THE GERMANS AMONG US

LARGELY FROM TWO ADDRESSES TO THE SULLIVAN COUNTY GENEALOGY SOCIETY

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The immigration of Germans into the Valleys of the Holston, Clinch, and Powell was early, heavy, and largely forgotten. I will present evidence of this migration, and then recount how it came about, and define what sort of people these were.

Suk-suk-sukie! Is there any among the readers that knows what I have just done? All of you with roots on the farm will know that I have just called the cows, and have done so in a manner that is used far and wide across this country. It is not an English, nor an Irish, nor a Scottish call. Nor is it used in Germany today. It is from the medieval dialect of a special group of people who onced lived in the German province of Franconia, or Franken. The French, or the Franks, once conquered the part of present Germany around Frankfort (the "River Ford of the Franks") and lived there long enough to influence the German dialect spoken there. "Suggi" is the medieval Franchonian verb meaning "to suckle". How did it come to pass that a farmer in Southwest Virginia and East Tennessee would call his cattle in a forgotten ancient dialect from a small area of medieval Germany?

How many of you men, when you were growing lads, were teased that your pants looked like "high water britches". How many of you VPI fans yell "Hokie, Hokie, Hi!", and are aware that a "Hoche" was the German name for a hay wagon which had high sides? VPI was initially an agricultural college which recruited extensively among the German farmer's sons of the Valley of Virginia. Hokie became the English Virginian's nickname for these boys. Are salt cured hams, potato salad, sour krout, pickled vegetables, and pork fixed in every way so that everything but the squell was used familiar to you? All these are German. Even the name "Holston" is German.

How many of you are familiar with the following surnames? Abel, Akard, Akers, Altizer, Arnette, Arnold, Astrop, Atkins, Baum, Bayer, Beal, Bell, Benham, Berger, Bernhart, Blabough, Blubaough, Bogle, Bousch,

Bowers, Bowman,
Brock, Bruck, Bumgardner, Burke, Burkhart, Burgar, Carlock, Chrisman,
Cline, Cole,
Copenhaver, Criger, Cullup, Davault, Deck, Dellinger, Dinkens, Dishner,
Doack,
Droake, Dutton, Engle, Epling, Fischer, Fleenor, Fogleman, Foglesong,
Fraley, Frazier, Fuchs, Fulkerson, Funkhouser, Gamble, Gardner, Gobble,
Graybill, Graybeal, Greever, Groseclose, Gross, Hagey, Hankel,
Hansburger, Harless, Harr, Hart, Hartman, Hartsock, Haskell, Hayter,
Hendrick, Henniger, Hesse, Higganbotham, Hillman, Hite, Hoffman,
Honaker, Honeysucker, Hornbarger, Hortenstine, Houser, Huff, Istminger,
Kaiser, Kassel, Cassel, Castle, Kaylor,Kegley, Keller,Kendrick, Kestner,
Kinder, Kine, Kinser, Kline, Klutz, Kniceley,Koppenhafer, Kounts,
Counts, Countiss,Lampie, Leonard, Linder, Link, Litz, Lund, Mauk,
Meyers, Mooney, Mueller, Miller, Mongle, Mumpower, Neff, Olinger,
Painter, Preiss, Price, Rader, Rasnick, Rasnic, Reasor,
Repass, Rhoten, Riner, Roop, Rosenbaum, Rouse, Rupp, Ryan, Sauer,
Schafer,
Schyphers, Sheffey, Sharrett, Shankle, Shaffer, Shufflebarger, Shultz,
Shumate,
Slagle, Slemp, Snyder, Souder, Spangler, Spratt, Springer, Sproles,
Stacher, Statzer, Stoffel, Stover, Stringer, Stickley, Strouth, Stocker,
Stoffel, Sturgill, Susong,Teeter, Tilleman, Tilley, Tishner, Umbarger,
Vencill, Wampler, Wassum, Whisenet, Wier, Wigal, Wygal, Widner, Winegar,
Wise, Weiss, Wolf, Wolfenbarger, Woolwine,
Yost, Ziling, Zimmerman,Zink, Zinn.

These are but a sampling of the German names of the valleys of the Holston, Clinch, and Powell. Not included were the very numerous surnames that were simply translated from German to English and are therefore indistinguishable from the truely English bearers of these names. A quick and dirty list would be Weiss - White, Schwartz - Black, Grun - Green, Baur - Farmer, Müller - Miller, Wilhelms - Williams, Wilhelmson - Williamson, Bishof - Bishop, Braun - Brown, Stahl - Steel, Strasse - Street, Heyl - Hale, Vogel - Bird, Steiner - Stoner, Schmidt - Smith; the list goes on and on. These settlers will never be identified. That, actually, was their intent.

I have taken a quick look on the topographic maps for the Virginia Counties of Washington, Scott, Wise, and Lee and added some others off of the top of my head, and counted about 130 names of springs, cemeteries, and other geographic features bearing German family names. And this represents only the surface. Many more Germans passed through without leaving their names on the map.

So the evidence of early, heavy German settlement of the Valleys of the

Holston, Clinch, and Powell is varied and persuasive. What can one say about these German immigrants?

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EARLY GERMAN IMMIGRANT

There were two waves of intensive German immigration into this country, and they were different from one another. The first wave occurred largely from 1700 to the start of the Revolutionary War in 1776. The immigrants did not come from all over Germany, but were from a relatively small part of it. They shared the common experience of having been Protestant refugees and were mostly farmers. The second wave occurred in the mid 19th century and came from all over Germany, and were of all religions, and did not share the experience of having been refugees. There were many urbanites among them, and they tended to not have blended in with the rest of the American population as seamlessly as the first wave of immigrants. The Germans who settled Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee were of the first wave.

What was the history of these people? Why did they give up their home in Europe and come to a new land with a different language and culture? Why did they brave the horrors of a North Atlantic passage, and the terrors of settlement on the Indian frontier?

THE EUROPEAN STORY

Geography

If you are going to learn about German immigration into our area, you are going to have to deal with several unfamiliar political entities. Just as few of us had ever heard of the Balkan states of Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia, Hertzigovinia etc. before the present war; few people have a firm understanding of places like Alsace, Lorraine, The Palatinate, and Würtemberg. Since the German immigrants that ultimately settled the upper valleys of the Holston, Clinch, and Powell were from these European states, and since the American records of their emigration refer to them, we must become familiar with them.

Political Developments

You recall that in the Dark Ages the nations of Europe as we know them today did not exist. England and Spain were the first to come together into something like their present forms, and by the late 17th century France was well on the way to consolidating into something like its present shape. Germany, on the other hand did not exist as a nation. It was a linguistic zone consisting of over three hundred small states that perhaps averaged being the size of an American County. The French took advantage of this lack of political and military unity among their hereditary enemies, the Germans, and began the conquest of the culturally German principalities on her eastern border. This aggression was truly a nationalistic one, but was cloaked in the rhetoric of a religious war. By this time the political map of Western Europe had been drawn along religious lines, and nationalistic and religious objectives tended to coincide. At this point we need to drop back and look at the religious picture of central Europe, as this was the basic driving force behind the developments that populated our area with Germans. You can not understand the German immigration into our area without being familiar with cross currents of the Reformation and the sects that it produced.

