
CHAPTER V

EARLIEST PUBLISHED AMERICAN WRITINGS ABOUT EWING

The first step in any reliable research or study is to read and sort out the previous information found on the subject. We cannot list all we have found, yet, it is imperative that we show what proof early writers offer in attempting to identify EWING early in America. Then, with documents later discovered, we are able either to corroborate or correct early theories. We have reviewed the following and abstract them in chronological order:

- 1812 *Sermons by Dr. John Ewing*, edited by Rev. James P. Wilson.

We know that Dr. John Ewing (1732-1802) was the son of Nathaniel Ewing and Rachel (Porter) Ewing who immigrated to Cecil County Md. about 1725-27. We know that Dr. John was the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, PA from 1759 until just before his death in 1802. We know that he and his twin brother James Ewing were born in 1732 and that James went early (before 1757) to Amelia/Prince Edward County, Virginia, to live.

On the fly-leaf of the above book are listed the names of the brothers and sisters of Dr. John Ewing. We have located records (as others before now have also) proving the fact that Nathaniel Ewing, the father of Dr. John, died on September 6, 1748. The Inventory of his goods and chattels was taken on July 3, 1749. The Account of his Intestate Administration by his wife, Rachel, and eldest son, William, was filed June 18, 1750. It is an invaluable document for it gives the names and ages of all the children except the three eldest.

From letters of Dr. John Ewing when he visited Coleraine, Ireland and Glasgow and Edinburgh, Scotland, we know that he visited the place of his father's birth, Coleraine, Ireland. He implied that his visit to Scotland included some who might have been distant relatives. He refers to visiting a Mrs. Ewing. He was granted a Doctor of Divinity degree by the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. (See Chapter XXIV.)

- 1846 "Nathaniel Ewing's account of his Family" was printed in *The Courier Journal*, Louisville, Kentucky on February 28, 1897.

"Nathaniel Ewing's account of his Family" was printed in *The Courier Journal*, Louisville, Kentucky on February 28, 1897. However, it was written by Nathaniel Ewing prior to 1896, the year of his death. He was the grandson of the Nathaniel Ewing [1693-1748] referred to above, and the son of George Ewing and Mary Porter Ewing both of whom died prior to 1785. Nathaniel Ewing was 74 when he wrote the article that follows, having been born in 1772. Colonel William Alexander Ewing sent this article to *The Courier Journal* from his home in the Military Hospital in Ohio on February 2, 1897 and it was printed on the 28th.

I have taken the liberty of adding notes for clarification and of deleting some of those made, erroneously, by Col. Wm. A. Ewing. Why he waited 51 YEARS to reproduce these facts is still a MYSTERY. I have a photocopy of the original newspaper cited above.

Under the heading "GENEALOGICAL AND HISTORICAL" # 189 appears the following:

"EWING- Those who are interested in tracing the ancestry of the early members of the EWING family in America, and especially of the famous divine the Rev. Finis Ewing, D.D. (one of the founders of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and for many years a resident hear (sic.) and pastor of the Red River Church, Logan County Kentucky, will appreciate information given below, taken from a family sketch written by Nathaniel Ewing of Mount Clair, Knox County, Ind. (near Vincennes) born April 10, 1772, died August 1, 1846, and who moved from Fayette County, PA, to Vincennes in 1804."

"At the request of my children I give the following history of my family as far back as I have any knowledge, either traditional or personal. My forefathers were originally from Scotland, their seat in that country being on the Forth, not far from Stirling Castle whence they removed to the North of Ireland about the year____, and settled near Londonderry. My great grandfather whose name, I believe, was William, was twice married.

"By his first wife he had but one son – Nathaniel, who was my grandfather, by his second marriage he had several children, viz. William, Joshua and James and some others, whom I do not now recollect ... James I have seen, and had from him a portion of my information. He was at that time upward of eighty years of age and lived in Prince Edward County, Virginia. Nathaniel Ewing, my grandfather, was born about the year 1703.

A note is added here by Col. Wm. A. Ewing which reads "this is erroneous. He was born at Coleraine Londonderry County, Ireland, in 1693, as shown by the Bible Record of his son, Rev. Dr. John Ewing, D.D. now existing in St. Paul, Minn".

"He married a cousin of his own, Rachel Porter, in the year* 1723. Four years after, he emigrated to America bringing with him his half-brothers and sisters, and a large connection of the Porter family, and also, the

Gillespies. The colony settled in Maryland between the Octoraro Creek and the Susquehanna River, near the Pennsylvania line, about sixty miles from Philadelphia, this country at that time being the frontier settlement. My grandfather purchased a tract of land and commenced farming. His brother, Joshua, also purchased a tract adjoining him.”

*I.G.I. states that Nathaniel Ewing and Rachel Porter were married in the Parish of Templemore 2 March 1721/2.

