and bordering on the settlement, and to woolen and cotton mills. Tobacco was also a staple crop. The land was new and rich and produced a superior article. It could be more easily marketed than grain and was a very profitable crop. The first arsenal established in the United States, in 1790, was at Harpers Ferry about six miles from the settlement, which furnished a fine market for the product of the stills. The building of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal also furnished a fine market at their very door. In those days it was supposed that man could not dig in the ground all day without stimulants. There were what were called grogg bosses, who issued four drinks of whisky a day to each hand. There was great excitement at an early period about gold mining. The mines were on the Dutchman, a stream that empties into the Potomac about a mile above the Brunswick Bridge. There is a story that copper tools were unearthed at these mines by the early settlers, and were supposed to belong to a prehistoric race. There is also an old marble quarry on the Hickman farm, at Taylortown. Large slabs of white marble are exposed to view, which seems abundant and of fine quality.

There is a tradition that the Earl of Tankerville (Charles Bennett) was granted a large tract of land in Virginia by the British Crown which embraced the entire German settlement, and leased it to the early settlers at 1ct per acre. This grant was previous to the Fairfax grant and was probably surrendered to the latter upon concession elsewhere. Lord Tankerville never left England, or at least he never lived in Virginia. The only reminder of him in the settlement is the church named in his honor and the Tankerville Brass Band, an organization that is probably over a hundred years old, the oldest band in the state. This band has made but little progress of late years.

[To be Continued next week.]

woolens for winter clothing. Everything pertaining to farming in those days was primitive. Iron was scarce and very expensive. Nearly everything was made of wood. The farm wagon was entirely of wood, as well as all other farm implements. The first public buildings erected were school houses, which were also termed meeting houses. The Luthern and Reformed churches were organized the first year, although there are no records in existence to prove this. The first minutes and records of the Luthern church at Lovettsville were destroyed when the church was burned, years ago. The first records of the Reformed Church were also lost, as the oldest records of that church in existence are dated 1766; but there is positive evidence that the church was organized before that date. The Rev. Michael Schlatter traveled from Germantown Pa, on horseback and visited the Reformed congregation at Lovettsville, May 14, 1748 and stopped with Father Wenner, who was probably a minister and lived near the river, oposite Berlin, now Brunswick.

There has been a legendary tradition that German Hessians founded the German settlement, but it is impossible to reconcile this tradition with history, as this settlement was established nearly fifty years before the Hessians arrived in America. During the Revolutionary war, a profligate German Prince, who was related to the Royal family of Great Britain, hired to England 30,000 Hessians to fight against the American colonies, for which England paid over \$2,000,000, in addition to their salaries, which were at least \$2,000,000 more. There were killed, wounded and missing about 3,000, about 9,000 were taken prisoners and confined in barracks at Winchester, Staunton, Fredericksburg and Richmond, and about 200 taken to Cumberland, Md., Frederick Md., and Lancaster Pa. After the war few, if any, of the prisoners returned to England or Hesse-Cassel. Lowell says fully 12,000 never returned. It will be seen from the above that none of these located in Loudoun, as the German settlement was thickly populated before the Revolutionary war.

Gen. Washington's army obtained valuable supplies from Loudoun, such as grain, beef and pork. It is impossible to give a correct list of the early settlers, but the following names are believed to represent all the German families, given in alphabetical order:

Arnold, Ames, Axaline, Baker, Bartlett, Beamer, Bolin, Brawn, Boyer, Best, Booth, Cooper, Compher, Crim, Cruze, Cordell, Davis, Dorr, Everhart, English, Eamich, Fry, Fawley, Filler, Frasier, Goodhart, Grubb, Heater, Hickman, Householder, Hamilton, Hefner, Hoy, Houser, Kemp, Kern, Kalb, Lovett, Lay, Mann, Magaha, Martin, Mock, Mill, Nicewaner, Potterfield, Parmer, Ruse, Kopp, Roller, Sands, Spring, Stream, Stoneburner, Slater, Souder, Snoots, Swank, Sanbower, Stoutsenberger, Stouts, Stocks, Taylor, Tritapoe, Titus, Virts, Vincel, Wenner, Weiss, Wire, Wine, Wired, Walkman, Williams, Working, Wunder, Wolford.



SAMUEL E. TRITAPOE.



MAHLON H. BEST.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 415 379 0