The Reformation in Central Europe

The Protestant Reformation was much more complex that is generally presented. It started with John (or Jan) Huss in what is now the Czech Republic, who, about the year 1400 began to preach on the symbolic nature of Holy Communion, on the inappropriateness of obedience to the Pope and of the sale of indulgences, and the priesthood of the laity. He was excommunicated, and but made many converts in the Czech province of Moravia. These Moravians were driven into exile into Saxony, a German principality in what used to be East Germany. There they stayed for a couple of centuries or so, and became thoroughly German.

A century later Martin Luther borrowed these theologic doctrines from Huss, and began the real Reformation.

In the 1520's Huldreich Zwingli, a Swiss German, began the Swiss Reformation with his attacks on celibacy of the clergy, by promoting the supremacy of the scriptures as the legitimate source of authority, rather than the Pope, and by denouncing infant baptism. He borrowed heavily from Huss.

A generation later, the French Swiss John Calvin borrowed heavily from Huss and Zwingli, and founded a branch of theology that is named after him. In 1538 he was driven into exile to the city of Strasbourg, or

Strassburg, located in Alsace. Alsace was a principality located between the cultural frontiers of the French and German worlds. It had remained neutral in the great war of the Reformation, the Thirty Years War, and was a haven for the religious refugees from all over central Europe that that war produced.

So, here we have the major founding fathers of the denominations that were to seek refuge in the Valleys of the upper Holston, Clinch, and Powell. They borrowed heavily from each other theologically, but gradually different sects began to develop from each tradition. Let us list them, as they are the groups that emigrated to America.

The followers of John Huss, or Hussites, evolved into the Moravian, Amish, Mennonite, and Brethren Churches. The Calvinist denominations were the German Reformed, the Dutch Reformed, and the Presbyterian Churches.

Those Protestants who emphasized their opposition to infant baptism borrowed from both Huss and Calvin, and became known as the Anabaptists. The term is sometimes used to specify only the Hussite denominations, but the Baptist Church, which is Calvinist in origin, is its largest descendant.

Two denominations of significance to German settlement of our region that do not fit neatly into this classification system are the Dunkards and the Schwenkfelders.

The practical result of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) was that Central Europe was divided up between the Catholics and the Lutherans. All those other denominations became refugees. There was a power vacuum in the border states between France and the region that was in process of evolving into Germany. The Treaty of Westphalia that ended the Thirty Year's War had taken Alsace from the German Holy Roman Empire and had given nominal control of it to France, but had guaranteed the independence and freedom of religion of its people. This Treaty was guaranteed by King Charles of Sweden, who had been a major combatant it the Thirty Years War. These small states between France and Germany thought of themselves as being countries. They were Lorraine, Alsace, and the Palatinate; with the latter two being linguistically and culturally mostly German. The followers of the various branches of Huss and Calvin, as well as many Lutherans who had been driven out of the Catholic areas of Germany, flooded into these religious havens, where they lived for two or three generations.

The French referred to all of these Protestants as "Huguenots". The French had driven the Protestants of various denominations out of France

proper in 1572 following the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, and these refugees also settled in these border provinces, where the French Army had not yet gained control.

King Charles of Sweden invaded Russia, and was defeated and ruined by Tzar Peter the Great. Sweden lost its capacity to enforce the terms of the Treaty of Westphalia.

In a series of military operations centered around 1700 the French began the process of nullifying the Treaty of Westphalia and its guarantees of religious freedom for the border states, and first invaded, and then conquered Alsace, Lorraine, and the Palatinate. In Alsace's case they actually surrounded the place with troops in order to prevent the Protestants from fleeing, so that they could kill them instead. They killed tens of thousands. They drove all these various Protestant groups before them, and the world to this day mistakenly refers to all of them as "French Huguenots" even though many, if not most, were ethnic Germans.

The Alsatians went east into the Palatinate, but by 1730 the French had conquered that principality also. They dug up the bodies of the long dead Protestant Princes and dragged them behind horses through the streets of Heidelberg till there was nothing left of them. Not only did the various followers of Huss and Calvin become refugees, but the Lutherans also. Amongst these ethnic German refugees were large numbers of ethnic French members of the same denominations. It is hard to tell an ethnic French Protestant from an ethnic German one because many of the Germans had begun to spell their names in a French fashion, and after going to Holland both the French and Germans frequently adopted the Dutch versions of their names.

The Thirty Years War killed two thirds of the population of Germany, and the local Princes needed farmers and artisans to keep their principalities functional. They often recruited settlers amongst the Palatines. Many of the refugees returned to Germany, frequently reconverting to Catholicism as the price of reentry. Most of them went to Holland, where the Calvinist Dutch Reformed Church was the established religion; the members of the German Reformed Church being especially welcome. The Anabaptists and the Lutherans, however, were not welcome there, and were kept in large refugee camps outside the ports of Antwerp and Amsterdam. Thousands died from exposure to the elements, and to malnutrition, and to pestilence.

The English Quakers worked these camps as a humanitarian effort, and persuaded many to either come to England or to go to Pennsylvania. Many of those who had first gone to Holland or to Germany later came to

America. Also, the South African Afrikaners came from these refugee communities, and pioneered European settlement in what is now the Union of South Africa. There they became known as "Boers", which is the Dutch word for "farmer".

Those who went to England were not assimilated, but were also placed in refugee camps outside London, and in Ireland. The following is from a "thank you" note from the Palatines in Britain to the British Queen Anne in 1709. The term "Palatines" was used to cover all of the refugees, no matter where they had actually come from, much as we also use the term "Huguenots" in the same fashion. They were largely the same diverse group of people.

"We, the distressed Palatines, whose utter Ruin was occasioned by the merciless Cruelty of a Blood Enemy, the French, whose prevailing Power some years past, like a Torrent rushed into our Country, and overwhelmed us at once; and being not content with Money and Food necessary for their Occasions, not only dissposset us of all Support but inhumanely burnt our House to the ground, where being deprived of all Shelter, we were turned into open Fields, and there drove with our Families, to seek what Shelter we could find, being obliged to make the cold Earth our Lodgings, and the Clouds our Covering. In this deplorable condition we made our Humble Supplications and Cries to Almighty God ...."

The Circumstances of the Emigration to America

The Rhine Valley during the first half of the 18th century was destabilized not only be the refugees pouring into the area, but Central Europe underwent one on its periodic cold spells. The Rhine River froze over, fruit trees died, and crops failed. Population and economic pressures became destabilizing, and thousands of German peasants were squeezed out of the economy.

The German peasant was widely considered to be the best farmer in Europe. The entrepreneurs who were trying to get rich by opening up the English American colonies had lots of land, but it was worthless unless someone could be found to settle it. Getting rid of these Palatinine / Huguenot refugees was a top priority of the government, which in England was closely connected to these entrepreneurs. The solution to both problems was to persuade the refugees to go to America, which in practicality usually meant Pennsylvania.

Not only did the Quakers recruit amongst the refugees, but a new

profession sprang up as men became recruiters, who made a commission for signing up emigrants. They were known as "newlanders" among the Germans, and were not too particular about telling the complete truth of the deals they offered to the refugees. Not only did they recruit among the Palatines, but also in western regions of Germany such as Franchonia, where the flood of refugees into the country had destabilized the economy. Germany was overpopulated, and the social structure still feudal. The peasant was the property of the local prince, and was little more than a surf. He could not legally leave without paying his lord a manumission tax to compensate for his economic value to the prince.
Many sneaked off in the middle of the night without paying that tax, and by so doing became outlaws. They became an indistinguishable part of the flood of refugees flooding the Rhine River down to the Dutch port of Rotterdam. That trip took seven weeks. Whatever money they might have had was largely consumed by that trip, and by the three tolls they had to pay at customs houses along the river, and by the stay in Holland before they could get on board a ship to Philadelphia.

