

Source: "John Fain Anderson Collection 1796-1938", (Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee), Accession No. 288: Anderson, William Family History: XX: 25-26

The original copy of this paper was found among the effects of William Anderson, 3rd, of Sullivan County, Tenn., and is now in the possession of Miss Nannie Anderson of Johnson City, Tenn. A copy was made by Mrs. Will H. Fain, of Johnson City, Tenn., for Rhea Anderson of Blountville, Tenn. He in turn made a copy for James A. Anderson of University, Ala., and he in turn makes this copy for J. Fain Anderson of Washington College, Tenn.

"A brief history of the Anderson family given by William Anderson, the son of John, the son of William the first: to James W. Anderson the son of W. T., the son of Thomas, the son of William the first.

William Anderson (the first), was born in Ireland in 1736. His father's name was James. William had one brother and one sister, James and Susanna. James married Sarah Young. James was born in 1730 and had four children, William, Samuel, Sarah and Jane. William the first was married in Ireland to Jane Bryan. She had brothers and sisters but none further came to America. Her father's name was Andrew William Anderson [*I suspect this is a typo intended to read as Andrew William Bryan-MLF*] and Jane came to America in 1762. James Anderson their oldest child was born in Maryland. John (the father of this sketch) was born in Cecil County Maryland. His father, William the first, then moved to New Jersey near Monmouth Court House. Sarah and William were born there. They then (1770) moved near Staunton, Virginia, and lived there three years: Susanna was born there, then in 1773 moved to Holston (now Sullivan County) settled on the place William Hancher's. Andrew and Mary were born there; then moved to the old place on the Island Road in 1775 or 1776 where the other children were born.

William Anderson, the first, as stated above was born in Ireland in 1736, had good common intellect, a quiet well disposed and sober citizen, was five feet nine inches high, of fair or sandy complexion, his person rather comely with small feet hands. Jane Bryan, his wife, was about the same age. They were married in Ireland, were thirteen weeks crossing the Atlantic. She (for the writer well remembers her) had a well defined face for a strong mind, her person was large and bony for a female was surely of a stout family, was a pious woman, pockmarked, smoked a pipe, never forgot a friend or forgave an enemy. She died in Sullivan County, East Tennessee on the night of the 23rd of August 1819.

William and Jane Anderson had twelve children, 6 sons and six daughters.

1st. James Anderson, the eldest, was born Aug. 18th, 1763. He married a cousin or second cousin, Hester Anderson, at the head of Holstein Virginia. They had a large family. Five were deaf and dumb, though they had good minds and fine personal appearance. James was intemperate. His wife was a good and beautiful woman. They lived in Sullivan County until 1808, and removed to Middle Tennessee, and both died in Bedford County, Tenn.

2nd. John Anderson was born 19th of February, 1765, in Cecil County, Maryland, was married to Rachel Roberts in Knox County, Tenn., had twelve children, eight sons and four daughters, was strictly temperate, neither using whiskey or tobacco, or even cider. He and wife died in Sullivan County, East Tenn., where they had lived for many years, and where he had been surveyor of the county.

3rd. Sarah Anderson was born January 23, 1767, was married to John Sharp, had a large family, and both died in Roan County, Tenn.

4th. William Anderson was born April 23 1769, married to Elizabeth Yancy, had many children, moved to Know *[should read Knox-MLF]* County Kentucky, where they both died.

5th. Sussana Anderson was born April 12th 1770, was married to Joshua Taylor and had a large family. Both died in Wilson County, Tennessee.

6th. Andrew Anderson was born Oct. 21st, 1773, was married to Margaret Roberts. They also had a large family. She died in Sullivan County, Tenn., he in Meigs County, Tennessee.

7th. Mary Anderson was born Oct. 26th, 1775, was married first to Isaac Cole, then to George Deckard. All dead have three children.

8th. Margaret Anderson was born April 15th, 1777, married to Samuel Brittan, large family. Both died in Smith County, Tennessee.

9th. Thomas Anderson was born April 22nd, 1779, was married to Mary Davis, had a large family, lived in Sullivan County, Tenn., until 1811, then removed to Duck River, Bedford County, Tenn. He died in Panola County, Miss. She died in McNairy County, Tenn., Oct 3rd, 1833

10th. Samuel Anderson was born Sept. 16th, 1781, was married to Sussanna Caswell. They had several children. He has been dead for many years. She is supposed to be yet living at Shelbyville, Tenn.

