

### *William Robertson Banished to America*

William Robertson, age 20, a weaver by trade and a Jacobite in Lord Lewis Gordon's regiment, was banished to America from Spinel, Morayshire, Scotland, after the Battle of Culloden. After being held as a prisoner at Inverness and Tilbury, he was transported to America on the British ship the "Veteran, which sailed from Liverpool on 5 May 1747 for the Leeward Islands. The ship was later intercepted by a French privateer which freed all the prisoners and landed them in Martinique in June 1747. Others on the ship included Alexander Robertson, age 40, a former tenant of Robertson of Straun. Alexander was a prisoner at Monkland, Sterling and Carlisle; and another William Robertson, age 17, a laborer from Perth who was in the Duke of Perth's regiment. The younger William was captured at Carlisle and was a prisoner at Carlisle and York. The prisoners also included a George Reid and James Reed.

William Robertson of Nelson County, Kentucky left 60 pounds in his will to a Ralph Reid of Scotland.<sup>1</sup> Could the William Robertson who was banished to America be the William Robertson who died in Nelson County, Kentucky? The William banished to America is the right age. We can be fairly certain that the William Robertson who died in Nelson County was born in Scotland. He is referred to in several other publications as a Scotsman. He also left money in his will to Ralph Reid of Scotland indicating that he still had strong ties to Scotland. Also, the presence of George and James Reid/Reed on the same boat carrying prisoners from Scotland all indicate that the William who was banished from Scotland and the William who died in Nelson County could well be the same person.

### *William Robertson and the Hardin Family*

In the book *History of the Hardin Family in the Early Settling of Kentucky*<sup>2</sup>, Jack Hardin, Jr. details the adventures of his father, Jack Hardin, Sr. On the first of March 1780, fifteen families, "composed entirely of kindred by blood or marriage", floated down the Monongahela River<sup>3</sup>. Surnames of the families on the trip included Hardin, Harding, Robertson and Shivelys.

One boat carried their horses, cattle and heavy movable property. The other was a small, light boat, which carried the families and lighter personal effects. All went well until March 20th, when at the mouth of the Limestone River a large force of Indians attacked them. The book describes the battle, including a scene where Stephen Hardin, the 10-year old son of Jack, Sr.

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<sup>1</sup> *William of William Robertson, probated in Nelson County, Kentucky, July 1796.*

<sup>2</sup> *History of the Hardin Family in the Early Settling of Kentucky, Jack Hardin, Jr., Baptist World Publishing, Louisville, Kentucky, 1915.*

<sup>3</sup> *The Monongahela River is formed by the confluence of the Tygart and West Fork rivers at Fairmont in Marion County, W.Va. It flows 128 miles in a northerly direction past Morgantown into Pennsylvania, past Brownsville and Charleroi, joining the Allegheny River at Pittsburgh to become a major headwater of the Ohio River.*

It goes on to state the Robertson (his first name is not given) lost his wife and two children in the battle. The book is confusing about whether Robertson's wife actually died in the battle or later in captivity. The book describes Robertson and others going out later to rescue wives and children including "Mrs. Robertson," so presumably she died later while being held captive by the Indians. It does provide that "Mrs. Robertson" was related to the Hardins, but does not state how.

The Indians took several of the wives and children captive. The captives included Mrs. Harding, wife of Thomas, Robertson's wife and Jack, Sr.'s wife and son, Robert. About the middle of April 1780, a rescue party was formed which consisted of Jack Hardin, Sr., Jack Hardin, Jr., Thomas Harding<sup>4</sup> and Robertson.

After the battle, the families abandoned their plans to settle near Louisville and, instead, reunited three years later leaving for Kentucky in the early spring of 1783. They settled in what is now Washington County, Kentucky. Included in this group was William Robertson. William married Mary Hardin daughter of Martin Hardin and a niece of Jack Hardin, Jr.