By the time this had all run its course, most of the emigrants were broke, and had to sell themselves and their families into contracts with ship's captains as either redemptioners, who paid part of their passage to America, or as indentures who were able to pay none of their passage. The law of supply and demand applied. The contracts were written in English, and the Germans had to depend on the honesty of the recruiters for an accurate explanation of the contract's terms. Whereas an English indenture contract might average six years, a German Palatine with nothing but a pestilent refugee camp behind him, might sign on for 15 years. After a fifteen week passage to America in conditions on board ship similar to that of African slave ships, except for the absence of shackles, the ship's captains would sell these contracts to the highest bidder for a handsome profit. Families were frequently divided. The indentures were obliged to work for their purchasers for the term of their contracts in circumstances little different from that of slavery.

Life in Pennsylvania

All in all, there are records of the arrival of some 100,000 Germans into Pennsylvania in the twenty years before the Revolutionary War.

As the indenture contracts began to expire, the immigrants had to move away from Eastern Pennsylvania in order to find land for themselves. They headed west into the Susquehanna Valley, but could not go further directly west because of the unbroken wall of the Alleghenies, and had

to follow the Great Valley between the Blue Ridge and the Alleghenies into Virginia.

Strange things began to happen in America. The authorities in Maryland, which had been established as a haven for English Catholics, invited these Protestant German immigrants into Maryland. No matter that they had been fighting each other for 250 years in Europe. Many came, but the lure of limitless cheap land to the west lured many to move on to the the Frontiers of North Carolina and of Virginia.

Some of the denominations of refugees were more cohesive than others. The Mennonites and Amish, in particular, were tight self help societies, and provided mutual economic assistance in purchasing land. The Amish were able to form a colony in Pennsylvania. The Mennonites moved into the Shenandoah Valley. The Dunkards settled at Dunkard's Bottom at present Radford, Virginia.

The Cherokee annihilated the Catawbas who had lived in the Yadkin Valley of North Carolina, which is where Winston-Salem in located today. This created a vacuum in the area of some of the best farm land in North Carolina, and even as the Cherokee began to move in, the Moravians sent a missionary colony into the Yadkin, soon to be followed by a larger group of Moravians from Pennsylvania. Then came the various groups of the Brethren, less organized than the Moravians, but also the followers of John Huss. Then came large numbers of Scots- Irish, who as Presbyterians, were theologically related to the German denominations already settled in the Yadkin. These diverse peoples intermarried.

German Immigration into Southwest Virginia and Upper East Tennessee

At this point one needs to divide the incoming German settlers into four groups, as each was a little different from the other three. The first group would be those Germans who came directly into the upper Clinch Valley and the upper Valley of the North Fork of the Holston from Pennsylvania and Maryland. They were of relatively pure stock, and came over the route that lead from the New River by the Narrows to Bluefield or Tazewell, and who settled from there to more of less present US 19 between Abingdon and St. Paul. They tended to have been more of the pioneering culture as they arrived about the time of the French and Indian War.

In 1771 the settlers of the Yadkin Valley engaged in an armed insurrection against the Colonial authorities, against whom they fought a pitched battle near Alamance Court House. The settlers ran out of ammunition, and lost the battle. The Red Coated soldiers of the

Governor ran amok through the Yadkin, burning and hanging, and the settlers began the largest mass migration in colonial American history, as they ran for their lives through the passes of the Blue Ridge in to the Valleys of the Holston, Watauga, and Clinch. They became known as the "Over Mountain Men of the Watauga Settlements", and settled without benefit of legal title. They, also, were frontiersmen.

Around 1775-1777 real estate agents seem to have been active in the Pennsylvanian and Maryland German communities, as this is the period when the Rich and Poor Valleys of the Holston were settled by Germans of pure stock in the area running from the Tennessee - Virginia state line northeast to US 19. They purchased the land either from the State or from these real estate speculator companies that had promoted the land to them, or from earlier settlers. These folks tended to be more of the settled German peasant stock, and not so nearly the frontiersmen that their other German neighbors were. They have tended to stay put more than the groups to the north and to the south of them have.

The fourth and last group of German settlers in our area is typified by the ancestor of the Rasnicks (numerous spelling variations). As a young man Jacob Rasnick (not the original German spelling) was working on his parent's farm in the Germany, when an impressment gang of soldiers came down the road and took him. All his mother could do was to give him a German Bible and say goodbye, as he was taken off to become a soldier. They never saw each other again. His Duke rented Rasnick and his army out to the British for hard cash, and they wound up fighting in the American Revolution. They came from several German States, but the largest contributor was the State of Hesse. We call all of these German mercinaries "Hessians", though this is not quite correct. Many were captured in various battles like the Battle of Saratoga, and The Battle of Trenton. There was a prisoner of war camp set up for some of them at Charlottesville, Virginia, where a main thoroughfare is named "Barracks Road" in tribute to this event. Many, like Rasnick, after the war was over decided that if they returned to Germany their Duke would merely rent them out again to fight in some far off battlefield not of their choosing. Many stayed in Virginia. Col. Scheiflick, who had been interned at Charlottessville, stayed and became the ancestor of all the Shiffletts of Greene County. Rasnick came to what now is Dickenson County, Virginia.

There are no records of how many Hessians stayed in Virginia after the end of the War, but if family traditions are any indicator, their descendants are heavily sprinkled among us.

What happened to all these Germans, and to their culture? Well, the Germans are still here.

Evidences of the culture are more difficult to identify. There are several reasons. The more collectivistic of the German denominations established themselves to the northeast, where they are quite evident today as the well known Amish and Mennonite Communities. They had only indirect influence in Southwest Virginia or Upper East Tennessee. The European Lutheran Church did not support the Lutheran Church in America. Unlike the Episcopal, the Presbyterian, the Quaker, or the Catholic Churches, it sent neither trained clergy nor financial aide. There were Lutheran Churches in our region, but they soon withered. Even though Winston-Salem continues to be the center of the American Moravian Church, it did not survive the Regulator refugee emigration out of the Yadkin Valley into our area. The less formally organized Church of the Brethren survived the immigration better, and there was a Church of the Brethren at Zenobia, which is east of Mendota in Washington County, Virginia, that conducted services in German till World War I.

The Germans immigrants to our area desperately wanted to "be English". They were the subjects of some discrimination, frequently being called "thick headed Dutchmen". The second generation, those born in America, frequently joined British denominations that were historically and theologically related to the churches of their parents. Members of the German Reformed Church usually joined the co-Calvinist Presbyterian Church, and the Moravians and Brethren joined the Methodist Church in such numbers that they made it their own. The last union of Brethren and Methodists did not occur until about twenty five years ago, an event that turned the Methodist Church into the United Methodist Church.

As for the more private German culture as practiced within the family, it held together within my family until the Civil War. Others still spoke German well enough to listen to sermons in it and to sing in it till World War I. After this, all mention of things German vanished from memory, only to remain in subtile ways, like cattle calls, sour krout, and potato salad. Back in our mountains, salad is still frequently pronounced in the German fashion, "sala't ", as in "sala't greens".

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THE EUROPEAN ORIGINS OF THE FLEENOR FAMILY

By: Lawrence J. Fleenor, Jr.