11th. Jane Anderson was born April 16th, 1783, married to John Roberts. They lived first in Knox County, then in Franklin County. Both are dead, having raised a large family.

12th. Elizabeth Anderson was born Mar. 30th, 1785, married to William Roberts, they first lived in Knox County, Tenn., lived there a few years and returned to Knox County where they resided for several years, then removed to Texas where he died. She is supposed to be living in Texas. If so, she is the only one left of the family of William and Jane first mentioned and is over seventy five years of age.

And the six daughters of William and Jane were of medium size, and all were one height, of good native intellect, of industrious and pious habits and was what was in their day called, comely. Of the six males, William was the taller man, being over six feet high: Thomas the stouter, and Samuel the weaker. Though of respectable mental endowments, the writer of this sketch will not pretend to draw a distinction between them: either of them though qualified to fill

important offices, sought very few and were contented and happy with a mere competence and comfortable living, though William had more property than any of his brothers.

They were all peaceable if unassailed, but dangerous if attacked. Of the family of William and Jane only one daughter is left, and about 75 grandchildren; about 3 or 4 hundred great grandchildren and more than four times that many great-great grandchildren. In that family the youngest must have been near fifty years of age before the death of either of the brothers or sisters, and the medium age of the family was more than seventy years.

The ancestors of William and Jane for many generations before their day must have lived and died in Ireland, and all of their descendants not now alive must have lived and died in the States and territories of North America. Very many of their spirits, it is hoped, have been home to the bright world above, and the scattered dust of their bodies over this wide field, will by the hand of Omnipotence on that great day be brought forth and form a part of that great throng around the white throne, which we all are told will be numerous that no man can count them.”

Sent to Jas. W. Anderson, this 20th day of Dec., 1860.

Copy made by Rhea Anderson of Blountville, Tenn., for Jas. A. Anderson, of University, Ala., Aug. 19, 1916.

This copy made by Jas. Anderson, for J. Fain Anderson, of Washington College, Tenn., this 11th day of Nov. 1916.

Source: "John Fain Anderson Collection 1796-1938", (Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee), Accession No. 288: Anderson, William Family History: XX: 35-38,

[Anderson Family Reunion speech—I just hope everyone had a chance to eat before this fellow got started.]

I consider it a great honor to come today before the representatives of the Anderson family, and to speak to you as a member of that family. I am not unconscious of the responsibility the occasion imposes upon me by reason to the importance and accuracy of my statements in speaking of the past history of the Anderson family.

One hundred and fourteen years ago, due to an unfortunate circumstance, the families separated, and for many years all connection was lost between the various groups. You knew nothing of us and we knew less about you. The cause for this separation I will speak of later.

The family is now divided into three groups-located in east, middle and west Tennessee. That branch of the family to which I belong disappeared in the wilderness far to the west, and after this lapse of years, I, a representative of the fourth generation, come back to you today from Alabama. But I come as an Anderson, born in the western end of the state of Tennessee, and I hope I represent in thought, the sentiments of those who are unknown to you, but who live today the firm principles handed down to them since the days of William and Jane, those two noble pioneers who were our forebears and who braved the ocean and the wilderness and finally builded their home on this spot. We, the descendents of that hardy couple, are gathered here today to honor them and the name they gave to us, and to offer tribute to their memory.

I would remind you that we were not the only ones of this name among the early settlers of the section, and it is easy to confuse the families, for we are not related, so far as we know.

Our William Anderson was born in the northern part of Ireland, February, 1736. He was married to Jane Brian in 1762, and immediately following the marriage of these two, they, as bride and groom, emigrated to America. The story goes that they were thirteen weeks on the Atlantic-sailing in the crude ships of the times, they were practically at the mercy of the winds. It is said that the cargo consisted of hides of animals, and that as the food supplies were depleted, they subsisted in part on these hides, They were Presbyterians and came to his country as emigrants to escape the religious oppression of the old country, They sought a home in the new world where they could be free to worship their God in their own way. They finally landed on the friendly shores of Baltimore in the year 1762.

We stand today close by the very spot on which they built their first permanent home, and near to the spot where they lie buried. They settled here, after first living in Maryland, New Jersey and Virginia.