Maryland Deeds and early Rent and Debt Roll Books show this land, where Nathaniel and Rachel lived, was purchased Dec 3, 1728 jointly by Nathaniel and Joshua Ewing from Edward Nicholas. It was a 600 acre tract surveyed 17 May 1695 for Casparus Herman whose son, and executors assigned the same to Mathias Vanbebber, beginning at a bound white oak standing in a Marsh near a branch called Green Branch. Patented 2 December 1714. Vanbebber sold to Nicholas 19 Nov 1728. Edward Nicholas sold as above stated.

“Whether any others of the brothers purchased land there I do not know, but they did not remain long in Maryland, having removed to Virginia and settled on the waters of the Appomattox, Prince Edward County, where their posterity became numerous. Many of them afterward moved to Cripple Creek, or New Beaver, and Potsdam, near Knoxville. They are now scattered over the States of Tennessee and Kentucky.”

“* * * * *

The appearance of these asterisks may indicate part of the article was deleted.

“Sometime about the year 1735 or 1740, two young men, cousins of my grandfather Ewing, came to America. Their names were Charles and Robert Ewing. Having gotten into an affray at a fair in Ireland they were so unfortunate as to kill a man, for which they were obliged to fly the country and came to my grandfather's where they concealed themselves for a length of time until one of my grandfather's half-brothers came from Virginia on a visit to his relations in Maryland. On his return they were put over the Susquehanna in the night and went with him to Virginia. It being a place less frequented by emigrants from Ireland than Maryland, and a proclamation having arrived offering a reward for their apprehension, their longer stay became dangerous.

“Sometime after their arrival in Prince Edward County a new settlement was founded further back, what is now called Bedford County, near the Peaks of Otter. They joined the adventure and finally settled there and married sisters, daughters of Mr. Baker, a Presbyterian minister, and lived there until death. They both left large families, who are now settled in Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri some of whom I have seen, viz. Baker Ewing, Young Ewing, Samuel Ewing, and Finis Ewing, the last is a Presbyterian Clergyman and resides in Missouri. I mention the family on account of their having become so numerous in the Western Country and to show the connection between them and my family.

“My grandfather Ewing, as I said before, settled in Maryland on the eastern shore of the Susquehanna, now Cecil County, where he had a large family of ten children—six sons and four daughters, viz: Sarah, William, Ann, John and James (twins), George, Alexander, Rachel and Samuel, who died young.”

There were only three daughters on the Administration Account of Nathaniel. One was Rachel-Margaret but not two people.

The remainder of the article is not a direct quote from Nathaniel Ewing born 1772 died 1846 but is a summary by Col. Wm. A. Ewing

“He [i.e. Nathaniel (1772-1846)] follows the line of Nathaniel Ewing's (1693-1748) descendants, viz: 1. Sarah, the eldest married Robert Potts, lived near Harrisburg, Pa; 2. William Ewing, eldest son, married Kitty Ewing, daughter of Joshua Ewing; 3. Anne Ewing ('Sea Gull') married James Breeding, her cousin; 4. John Ewing married Hannah Sergeant of Philadelphia; 5. James Ewing married first 'Peggy' Ewing daughter of Joshua, James married 2nd 'Miss Venable'. 6. George Ewing married Mary Porter (his cousin) daughter of James Porter; 7. Alexander Ewing married Jane Kirkpatrick; 8. Rachel M(arget) Ewing married William Ewing a relative (cousin?) 9. Samuel died young.”

“Peggy” has been proven to be Margaret, daughter of brother, Samuel Ewing, of Prince Edward Co., Va. as his 1758 will and later deeds prove. 'Miss Venable' was the widow of Jacob Venable who died 1803. So, James married her after 1803. Alexander married Jane Patrick as proven by the 1777 will of Hugh Patrick of Little Britain Lancaster Co., PA “Rachel-Margaret” married Alexander, son of half brother Samuel of Prince Edward Co., Va. as mentioned above, died 1758. Alexander was brother to Margaret (Peggy) above. Rachel and Alexander moved to Botetourt Co., Va. then moved to Green Co., TN, where Alexander died 1789 and Rachel died in Blount Co., TN in 1823 at age 89.

“Returning to Robert Ewing and his younger brother, Charles Ewing of Bedford County, Virginia, will say, Robert Ewing married Mary Baker died June 1787, will probated June 28, 1787. He left surviving him his wife, Mary, his sons Robert, Baker, Reuben, Chatham, Young, Urbin, John and Finis Ewing and daughters Patsie,

Bettie married Mills and Sydney married Linn. Charles Ewing married Martha Baker died May 1770, will probated May 31, 1770. He left surviving him his wife, Martha, sons Charles, William, Robert, Samuel, George, David and Caleb, daughters Mary and Martha.