In an earlier article I had discussed the generic history of German immigration into the Valleys of the Holston, Clinch, and Powell. The surname "Fleenor" is peculiar to Southwest Virginia, as anyone in the country who spells their name this way has roots in Washington County, Virginia, and a discussion of its history is a reasonable subject for a local history journal. In a future article, I will discuss the early movement of the family within this country, but in this essay I will explore the history of the family in Europe before emigration. It will be of interest, of course, to the many people who have this surname in their family tree, but will also interest others as the story of this family is typical of that of many of the other German families who came here about the time of the Revolutionary War.

The surname has been spelled numerous ways both in America and in Germany. Some of the more common variations are: Fleenor, Fleener, Flener, Flinner, Flenner, Flyner, Fliner, Fleiner, Flimmer, Fleenora, Flender, Flemor, Flanna, Flennerard, Flennard, and Flenard. The spelling used by the original immigrants to the USA was Flinner. There are less than two hundred households in Germany today who use this spelling; Fleiner being much more common, though still being an unusual name in Germany.

The history of the clan begins in the tribal warfare of barbarian Southwestern Germany in the Jura Mountains during the Twelfth Century. The more precise location was a castle called Hohenscheid that stood on the lower Enz river near the community of Vaihingen. The social convention of family names had not yet been invented, and these people were not yet Fleiners. They were a clan, or extended family, closely allied with a neighboring clan from the village of Stauf, and the first two hundred years of their history was to be dominated by that relationship.

These people from Stauf (Staufer in the singular, or Staufen in the plural) were aggressive warrior chieftains, and soon came to dominate the region. At this point the word "Staufer" used to designate them was not a surname, but designated their place of origin. As they gained power and prestige they became known as the "High and Mighty People from Stauf" , or 'Hohenstaufen'. They became the greatest of the ruling families of medieval Germany. The Hohenstaufen and their lieutenants, the Hohenscheiden, conquered their way into more desirable lowlands along the middle Nechar River and the Hohenscheiden occupied the site of an old Roman fortress near present Cannstadt at a region known for its peculiar small stones.

The medieval German word for this rock was variously spelled as "Vlyn, Flyn, Flin, Flina, or as Vlins". It was used to designate any of a variety of small stones or pebbles that shared the characteristic of having sharp edges, such as shale, slate, or flint, or an escarpment of such rock. Indeed, the English work "flint" derives from "Flins". German has evolved differently, with Vlins being used as a rare alternative to "Kiesel", which is the current more common German word for flint. There is a region, called in German the "Flyngau", that stretches from the City of Heilbronn along the Neckar River to the Jura Mountains.

This old Roman fortress which was given by the Hohenstaufen to the Hohenscheiden, was constructed of earthen and wooden palisades, and was situated so as to defend a ford on the Neckar, and was near an escarpment of this peculiar rock, referred to as "Vlins". The settlement here became known as "Flin". The earliest mention of the current town of Flein ("Flina") is in a document defining the town as being part of the dowry in the marriage between the son of the Holy Roman Emperor (really a German title), Frederick Barbarossa (Red Bearded Fred in Latin) and King Alfons VIII of Castille's daughter, Berengaria. The date is April 23, 1188. A few decades later some of these settlers moved to the neighboring city of Heilbronn (Holy Spring), where they became known by their places of origin ie. Flin, going back earlier to Hohenscheid. An example would be "Reinhard der Fliner von Hohenscheid". The first person of this circumstance of whom we have a record is one "Gerung von Flein" (Gerung from Flein) who lived in Heilbronn in 1222. He thus becomes our earliest named ancestor, as these designations of place-of-origin used to identify people soon evolved into surnames.

After the return of the German soldiers from the Third Crusade the old Roman fortress at Flin or Flein was rebuilt as two masonry castles, called Altenburg and Brie, and our ancestors were given custody of them serving as border guards within the feudal system of Friedrich

Barbarossa von Hohenstaufen, the Holy Roman Emperor.

The linguistic problems of standardizing spellings of surnames in this region, which was close to what is now France, and where Latin as well as French was held in high prestige, caused divergent linguistic drift. The typical German rules of phonic spellings resulted in the standardization of the spelling 'Flein' within Germany, but Latinized forms, such as 'Flinarium' also developed. French phonics produced spellings like 'Flyneri de Altenburg' and 'Flinner' for family members that strayed closer to the zones of French influence.

Short biographical sketches of three of the better known clan members will serve as illustrations of the history of the family, and thus of the general history of the German families who were to come to the USA in the decades before the Revolution.

Dionysius Fleiner

Dionysius Fleiner, bailiff and mayor of the Town of Esslingen, Germany, was born there in 1553, and died there in 1616. November 7, 1574 he married Anna Schertlin, a daughter of Hans Schertlin of Cannstatt, and a member of the prominent family of Schertlins of Burtenbach. They had four children, Johann Leonhard, Anthoni, Anna Maria, and Hans Ludwig.

By profession, he was a sieve maker. Esslingen was a town noted for commerce in fish.

Dionysius began to rise in the local political world early, and at 21 was already Chief Secretary of the Hospital and Bailiff. In the Esslingen City Chamber's "Book of Coats-of-Arms" it notes that "In the year 1578 he joined the city council in its lowest position, in the following year he made a great advancement and entered the court in its lowest position, having gained entry to it based on his merit, and by 1583 had come into the Advisory College. He became bailiff in the year 1585, Privy Counselor in 1589, Mayor in 1592, was removed from the Advisory Commission in 1596, and involved himself in many momentous events."

In 1589 Esslingen was deeply in debt. The citizens had to pay taxes with a fourth of their annual incomes, and many of the wealthiest citizens emigrated, leaving scarcely ten in town. As Mayor, Dionysius had wanted to sell the villages of Deizisau, Möhringen, and Vaihingen. His proposal found much political opposition, and caused him to be removed from office in 1599. As a political outcast he got into further trouble by opposing his replacement, and was imprisoned because of "slander against the Office of Mayor", and was fined 300 Imperial

Dollars, and later was fined 200 Imperial Dollars for lampooning the other councilmen, and was finally expelled completely from the city's territory.

With the passage of time when it became clear that his proposals had been appropriate, he was rehabilitated and Esslingen sold off the villages as he had suggested, but under more unfavorable terms.

In the "Book of Coats-Of-Arms, volume V, pg. 15 in the Würtemburg State museum at Stuttgart Dionysius Fleiner's coat-of-arms is described: "On red a silver heron with outstretched wings, a fish hanging in its beak, standing on an upturned well shaped half moon; helmet with a woman sprouting from it, dressed in red and holding a fish in each out stretched hand, and on top of her head an upturned half moon; Decking; red and green."

Joachim Fleiner, the Youthful Martyr of Esslingen

Dionysius Fleiner was overcome by the financial and economic ruin accompanying the Wars of the Reformation that devastated his part of the world. But lest we forget, there was much more suffering involved than from poverty and politics. The followings is a sketch from period records illustrating why our German ancestors came to America. It is a theme shared by many of them, but long forgotten by us today. Joachim is Old German for Jacob.

translation by the author

"The Anabaptists of the time of the Reformation are innocent martyrs without equal. Not only men and women in ripe old age, but also young men and women we find in the martyred sects.

"It was the year 1530. The Reformation had not yet passed through the free Federal City of Esslingen. With an iron like severity a person goes against other's ideas, so also against their baptism. Among the perhaps thirty sects of the radical off-shoots of Protestantism one was located in the prison, also among whom as the Esslingen chronicler Dreytwein puts it - the "handsome youth" Joachim Fleiner found himself. Through it was not exterior, bodily beauty that lead him to the attention of people, but that nobility of conviction, through which the true followers of Jesus are led. These reflections, which the spirit of Jesus Christ begets in the hearts of the believers in the Redeemer and Savior Jesus Christ, were observed by all who had eyes to see, in the devout Esslingen youth.