William died October 23rd, 1789, while Jane lived until August 23rd, 1819. They lie buried in the old Jacob Schnapp graveyard nearby. This is I indeed a hallowed spot to those of us who bear the

honored name of Anderson, and may we ever consider this a family shrine that is worthy of our love and respect.

I wish that I could give you some of their early history in the old country. We were led to believe that the family originated in South Carolina and was of Scotch-Irish descent. We later learned that we had never been South Carolinians, and furthermore that we were pure Irish, and aside from a few startling examples, have very little of the Scotch trait, that of being close or tight-fisted. However, I have never considered the Scotch close, but simply thrifty. As descendents of an Irishman, emigrant though he might have been, no one can say that we sprang from anyone, but that on the other hand, as Irishmen pure and simply, we sprang at them and not from them. Who ever heard of an Irishman doing otherwise, and if you don't believe it, just try to start something.

No doubt if we could go farther back, we would find that they had a Scandinavian origin. It is my intention some day, if I am spared and can find myself able, to travel over to that interesting country and seek out the original lines.

It has now been over a century since we separated, one from another. With the coming of the Civil War, and the reconstruction period and its consequences, all connection was lost. As time went on the older ones were called to their reward; the younger generation came on the scene, and being engrossed in the stern business of life, they soon lost contact, and family records were no longer kept and preserved. However, the relationship still existed in spite of the passing years, and war's invasion, many families coming and growing into manhood- married and produced many new families. No doubt representatives of these families have from time to time come into contact with each other without being aware of the relationship that existed between them.

To me falls the honor of being that connecting link, between the east and the west. It was by reason of my desire to record the family history and to establish the family tree, that gives me this position of honor today. It is my pleasure and satisfaction to know that I am personally acquainted with more of the Andersons than any other member of the family. It has been said that it is always the sap of the family that attempts to build a tee, but I am free to say to you that I am willing to be called the sap of this family if I can succeed in building up the family record. It has proven to be a stupendous job, for reason of the fact that the older members have passed on without leaving the proper record. I came upon the sad effects of war's invasion, the destruction of records in homes and courthouses, and a sad lack of interest by those who should have been most interested. In spite of this, I have today a record of names that runs well into the thousands, all descendants of that first Anderson couple, William and his wife, Jane.

I am proud to be with you today, and I welcome this opportunity to tell you the story of the Andersons and to renew again the broken ties and to re-establish ourselves on a firmer foundation of love and family brotherhood. I am proud to say to you that you are indeed my own people, and I love you as my own. This is indeed a family reunion where a great-great-grandson of the wanderer has returned to forge again the broken family chain. I represent the Prodigal, and there is no reason for me to ask that the fatted calf be killed for it is evident that you have seen the prodigal from afar off and that you have made ample provision along that line.

The part that the Anderson family played in the formation of this settlement makes the subject so great that I can only cover a small part of it at this time, and I would that I had the time to speak on the history of this interesting section, and to tell you about those men and women who in the early days made habitation possible in the mountains. All of this concerns the coming of our own people and is a matter of the greatest interest to us all, since our very lives are built around this historic spot, I would love to tell you the story of those wonderful pioneers that have made glorious the pages of our history, as these very pioneers and heroes were the friends and associates of our own people. And when we speak of them and recount their valorous deeds we must include our own people with them, as they altogether made this land a habitation for us. So let us say with the poet:

“Let no mean hope your souls enslave,
Be independent, generous, brave;
Your fathers such example gave,
And such revere.”

A short time before people came to this spot, no Anglo-American had penetrated the dark recesses of the Allegheny or had explored the wilds now embraced within the limits of Tennessee. The first pioneers suffered many trials and privations and suffered greatly at the hands of the Indians who were finally subdued, but only after the blood of the pioneers had drenched the soil of the frontier. On the rugged banks of the Kenhawa and of Hiwassee, in the wilds of Cumberland and on down the rugged plains of Coosa, we hear of their daring adventures, their prowess and their triumphs. But the proudest recollections come to us when we recur to that part taken by the infant settlements on Holston, Wautauga and Nollichuckee. And at that dark period when the fight for American independence was in the balance, and when the “Over-the Mountain” men went across the mountains and crushed and humbled the proud and over-confident British in the battle of King’s Mountain.

We know that William Anderson was a part of that band of patriots and soldiers.