“Rev. Finis Ewing, D.D. born July 10, 1773 married Peggy Davidson, January 15, 1793; died July 4, 1841. He had twelve children viz: 1. Winnifred Warren married Henry Rubey 2. Hon. William L.D. Ewing, U.S. Senator and Governor of Illinois. “3. Thompson McGready Ewing. 4. Polly Ewing died in infancy. 5. Doyle Ewing died in infancy. 6. Baxter McGee Ewing died in infancy. 7. Mary (Polly) Ewing married first, Archibald Kavinagh, second, Chatham Ewing; 8. Margaret Davidson Ewing married Rev. Robert Sloan; 9. Pamela Jane Ewing married first Dr. James W. Reed; second, Horseley Rea; 10. Finis Young Ewing; 11. Washington Perry Ewing; 12. Robert Chatham Ewing.

“The above could be continued to a degree your space would not permit. Shall be glad to have any known errors, corrected through the Courier-Journal's Genealogical and Historical Columns. WM. A. E.; National Military Home, O. Feb. 2, 1897.”

- 1847 *A Record of The Families of Robert Patterson (The Elder) Emigrant from Ireland to America (1774)*: THOMAS EWING from Ireland (1718); and LOUIS DUBOIS from France (1660). Part the First. William Ewing DuBois signed the introduction to this book of 150 copies printed by the Press of J.C. Clark, in Philadelphia, PA. He did not finish this work and it has no information of Thomas Ewing in it. His brother finished his work.
- 1858 *A Record of The Family of Thomas Ewing Who Emigrated to America in 1718*, by Robert Patterson DuBois, New London, PA. This work traces the descendants of Thomas and Mary (Maskell) Ewing of Cohansey River, Greenwich township, Cumberland County, New Jersey. The location of Thomas Ewing's first settlement was called Salem, and is now divided into Cumberland and Salem Counties.

This book has been the source of much confusion to Ewing Genealogists, not for its description of the family of Thomas and Mary Maskell Ewing, but for the post note on page 6. The note is by Amos Ewing, Jr., Esquire, born 1794 died 1872. He lived at “Mount Pleasant” a plantation in West Nottingham Hundred, Cecil County MD. He was a grandson of Samuel Ewing and Rebecca (George) Ewing. His statement should not be relied upon as factual as he INCORRECTLY blends two EWING families into one.

I have made every effort to solve this in my report of the family of Nathaniel Ewing of Octoraro Hundred twp. Cecil Co., Md. and of the family of James Ewing of Inch Island, Ireland. (See chapter on Nathaniel Ewing.)

- 1869 *Autobiography of Thomas Ewing*, by Senator Thomas Ewing of Ohio. It was edited by Clement L. Martzloff and was published in Volume XXII pages 126-204 of the “Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications.”

Senator Ewing wrote this for his children and grandchildren. He was aware of the names of his father, George, of course, and of his grandfather, Thomas and great grandfather Thomas who married Mary Maskell, but beyond that he did not know the name of their “grandfather's great grandfather” who was a Captain Ewing and fought at the Battle of the Boyne and in Siege of Londonderry.

Subsequent genealogies have identified the “Captain Ewing” and his father with various names. We have tried to set this record straight with some success. [See Chapter re EWING of New Jersey-Thomas Ewing son of Finley.]

My Ewing female “cousins” will laud Senator Thomas Ewing for the following remark:

“I do not dwell upon the family genealogy at large as I am aware that one of you has traced it back several hundred years; [the footnote indicates he is referring to Hugh Ewing's 1867 manuscript which I have been unable to locate] and more especially as I attach little importance to remote ancestry. Go back three hundred years and there are few who may not number two or three hundred ancestors, and among them persons in all ranks and stations of life ... men who have pride in their descent do for the most part trace back their genealogy along the male line, forgetting that their ancestors all had mothers who had their full share in forming the physical, moral and mental man.”

- 1897 *The Ewing Family* by Colonel William A. Ewing. This is also entitled Originally *The Highland Scotch Clan of Macewen-Macewan-Macewing Which Was Anglicized into Ewing*. Following that is the typed title “Ewing Family of Lancaster, PA compiled about 1897 by Col. Wm. A. Ewing and arranged and indexed by F. N. Trevor of Lockport, N.Y. Index to some of the earlier names,” and “Indexed and added to by Francis Nathaniel Trevor, Lockport, N.Y. 1901.” A copy of this manuscript was a gift to me from Robert H. Ewing of Columbus, Ohio now of Dublin, Ohio.

This manuscript is a tremendous effort on the part of Col. Ewing to continue the work of his uncle, George Washington Ewing. He traces the family of Nathaniel Ewing the 1725 immigrant to Cecil Co., Md and provided *The Courier Journal* of

Louisville, KY with the article printed in 1897 which was quoted above and was dated "1846". Some of Col. William's statements are incorrect as he did not have access to all the deeds and records needed. Some of it has been distorted by the editing of F.N. Trevor, however well-meant.

Not one but five different EWING families are alluded to in this manuscript; as proven by wills, deeds, tax records and family Bibles.

GENEALOGIES IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS - EWING All of these have used the Colonel William A. Ewing manuscript and a chart that he was supposed to have made but never finished.