"Joachim Fleiner was the son of a respected deceased guild master from Esslingen. Probably he was converted to the faith by Wilhelm Reublin or Christoph Freisleben. He became baptized in 1528 by affirmation of his faith. Perhaps it was in the year 1551 that the old mayor Antoni Fleiner (father of Dionysius) was mentioned in the Esslinger records as being related to our Joachim. The former had attended a baptism in a house and had to answer for himself for this with the other council members, which he did "by quoting all the necessary scriptures."

"In April 1528 Joachim Fleiner was imprisoned. At the trial on the 28th of April he made a noteworthy speech. He admitted to having comforted the imprisoned wife of Zacharias Degenhardt of Singen-on-the-Hohentweil, it then belonged to the work of compassion that Christian people comforted the imprisoned, fed the hungry and slaked the thirst of the thirsty. The communicants would have been written to occasionally by no one's authority by their brothers in Augsburg, Worms, Strassburg etc. He would have had such a letter, which he intended to deliver to the council. As usual they would have had their solace only from God. Steadfastly he refused to reveal other communicants, although he said that they numbered among themselves 10, 20, 50, yes even 100 persons. He stated further that they had no cemetery. They buried their dead under a tree.

"On April 29th he was tried a second time and on the 10th of May for a third time. Then he was set free. He was well aware that he must look out for himself, he made the most of his time. Like a consecrated angel he strode through the streets of the city. Doing good deeds and preaching, he did not forget. Over all the city and also outside of it he testified about the merciful God present in Jesus Christ, whom he had come to know personally. He loved Jesus Christ with the entire passion of his heart. That also he learn to recognize his fellow men and to learn to love them was his heart's wish and prayer, and therefore he could not keep silent even though he was in defiance of the prohibition.

"Even though he was so young, he was the biblical authority in the house. Therefore he was able to differentiate error from truth. To this end he once had a special opportunity. On September 29, 1528 Augustin Bader looked him up. Joachim in his enthusiasm pronounced the Augsburger "profit and king". Bader held himself well for a time with the communicants, then however he separated himself from them during which time he did not come to his judgment by them. He invited them to an assembly of his associates from Schöneberg-by-Geroldseck. Fleinere, who had held a strong impression of Bader as a man well versed in the scripture, obeyed the invitation, because by doing so he should be treated to baptisms, excommunications, and Holy Communion.

"In his fervor Fleiner gave a good picture of the transactions of the first day concerning Holy Communion with the genuine theologic disposition: "Reality, Works, Custom", and "True Understanding of the Swiss." (Swiss theologians such as Calvin and Zwingli). The reality of the nature of the elements that were and remain bread and wine, which exists not in their nature, but in the remembrance and significance of the life and blood of Jesus Christ. This is proved by the scripture: "This is my life ..." - the reality - not in the sense of works - the release and ablution of sins were expressed in the words which were given for you. The custom that he commanded and bade us ie. that we should take them to his memory and to Him also, should be observed.

"He could not judge about baptism and excommunication, subjects which he again brought up in the following days. And he also said why was it that Augustin Bader's example and demeanor were not expected to fall on him. It is no different for him to experience it than for a highly perfected spirit.

"Fleiner returned to Esslingen, where he again instructed and taught his youth. Perhaps a year of his effectiveness passed, during which time he received a significant position in the congregation.

"He was arrested at the end of the year 1529. He had often preached in the market. No fewer that 14 doctors were proclaimed, brought about by the repeated calling of the youth. His earthly brothers and sisters and other converts asked him with tears to let go of his convictions. He replied, he wished to avoid evil and to do good. He testified at his trial that the baptized people are not against the civil authorities, they desire themselves in all matters, which are not contrary to God, to be obedient. It was not true that one of the congregation had conspired against the authorities. It is true, to be sure, that one would not take an oath; but one would rather affirm it or to abstain from it. All good people were not the same, yet each to his own satisfaction understood to do as his God wished, yet he should not entirely and absolutely be bound to this, but rather always do charitable works for the poor. With regard to the baptized people he cited the Holy Scriptures. They alone are decisive here. First of all when someone believes with their entire heart, he should let himself be baptized and testify to his faith in baptism. Especially concerning Holy Communion he asked the question whether one consumed with the external symbols the actual body and blood of Christ, the answer was that he with his brothers and sisters celebrated it to the memory of the death of Christ. He also maintained that such a celebration bound patient sinners to the will of Christ.

"All attempts at conversion were in vain. That condemned him to come

to the executioner. These people threatened him with a painful death. The youth was reminded about this. He should distance himself from his errors, so that his life could be spared.

"Fleiner remained steadfast. On January 1530, after the court had handed down the death sentence, and after the official announcement was made, he was lead out to the common place of execution along with his fellow believer Ludwig Lichtenstein, also from Esslingen.

"After coming to that place, the youthful martyr began to sing the song of Luther: "Out of deep necessity I cry to You, Lord God, hear my prayer."

"Hereupon he asked everyone for forgiveness, if he should have injured anyone, and also he wished everyone, especially his friends, to heed the will of Christ. Then he looked up to the leavens and said: "Father, into your hands I direct my spirit."

"As he knelt down, to receive the death blow, the executioner said, by which he alluded to the corpse of his previously executed brother-in-faith: "My dear son Joachim, I ask you to recant after seeing your brother."

The executioner thought he would be terrified and turn pale. However, he had in no way lost his red color, gave a special smile, and spoke: "I will not die today. I will on this day live with God, my Heavenly Father."

"And thereupon he gave such a beautiful oration and sermon that it seemed not to be human, but rather angelic, that all the world, young and old, wept bitterly over it. I considered that God would have been merciful that the youth by such bravery, could have been saved by God, for he possibly could have retained his young life with a single word. How many are there who find solace in Christ, however there is no one who lets his finger be snapped asunder on account of God, the All Powerful. Oh, you miserable man, what did you yourself do when you came only to help your neighbor a little, and to render to him brotherly love, as you are obliged to do by God, your Maker. Then the true believers prove themselves through love to their neighbors. This, however, is not to be found by you, but rather hatred."

"So recorded the contemporary chronicler Dreytwein of the steadfastness and of the faithful and joyous end of the beautiful youth Joachim Fleiner of Esslingen."

M. (Monsignor) Johann Flinner
(Flenner, Flimmer)

The last of the three illustrative biographies is important because it adds depth to our understanding of the Reformation's importance in producing the flood of German refugees that were later to pour into the Valleys of the Holston, Clinch, and Powell; and because the geographic movements of Father Johann Flinner parallel the known movements of the Fleiner - Flinner et al clan members across Europe and to America.