Members of the Anderson family, along with those soldiers of Tennessee who have made such an honored name for the state, have always been conspicuous in the fight for freedom and independence. In the mountains of east Tennessee, in the fastnesses of Florida, on the plains of the Mississippi, at the Alamo and San Jacinto, under the walls of Monterey in Mexico, on the battlefield of Chickamauga, Murphreesboro and Shiloh, and in France at Chateau Thierry, the same fearless disregard of danger, the same inextinguishable love of freedom, the same pure devotion to liberty, the same undying thirst for glory. And in all this we must know that the Andersons played their honorable part.

In a wild and almost forgotten spot in Alabama, lie the bones of an Anderson boy serving under Jackson in his expedition to Florida; my great-uncle, George Sargent Anderson, gave his life to the Confederate cause at Murphreesboro, and in the present generation, on the very last day of the recent war, young Paul Bunn, of Sherwood, Tennessee, an Anderson in his blood relationship, gave his young life on the fields of France.

Without further consideration to the historical interest attached to this section of the country, with all of which the Andersons were so actively identified, I shall proceed to give you in limited detail, some of the early history of the family itself.

The records point to the fact that one or more brothers must have accompanied our first ancestor William in his journey to America, but of this we have no definite record.

While it's possible William had brothers with him, we do know that none of Jane's relatives were in the party, as she left all her people in Ireland, where perhaps some of them still reside. We do believe that William had at least one brother, James, with him and we believe this James to be the originator of one of the large Anderson families in South Carolina. This must have been true, for we know that James, the oldest son of William was married to his first cousin, Hester Anderson, and from that union came five children who were deaf and dumb. We have no further information in regard to them, but it proves that William was not alone.

William and Jane first lived in Cecil County, Maryland where James and John were born. John, the second son of William, was the progenitor of many of you present here today, through his marriage with Rachel Roberts, and this John and Rachel were the grandparents of our distinguished kinsman, John Fain Anderson, the real historian of the Anderson family, who by God's grace is with us today, and has the honor, according to my records, to be the oldest living representative of the name. William also lived at Monmouth Courthouse, New Jersey, where Sarah and William II were born. In 1780 he was living near Staunton, Virginia, where Suzzanna was born. In 1785, the family moved over to Sullivan County and settled on Reedy Creek and afterward built their home on this spot, and on this spot they died. The following children were born in this county: Andrew, Mary, Margaret, Thomas, (my great-grandfather), Samuel, Jane and Elizabeth, making a total of twelve children. It must have been a remarkable family, in so far that it recorded that the youngest must have been over fifty years of age before any of the other brothers and sisters died. It is recorded that in 1860, Elizabeth, who was born in 1785 and married to William Roberts, was still living in the state of Texas.

It was said that William Anderson was possessed of good common intellect, a quiet, well-disposed and sober citizen. He was five feet, nine inches tall, and of a sandy complexion. His person was rather shapely, with small hands and feet. His wife, Jane, was about the same age. She was said to be large and boney, being from a stout family. She had a strong mind and was a pious and Godly woman, and I am told that she smoked a pipe, and it said of her that she was the kind that never forgot a friend nor forgave an enemy. As I have said before, William died October 23rd, 1789, while Jane died in 1819, thirty years later.

This record as I have given it is absolutely authentic and I have been able to carry it along down certain lines to the present time, having a record of all the names of all those particular families to which a number of you belong. I have not been so fortunate in regard to some of the other lines that I am still searching for in nearby counties. You will understand that I am endeavoring to trace the families of all the twelve children of William and Jane, some of which have disappeared entirely.

I have already told you of other Anderson families, and I want you to know just how I got this record straight and give due credit to those who are responsible for it. It seems that my father, James W. Anderson, of Jackson, Tennessee, in December 1860, became acquainted with William Anderson, the son of John, the son of the original William. This William Anderson wrote for my father a description of William and Jane as he had learned it from his grandparents, and he listed all the children of the original couple, with the proper dates of their birth and marriage. It was a fortunate and happy circumstance that brought a copy of this paper to me. The original is in the possession of Miss Nannie Anderson, of Johnson City, and I give full credit to her for the use of it as a basis for my work on the family history. I had no idea of the existence of this paper back in my home, and it must have been destroyed during the Civil War as it was never found in my father's papers. I will say that without this ancient scrap of paper, no one would ever have been able to make an accurate record of the family.