Father Johann Flinner (Flenner - Flimmer), initially a Catholic priest, and later a Lutheran Minister, theologian and hymn writer, was born in the interior of Germany in 1520., and died 1578 in Strasbourg, Alsace. After 1537 he worked as a priest at the Church of the Cross in Augsburg. In 1546 he was walking through the so called "Parson's Alley", when he was accosted by an official of the cathedral, who demanded to debate with him. After a short exchange of words the man pulled out from under his frock coat a short musket with the intention of shooting the pastor. However, fortunately a weaver named Hans Pfeiffelmann came on the scene, and prevented the shooting. Flinner became excommunicated in 1548 because of the Interregnum of Johann Agricola, however he returned to Augsburg on the demands of his earlier congregation, after he had become, in the meanwhile, Court Preacher of King Christian III of Denmark. Flinner was again exiled from that place by Kaiser Charles V because of his frequent acknowledgements of faith, and in 1553 came as the Deacon at the St. Orleans Church in Strasbourg. On April 23,1554 he signed the "Letter of the Strausbourg Preacher" of the Lutheran theologians that were assembled in the Naumburg (Hall), in which they recognized the "Confessio Tetrapolitana", or the "Confession of the Four Cities" of 1530, breaking off all connection to the Catholic "Confession of Augustana". Flinner was called again as the preacher of the Church of the Holy Ghost in Heidelberg in 1556, however he returned again in 1558 to Strassburg. Flinner became known by his hymns: "Praise the Heavenly Hosts, all you Heathen" , and " We Little Children Thank the Good God, that He still Preserves Church and School".

Flinner was well connected within the academic circles of Lutheranism. He was a coauthor along with Johann Marbach of the scholarly collection of essays entitled, "Johann Marbach's and Johann Flinneri (Flinnere's) Writings on Churfürst Friedrich III of Heidelberg, Against the Booklets of the Tilimanni Hesshusii, Which Were Printed in Strassburg".

Marbach was at the very top of the academic Lutheran circles, being a personal friend and former room mate of Martin Luther, himself. His special theme was to preach against the further splintering of the

Protestant movement, especially singling out for rebuke the followers of Zwingli, Calvin, Hus, and Schwenkfeld.

The documented and suspected geographic movements of the ancestors of the Flinner Clan immigrants to America, as well as those of the Flinners who currently live in Germany parallel those of Father Johann Flinner. He and they moved from central Germany to Alsace; and after living there for generations some came to American and some returned to the Fulda-Darmstadt region of Germany. Those who returned to Germany had to reconvert to Catholicism in order to do so.

In a following article we will pick up the family in America, and trace their early movements within this country.

THE FLEENOR FAMILY IN AMERICA

Lawrence J. Fleenor, Jr.
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based on research primarily by Margery Day Hanson & Edgar Howard, the author, and many others

In earlier articles we have covered the generic European history of the German immigrants who settled the Central Appalachian region of the United States, and the specific European history of the ancestors of the American Fleenors (various spellings). In this article, the last of the series, the early American history of this family will be related.

There are records of five branches of the European Flinner (Flenner) family having come to this country.

Sept. 1741 Johannes Flender (also spelled Flenner, Flemor, Flanna, Flennerard, and Flennard, and Flenard) and his wife Christina came from Nassau-Siegen at Bockenbach in the parish of Krombach, Westphalia via the Palatinate on the ship "St. Mark" from Rotterdam to Philadelphia, and settled in Frederick County, Maryland. Christina died 1756-57 and he in 1785. He signed his will as "Flenner". All these spellings reflect dialectic differences in German, and not in American induced errors of spelling. He had four brothers also named 'Johann', a not

unusual circumstance, as German naming customs of the time were for the first name to have been the name of a saint, with the middle name being the one actually used. His parents were Hans (short for Johannes) Henrich Flender, whose father was Johannes Flender, and Elizabeth Freundenberg of Eychen. None of this line settled in the Central Appalachians, and the spelling never changed to Fleenor.

Johannes and Anna Flinner, came to Buck's County, Pa. from Amsterdam in 1754 aboard the "John and Elizabeth" with all the passengers having come from either the Palatinate, Würtemberg, or Hanau. Hanau is a city east of Frankfurt-am-Main, and was the port of embarkation on the river boats that took the emigrants to the sea port of Amsterdam. Emigrants designated as having come from Hanau could have come from any part of the upper Main Valley, specifically including Hesse and Fulda. After living in Pennsylvania for several years, they moved to Maryland, where they likely are buried, but all their sons moved to Washington County, Virginia where the spelling of the name changed to 'Fleenor'. Some of the next generation moved to Indiana where the name changed again to 'Fleener'. It was the line from Johannes and Anna that gave birth to all the Fleenors of the Central Appalachians, and the remainder of the article will feature it. But before that, there were three other branches of the family that came to America.

A branch of the family came from Darmstadt, Germany. John Flinner was born in Germany in 1802 and first married Eve Miller with whom he had a son named Adam. Eve apparently died and before 1823 John married Annie Rader who was born 1804-06 in Germany and died 1902. The first half of their children were born in Germany, and the second half were born in Butler Co., Pa. where they had moved before 1858, taking Adam with them. John and Annie both died in Butler Co. Their son John Flinner was born in Germany in 1833 and in 1858 married Christina Heyl. They also moved to America, where the name is sometimes spelled 'Flenner'. Maiden names from the Heyl family include Beighey, Buchi, and Weber.

Another branch came from Neuengronau, Germany. Records have been obtained from the Lutheran Church there. Sebastian Flinner was born cirra 1737-38 and died Jan. 16,1801 in Neungronau. He married Barbara Elizabeth Fuchs, born cirra 1741 and who died Nov. 9, 1819. Their son was Johann Georg, whose birth date is unknown, but who died Feb. 11, 1844. He was a brick layer, and married on March 3, 1804 in Neuengronau Anna Maria Wenzel, who was born cirra 1779 in Dittloffroda and who died Oct. 8, 1867. Their son was Johann Georg Friedrich Flinner, who was born March 29, 1814 and who died Feb. 20, 1873. He was a linen weaver and a pig herder. Feb. 18, 1844 he married Anna Margarethe Heinbuch, who was born Feb. 1, 1814 and died Jan. 11, 1861.

Both of them lived their lives in Neuengronau. Place names in the genealogy of Anna Margarethe Heinbuch are "Zeigelhutte" and "Elm, District of Schluchtern." Their son Johann Cornelius Flinner was born in Neuengronau on June 6, 1852. He was a farmer and an inventor. He immigrated to Ohio, where he married Emma Sommer on Dec. 26,1873.

Another branch of the family came from "Schluchtern Kurhessen" in Germany. John Flinner (1843-1908) and his brother Conrad (1849 -1934) immigrated in 1866 on the ship "Therese" to New York, moved to Walnut Creek, Ohio. Schluchtern is 15-20 miles southeast of Fulda in the Province of Hesse. The form of the name "Kurhessen" is what the location was called after it was conquered by Prussia in 1866. Conrad married Mary Etting in 1869. Another John Flinner, who was married to Elizabeth Heil, emigrated in 1879 from Germany to Holmes Co., Ohio.

Now to pick up on Johannes and Anna Flinner. They came to Philadelphia November 7, 1754. With them they had their children Adam, Elizabetha, Nicholas, Margaretha, Maria Katherina, and Kaspar. Philadelphia and surrounding Bucks County were heavily populated with German immigrants of various groups. Before 1776, 300,000 German immigrants landed at Philadelphia alone. It was common for new German immigrants to acclimate themselves to America for a while by staying within this heavily German community. They may also have had to work off indenture contracts. Under this arrangement, if the emigrants could not pay their passages, they would sell themselves to the ship's captain and he would in turn sell their contracts to prosperous Pennsylvanian farmers, for whom the immigrants would have to work for periods averaging from six to fifteen years. Sometimes the indenture period was cut short if the immigrants had paid part of their passages.

The next documented place of abode was Trappe, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, where there is a record of a March 29, 1761 confirmation of Margaretha Flenner, whose age was fifteen, and whose father was Johannes.

Somewhere during this Pennsylvania period of their lives, Jacob, John, and Michael born to them.

German peasants were widely considered to have been the best farmers around. The large landowners of Maryland needed farmers, and they passed a law guaranteeing religious freedom to the Germans if they would come settle there. Johannes and Anna Flinner and their family moved to Rocky Hill, near Woodsboro, Frederick Co., where they became members of the Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church. The first church record of them at this place is dated 1768, when Johannes and Anna were sponsors in an infant baptism.

The other Johannes Flenner (Flender) and his wife Christina, who had come to Pennsylvania in 1741, also had moved to this general part of Maryland, and are often confused with the Johannes and Anna of our story. This has led some genealogists to add two of this couple's children, Rudolf and Charles, to the list of children of Johannes and Anna.

The date of last entry into the Maryland Church records for anyone of this family is one listing Johannes and Anna as communicants as of Sept. 24, 1789. This is the last known record of their whereabouts. It is presumed that they never left Maryland, as this date would have put them well into what would have been advanced old age for the time. Nevertheless, there is no record of their death or burial at this church.

The Valley of Virginia as it runs through Washington County is subdivided into three valleys that lie between the Blue Ridge to the southeast, and Clinch Mountain - the first ridge of the Alleghenies - to the northwest. This land is drained by the Holston River into the Tennessee River to the southwest. The main Holston Valley lies to the southeast, and was settled predominantly by people of English and Scots-Irish descent in the 1760's. The North Fork of the Holston runs parallel to the main valley, but is, itself, divided into Rich and Poor Valleys. The North Fork twists and turns through the bottom lands of Poor Valley, and a set of parallel ridges divide it from Rich Valley, which lies between it and the main Holston Valley. This line of ridges between Rich and Poor Valleys is pierced by several creeks that carry Rich Valley's drainage into the North Fork. Walker's Mountain separates Rich Valley from the main Holston Valley, and its top is a broad flat plateau. Even though there was a thin spread of English and Scots-Irish settlers on Walker's Mountain and in Rich and Poor Valleys, the land was largely vacant and was in the public domain of the Colony (State as of 1776) of Virginia. In the decade prior to the American Revolution, large numbers of German settlers took up land on the Walker Mountain Plateau and in Rich and Poor Valleys.

These German immigrants were largely born in this country, usually in Pennsylvania or in Maryland. They were mostly still German in language and in culture. The younger ones, who had more ease with the English language and with American law and customs served as intermediaries between the "English" community and less acculturated members of the "German" community. They came in large extended family groups, and settled near each other.

The process of land acquisition was either to go to Richmond and to buy

a land warrant from the State, or to buy a warrant on the secondary market from someone else. This document entitled its owner to a grant of a specified acreage in the unpatented lands of the State. The immigrant would then go to the western reaches of the Old Dominion and pick out land that he liked, settle on it, and then have it surveyed and the survey recorded with the State Land Office. Often, years would pass between settlement and registration. This was especially true during the Revolution, as the State Land Office was closed from the beginning of the War till 1783. Sometimes the settlers did not have a warrant, but just squatted on the land. The law accommodated these people, and allowed them to register their farms under "Settlement Rights". At other times land speculators bought up thousands of acres for resale to later immigrants. The land speculators tended to be English speakers - either of English or of Scots-Irish descent, or the more enterprising and younger English speaking members of the German community.

The surname was never spelled "Flinner" after the children of Johannes and Anna moved to Washington Co., Va. The English speaking clerks of the county spelled it in the court records in a variety of ways, but "Fleenor" and "Fleener" were the most common, and all of the family living in Virginia today spell it "Fleenor".

Kaspar Fleenor married an Andtes, and that German clan settled on Smith Creek in the 1760's. Smith Creek drains a portion of Rich Valley into the North Fork. Kaspar came as a part of the Andtes clan, and in 1769 settled on 250 acres on the southwest side of the heavier concentration of his in laws. The creek he settled on is a tributary of Smith Creek, and is named after him, being called "Gaspard Creek" on the government topographic map, and labeled "Jasper Creek" on the Washington County road map. A copy of his original grant has not been located. Through the years he extended his land holdings to the southwest, laying along the Rich Valley Road (#700) on Krimmel's Creek. Interestingly, the English speaking court clerks wrote this German surname in an English sounding form, "Trimble's Creek". Such was often the fate of German surnames in Southwest Virginia. At the head waters of Kaspar's Creek, where it crosses this road, he gave land for the Lutheran Church of Rich Valley. His descendants legally deeded this land to the church in 1856. It is now a Baptist Church, called either "Fleenor Memorial Church", or just "Memorial Church". Kaspar is said to be buried in its cemetery.

In 1772 Adam Fleenor bought 200 acres on Meadow Creek, a tributary of Beaver Creek. This stream is now called Clear Creek, and it drains a portion of the plateau on top of Walker's Mountain into the main Holston River. He got the land from John Funkhouser, who presumably was his brother-in-law, as Adam's wife was Sarah Funkhouser. The Funkhousers

were members of the Ebbing Spring Presbyterian Church. Many people who had belonged to the German Reformed Church in Germany joined the Presbyterian Church in America, as they were both Calvinist. The next year Adam added an additional 145 acres across State Route 625. Present Clear Creek Lake touches these tracts to the south. The Funkhousers lived on adjacent land just to the south, near the present Clear Creek Country Club.

In April 1785 Adam sold his 145 acre tract to his youngest brother, Michael, and soon thereafter moved to Kentucky. (This 'Adam' may have been one of his namesake nephews.) In 1794 or 1795 (another source gives the date as June 4, 1793) he was a member of a hunting party that was approaching Dripping Springs in the Barons of Kentucky, east of present Bowling Green. This region is a treeless limestone plateau covered with scrub brush. The porous limestone drains the area by underground streams, leaving the surface without watering holes. Dripping Springs was the only source of drinking water for travelers on this segment of the Nashville to Kentucky Trace that went through here. In 1793, Chief Bob Benge of the Chickamauga Cherokee and his uncles, Double Head and Pumpkin Boy, had ambushed Captain William Overall and a man named Burnett at Dripping Springs, and had eaten their hearts and brains in a campaign of terror against the settlements.

Adam's hunting party came upon an Indian girl bathing in the spring, and one of the party shot her. Soon the hunting party was surrounded by Indians, said to be Creeks, who had come to the sound of the shot. When the hunting party saw the Indians, they all ran, and only Adam, who was well into middle age, was captured (another record states that Richard Robertson and William Bartlett were also killed). He was taken to the Indian's camp and was tied to a stake and slowly skinned alive.

In 1773 Nicholas Fleenor, whose wife traditionally was Marie "Mary" Catherine Fulkerson, acquired 140 acres at Lime Hill, in Rich Valley. The land lay on the South Fork of Abram's Creek, also known today as Rock Station Creek. He acquired it by "right of settlement", not having it registered until 1789. The following year he also acquired 200 acres on Meadow Creek, also by "right of settlement". This tract touched the 145 acre tract belonging to Adam, and later to Michael. He ultimately acquired a total of 1018 acres. The center of his holdings along Meadow Creek was around a large spring, that came to be known as "Fleenor's Spring", and is labeled as such on today's topographic map.