It would not be my intention to devote all my time to the lines that have been lost to you for so long, but it is natural that I have more information bearing on their history since the separation of 1814 than I have of you still living here. I am familiar, however, with the part played by all the Andersons who remained at the homesite and am familiar to some extent, with the part played by certain allied families, the Fains, [*looks like Rhods ---*], McClellans, Rutledges and Vaughans. And in the western part I mention with pride the names of Wisdom, Walsh, Stribling, Rusging, Dunaway and many others.

I now come to the cause for the separation of the families. At this late date, after the lapse of 114 years, we can look back with regret that there should be a dark stain on our family escutcheon. Perhaps as long as my own progenitor was involved in it, it might possibly be left unsaid. But it was a circumstance, regrettable though it might have been, and as much as it affected our own lives, we can take no blame to ourselves for it, and in speaking of it we must consider the condition of the times in which it occurred and the circumstances which made it possibly necessary, and try to be fair as we can in our judgment. In spite of all the legends and stories to the contrary, the main facts are as I give them. On a night in the year 1814, Thomas Anderson, my great-grandfather, for some reason of other, was persuaded to mount his mule, perhaps out among these hills, and ride into the village at Blountville for the purpose of meeting some companions that were apparently below his standard of life, or at least below what I consider they should have been. The party met at the old tavern in the village that night, and we can let our imagination picture what the condition of that small frontier village was during those trying days back in the beginning of things, where they engaged in a card game. It was evident, as was customary at that time, that whiskey must have played an important part in that unfortunate night's affair. It was no uncommon thing for men to engage in fight under such conditions and following that custom of the times, it did start that night. I am told that Thomas Anderson, to avoid trouble, left the cabin in which they were playing, evidently with the intention of letting his Irish temper cool down. Later on he returned, and the aggressor, whether he had other cause or not I do not know, greeted his return with a vile insinuation, using the statement, "Here comes that coward, Tom Anderson", and he followed this by spitting in his face. This was too much for man with fighting proclivities, and in a few minutes a corpse lay across the card table. I am told that he was held confined for a few hours, but that his friends rescued him and carried him to a distant part of the state. Later on, feeling that he was justified, he returned to his home where he remained quite a while. Later on, the sheriff, evidently a man of fair judgment and a friend of the

family, advised the family that he would be compelled to make an arrest unless he left the country. This he did with his family, I suppose in a wagon of some sort, they turned their faces toward the western wilderness and they disappeared in the wilds of the Cumberland. No arrest was ever made, no court indictment was ever entered on the books of the county or the state, and it is evident to us that he had the sympathy of the community and that they felt he was justified in what he did. I have often pondered over the matter and thought of what a tremendous influence this affair has had upon the lives of not only those who were living at that time, but for all of us who have followed after. If we could only look ahead and see what effect our acts would have on the future of ourselves and of others, very likely we would be more careful. To the third and fourth generation and to generations yet to come, this unfortunate thing will have its bearing and its influence.

Thomas Anderson, my great-grandfather, the wanderer of the family, was born at the old home place on April 22nd, 1779. He was born in this immediate vicinity. He was married to Mary Davis, the daughter of a Revolutionary Soldier, and she was born on Chestnut Street in the city of Philadelphia. He removed from this section with his family in 1814, together with his wife Mary, and his eight children, one of which was my grandfather. Four other children were born later in middle Tennessee. I am not fully posted as to his wanderings, except that he finally settled in Franklin County, Tennessee, on Crow Creek. He and the greater part of his family finally moved to McNairy County further west, where his children grew to manhood and womanhood and where his wife, Mary Davis, died and is buried. The old home town of Prudy, in McNairy County, was the home of the Andersons for many years; this town is now deserted, the houses have all fallen down and rotted away and the cotton fields now cover the spots where the homes of the old time planters stood. His oldest son, George Prince Anderson, having a number of years before removed to Panola County, Mississippi, Thomas, in his latter days was sent down there, where he died April 22nd, 1851, and where he lies buried in an old Anderson cemetery, his bones being separated by many miles from those of his wife, Mary Davis.

Now to introduce myself and to establish my right to claim kinship with you, I give you my line of descent. I was born at Jackson, Madison County, Tennessee, on April 6th, 1871. I have lived for the past thirty-one years at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, where my business is located at the state University of Alabama.