Confusingly enough, his second son, Johannes Jacob, was born in Maryland in 1774. When Nicholas actually moved to Washington County is a mystery, as is the question of whether he ever actually lived at Lime Hill. The grant for the first tract is available, but the one for the

Meadow Creek tract has not been located. From later land purchases of his, we know two sides of this tract, however, and therefore its location astraddle the intersection of state route 638 and the Reedy Creek Road.

The three main routes of immigration into Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee were down the main Holston Valley by the Island Road to Long Island at Kingsport; from Newport in the New River Valley to Narrows and up Wolf Creek to Tazewell and on down the Clinch Valley to intersect with the Wilderness Road at Natural Tunnel in Scott Co; and The Blue Grass Road that came from Newport up Walker Creek to the head of the North Fork, and thence along the northern bank of the North Fork of the Holston to the Blockhouse in East Carter's Valley. Local deeds refer to it as "The Great Road", a name also used by the Wilderness Trail in Scott and Lee Counties.

The Reedy Creek Road collected traffic from the Island Road at Abingdon, and the Blue Grass Trail west of Saltville, and from the Clinch Valley Road detouring from Hansonville, and ran along the crest of the Walker's Mountain Plateau to the start of the actual Reedy Creek at Three Springs, Virginia, thence on to Long Island. Therefore, Nicholas's Meadow Creek property on the Reedy Creek Road could scarcely been better placed to benefit from commerce and inflating land prices.

What evidence exists to indicate where Nicholas actually lived in Washington Co.? The Hortenstine family bought 190 acres that had belonged to Nicholas's brother, Jacob, at Fleenor's Spring. Three of Nicholas's children married Hortenstines. Indeed, the Hortenstines may have been the only family near Fleenor's Spring that was not already related to the Fleenors when they all moved in. Abraham Hortenstine along with Nicholas's son, Christly Fleenor, were "Sureties" of a $2,000.00 bond associated with the court action of Nov. 17, 1812 that named Mary Fleenor Hortenstine as guardian of Nicholas. None of the Nicholas children married the Lime Hill neighbors ie. the Carmacks, Livingstons, Hendersons, Decks, Spahrs, Hensleys etc. Clearly the children of Nicholas lived at Fleenor's Spring during their courting period. Also, clearly, when Nicholas became incapacitated he lived at Fleenor's Spring. Christopher (Chrisley or Christley) got the core of the Fleenor's Spring estate. A review of the appraisal of Nicholas's estate shows that it contained the machinery for making apple brandy ie. a apple mill, 8 still tubs, and 1 still cap. Family tradition holds that Christopher was a commercial distiller of apple and peach brandy. Indeed, Fleenor's Spring is known within the family as "the Still House Spring". It would seem that that business was started by Nicholas, and since apple and peach trees take years to grow, it is likely that Nicholas started the business at Fleenor's Spring.

Jacob Fleenor (the court clerk spelled the name "Fluner") warranted a 400 acre tract at Fleenor's Spring in 1775. Some undocumented sources give Susanna Hope as the name of his wife. In 1791 he divided his land, selling 210 acres to his brother John, and 190 acres to Jacob Link or Zink. The Link land soon passed to the Hortenstines, who intermarried later with the children of Nicholas Fleenor. Also, on this portion of Jacob's land there was a Lutheran Church and cemetery, which probably contains the graves of a number of these early settlers.

In 1791 Jacob bought land near Bluff City, Sullivan County, Tennessee, at the head of what was then called Indian Creek. This creek today is called Jacob's Creek, in honor of Jacob Fleenor. Its mouth forms a large cove in South Holston Lake. The last record of Jacob is dated 1809, when he sold out his Sullivan County holdings and dropped from sight. It should be noted that all but the land records of Sullivan County were burned during the Civil War, so we do not know if he died there or not.

John Fleenor in 1776 patented fifty acres in the southeast corner of the Fleenor's Spring intersection, and later bought the western 210 acres from his brother Jacob's land in 1791. He later acquired another 100 acres to the northwest of this tract. Like his brother Michael, he later began to acquire land in Poor Valley on the North Fork, where in 1805 he acquired a 111 acre tract that contained the southern half of Benham's Gap, and bordered the land of John Benham. This deed is historically important, as it locates the elusive gap and the general location of the first fort on the North Fork, Benham's Fort having been built in the 1760's. This fort figured significantly in the 1794 Livingston raid by Chief Benge of the Cherokee.

John had been born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and had married Catherine Gobble before moving to Washington County. The Gobbles also had moved from Maryland to settle in the German community that orbited around Fleenor's Spring, having settled on a tributary of Gaspard's (Jaspar's) Creek among the Krimmels, Andtes's, and Kaspar Fleenor, and having also bought land along the North Fork among the tracts owned by Michael Fleenor and his Linder kin. John died in Washington Co. September 14, 1819.

Michael was born 11-28-1760 in Bucks County, Pennsylvania and died and is buried at Mongle Springs in Washington County, Virginia. He married Sarah "Sally" Linder, possibly around 1777. His entry into Washington County is not documented, as he did not begin to buy land until 1782. We know that he was there, however, because of his marriage to Sarah Linder, the daughter of Anthony Linder, a German immigrant who first

bought land on the North Fork in 1774 in the area of the mouth of Smith Creek and upstream; and because of his Revolutionary War pension application and affidavits that list his service in the Holston Militia. He served not only his own duty requirements, but also those of his brother-in-law, James Fulkerson, and probably of some of his brothers. He saw service at Glade Hollow Fort at Lebanon, and at Carter's Fort at Rye Cove. He went on the King's Mountain expedition, but became ill and did not participate in the actual battle.

The pattern of his earliest land purchases suggests that he came as a member of the Linder clan, which included the Newlands and the Frosts, and perhaps the Bluebaughs, Gillenwaters, Gobbles, Hawkins, and Mongles (Mungles). He began to buy up this extended clan's land in 1782, and before his death he owned much of the land extending from Pine Grove to Mongle Springs along the North Fork. In 1785 he bought 145 acres of Adam Fleenor's land at Fleenor's Spring. He gave the land for the already established North Fork Church, which still stands along The Great Road in the center of Michael's land in the Alum Springs / Buffalo Ford bottoms upstream from the mouth of Smith Creek.

Michael seems to have gotten much of the cash he used to make these land purchases by raising hogs in the woods, where they ate the wild chestnuts. Based on the hilly land that his brother, Kaspar, and his Andtes kin bought on the adjacent Smith Creek / Jaspar's Creek water shed, it seems likely that he was engaged in the same occupation. Perhaps brother-in-law James Fulkerson did the same thing, as he bought much land on Cove Creek, that could only have been used in a similar fashion. These hogs were driven to markets in the East.

James Fulkerson, presumably Nicholas's brother-in-law, lived on land adjacent to Nicholas at Fleenor's Spring. He was an officer in the Holston Militia, and a prominent land speculator. He was a third generation German immigrant

Elizabethe married George Ehrhardt and had two children baptized at the Woodsboro church, and may have moved to Rockingham County, Va. afterwards.

Margaretha married Johannes Guckerli, and has one child's baptism recorded at Woodsboro. Of her nothing else is known.

Maria Catharina married George Fuchs, and had one child baptized at Woodsboro.

Several of the Fleenor brother's sons moved to Indiana, and like their parent's generation, tended to move close to one another. The spelling

variant of the name used by this branch of the family was 'Fleener'.

Thus the extended Fleenor clan serves as an example of the migration patterns that settled the central Appalachians. It shows how people moved and settled as large family units, and how large numbers of German immigrants wove their way into the main tapestry of American life.