My father was James Wisdom Anderson, who was born in McNairy County, May 31st, 1835. He was a merchant at Jackson, and the first president of the First National Bank at Jackson, which position he held at the time of his death, June 16th, 1879. He was a Confederate soldier and was captured at his home while on furlough and remained at Camp Chase, Ohio for nearly two years. He belonged to the Cumberland Presbyterian church and was all of his life a consistent Christian and a man of a gentle, loving disposition. His death can be attributed to the sorrow caused by misplaced confidence in his friends. He was, for that day and time, a prosperous man, but suffered greatly at the hands of his friends and employees. He was married to Ellen Burrough Dunaway, the daughter of a pioneer preacher in the Cumberland Presbyterian church. Besides myself, there were five boys and two girls. Two of the boys and one sister have died since reaching manhood and womanhood. One brother, Frank, who died three years ago in Oklahoma City, was the originator and builder of the firm Anderson-Clayton & Company, and conceded to be the largest and most influential firm of cotton buyers in the world.

My grandfather was William Taylor Anderson, the son of Thomas that I have just told you about. My grandfather was born in this county and very likely on this spot, May 4th, 1804, 124 years ago. He was seven years old when the family removed from this section to middle Tennessee. At the age of eighteen, he crossed the western ridge on foot and settled in McNairy County. He went to join his uncle, Samuel Anderson, who was a soldier in the Mexican army, enlisted in this county, afterwards discharged at Memphis, and settled in west Tennessee. My grandfather married in McNairy County, Mahala Wisdom, and her brother, Sargent Wisdom, later married his sister Jane, and this later on constituted a double relationship between the two families. He was an old line Whig and while very poor to start with, he became a wealthy and influential citizen of his community. He was opposed to secession, but aligned himself with the Confederate cause in sympathy, but of course was beyond the age of service. The greater part of his fortune was lost during the Civil War. In 1869 he moved to Jackson, where he died April 8th, 1870, just a year before I was born. He had twelve children, six boys and six girls. One of these boys was George Sargent Anderson, who was killed at the battle of Murphreesboro, serving the Confederate army. Another was Neil P. Anderson, who many years ago remove to Ft. Worth, Texas, and engaged in the cotton business and became a very wealthy and influential citizen. Another son, the youngest, the one who was destined to become most prominent in the political affairs of the state, was Hugh Crump Anderson. He was mayor of Jackson for twenty-five years, a banker, lawyer and a leader in the Democratic party. On January 1st, 1915, he entered the Senate of the state of Tennessee and was made speaker of that body, but his untimely death occurred on the first day of March of that same year. We confidently believe that had he lived, he would have been governor of the state of Tennessee. Another son was John Harrison Anderson, now living in Livingston, Texas, at the advanced age of 83 years, and he is the last living member of my father's family. William Taylor Anderson, my grandfather, was the son of Thomas Brian Anderson, the ninth child of William and Jane, of whom I have told you, and it was the result of that unfortunate escapade and his consequent removal from this section that caused the separation and dissolution of the family, and I as his great-great-grandson, meet with you today to renew the broken ties.

Some confusion having existed in your minds as to the exact identity of the three families I have mentioned, the branches as represented in east, middle and west Tennessee, makes an explanation necessary, so you will not get them confused as has been done in the past. Thomas Anderson, my great-great grandfather, when he left this section and settled in middle Tennessee in Franklin County, built the first Anderson home in that section; later on when he moved further west to McNairy County, all of the family did not leave with him. John Fitzpatrick Anderson, his son, preferred to remain, and in this man, the Andersons produced one of the most unique personalities in the Anderson line, and also produced a man who wielded a wonderful influence in that country. John Fitzpatrick Anderson, a son of Thomas, was born in this county on February 27th, 1808, and was only six years old when the exodus occurred. He, as you should understand, was my grandfather's brother. He grew to manhood without the advantages of any sort of education, yet he became one of the shrewdest financiers of that section and was probably one of the richest men of that day and time. Many years ago, some of you hearing of him and his success, made the error in thinking it was old Thomas himself who had become so prosperous and prominent. John F. Anderson was a wonderful man. At one time he owned all the land from Cowan, Tennessee, where the N. C. & St. L. tunnel is located, clear over to Bridgeport, Alabama.

It was truthfully said that he could not ride around his holdings on his horse in a day's time, in fact, he could not have done so in a month's time. He was a contractor in the building of the N. C. & St. L. RR., owned large shares of stock in the road itself, and was at one time one of the directors. He was a most prosperous farmer, raising great herds of both cattle and hogs and his hog sales extended far down into Alabama. His home was a place of wonder and I am told that he entertained so many people that there was only one meal a day cooked and that was all day long for the reason that at times there were as many as forty people eating at this table. He married twice and was the father of twenty children of his own, ten by each marriage, and besides this he raised three step-children, one adopted child and one niece. He has been known to say that he raised twenty children of his own and five on the "sheers". He gave employment to hundreds of mountain people in the digging of gin seng, and they were known as the "sang" diggers of Tennessee. He could not write his name but in later years he made his cross-mark one time too often and the result of that signature, just a few years before his death in 1894, all of his property was lost. It was a deal made with the agents of Russell A. Alger, then secretary of State under President Cleveland. He sold the lands as coal lands and he believed them as such, but it later developed there was no coal in the mountains. It was then claimed by the Alger interests that he had practiced fraud in that he had painted the rocks black, thereby fooling the agents. A suit followed that was long and costly to the estate. The Alger interests lost the first suit, but the heirs in turn filed another suit in retaliation for losses incurred and they in turn lost and the property went over into the hands of strangers. Uncle John died during the process of the first suit and was spared the sorrow and disappointment that would have been his had he lived. Strangers came down from the north and took possession of the fine property and attempted to operate it according to their notion. The family was broken up and the home was taken over by strangers. After a few years, the new-comers made a complete failure of the operation of the property and one by one they removed back to the north from which they came. The property was put on the market and John W. Gonce, the only son of his first daughter who died during the cholera epidemic of 1850, gradually bought back, not only the old home place, but many of its acres, and soon restored the home to its former beauty and magnificence. This John W. Gonce himself was a remarkably intelligent man and a wonderful financier, considering his infirmities. At the time of the death of his mother, he being an infant, he was placed in the charge of an old negro mammy belonging to the family. He was taken with scarlet fever which affected his hearing, and she, in her crude method of treatment, caused him to become almost entirely deaf. In spite of this infirmity and handicap, John W. Gonce became a very successful man and besides building up a wonderful plantation at the old Anderson home, he was an inventor of no mean ability. He has now retired from active life, possessing the necessary means, and now makes his home in Miami, Florida, while some of his children carry on at the old Anderson place, located at a small station on the N. C. St. L. RR., which is called Anderson, but has never developed into a town of any consequence. You of the old lines used to refer to it as "Anderson Depot", as that was the name by which it was known until recent years. Many of the children of John Anderson by both marriages, still live in that vicinity and are typical Andersons in appearance and the daily conduct of their lives.

This matter of a history of a family must necessarily cover a great deal of ground, and it is manifestly impossible for me to cover even the smallest part of it. Too many years have elapsed and so many Andersons have appeared upon the stage and played their part and retired into the wings of eternity. To all of these we can give all due honor, but we cannot at this time mention

them and there are yet many thousands who are still active in this world's affairs and who are daily carrying on to the honor of the family. It is natural to feel an interest in one's lineage, especially when it incites to noble deeds, elevates above the mean and ignoble and assists in transmitting the inheritance with added luster to succeeding generations.

It is only when the claim of birth is vaunted without the desirability to reproduce its merit does it become a thing of scorn and derision.

Genealogies were sacredly preserved in the Bible, as were the weightier matters of the law and the glorious truths of the redemption. The folly of neglecting it is clearly shown in the seventh chapter of Nehemiah, where it is narrated that the captive tribes from Babylon, when the gates were opened and the roll of the register called, it was found that 642 could not show the lineage of their father's house.

On the records far back in those ancient days many of the forefathers covenanted with God and stood ready to seal the covenant with their blood, and those promises are not only to believers and their children, but to thousands of generations.

May you, my people and my friends to whom I am speaking, be encouraged by the success and warned by the failure of those who have preceded you on life's stage, and each for himself grasp with a firm hand the promises of our great Father of All.

My friends, however well established your claim to the long lines of our distinguished and honorable ancestry, however noble and heroic the deeds of your own life, it will avail you little if this one great name is not made secure.

“Then that thy pedigree may useful be,
Search out the virtues of your family;
And to be worthy of your father's name,
Learn out the good they did, and do the same.
For if you bear their wrongs, and not their fame,
Those ensigns of their worth will be your shame.”