The book by Jack Hardin, Jr. does not mention the first name of the Robertson who lost his wife and children on March 20, 1780, but he does say that he was the brother of William who married Mary Hardin. George Morgan Chinn in his book describes the events of March 20, 1780 and states that Robertson's first name was Samuel.<sup>5</sup>

William and Mary married in 1785 in Washington County, Kentucky, so they would have married after the trip to Kentucky. Mary was William's second wife and William was Mary's second husband. William and Mary had no children and Mary had no children by her first marriage to Robert Wickliff. William's first wife may have been Frances Ann Nelson, although her name has not been confirmed. He had at least two children by his first marriage; John and Elizabeth.

There is a great deal of information on the Hardin and Harding families of Virginia and Kentucky. B. C. Holtzclaw devotes a chapter to this family in the book *Ancestry and Descendants of The Nassau-Siegen Immigrants to Virginia 1714-1750*. In that book it provides that Mary Hardin who married William Robertson<sup>6</sup> was the daughter of Martin Hardin (ba. 1716 in Northumberland Co., VA, d. 1780 in Monongahela Co., PA) and Lydia Waters. Martin was the brother of Jack Hardin, Sr. and both were the sons of Mark Hardin and Mary Hogue.

Assuming that Mr. Hardin's book and Mr. Chinn's book are correct, William and Samuel were brothers and it is likely that they come from somewhere along the Monongahela

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<sup>4</sup> *Thomas Harding was the father-in-law of Jack Hardin, Sr. and the grandfather of Jack Hardin, Jr.*

<sup>5</sup> *Kentucky Settlement and Statehood, George Morgan Chinn, The Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, KY 1975.*

<sup>6</sup> *The book states she married Robert Wickcliff on August 27, 1759 in Fauquier Co., VA and second to William "Robinson."*

River. Ms. Dorothy Wulfeck's book<sup>7</sup> on the Hardin and Harding families contains a letter from Mary Louis Harding Felts to a Mrs. Murphy dated March 3, 1961. In it she states that "John [Harding] was living in Green Co., KY, in 1797, as he left a Power of Attorney that year giving his brother, Abraham, authority to sell land for him which he owned jointly with William Robertson on the West Fork of the Monongahela River in Washington Co., VA." [Washington Co. is actually in Pennsylvania.] Could this William be the William Robertson who married Mary Hardin? We know that from Mr. Hardin's book that William came from this area. We also know that there were family connections between the Hardin, Harding and Robertson families. Although it cannot be said for certain at this time, it seems possible that the William referred to in the Felts letter is the same William who married Mary Hardin. Later in the book, Mr. Wulfeck also lists William as being the second husband of Mary Hardin, daughter of Martin and Lydia Waters.

### *Fayette County, Pennsylvania*<sup>8</sup>

Fayette County, Pennsylvania as just north of the present was Virginia line. The Mononagahela River makes up the western county line. Bullskin township makes up the northern border of the county, along which Jacob's Creek who runs. Many claims were made on the land of Bullskin during the early days, before the question of proprietorship of the lands was determined.

Thomas and Richard Penn issued a patent on January 12th, 1771 to William Robertson, which covered the valuable lands lying on both sides of Jacob's Creek. Ralph Cherry left successfully disputed the validity of this patent to William Robertson, it was not until many years later that he perfected his claim.

William Robertson was a Scotchman by birth, and processed and an unusual degree of tenaciousness of purpose. He moved to Bullskin from the eastern part of Pennsylvania about 1770, settling on Jacob's Creek, below Ralph Cherry's, with whom he was involved in litigation until Robertson's death. Robertson's family moved to to the west.

Andrew Robertson, brother of William, settled first in Westmoreland County, but sometime about 1800 located at the foot of Chestnut Ridge. He was married to Betsey Smart and reared a family of four children, John, who died in Scotland; Nancy, one of the Pioneer teachers, who died a maiden; Andrew, who settled on the county line, for his family yet reside; and Elizabeth, who lived near Bridgeport as the wife of Asher Walker.

Andrew is listed as owning 207 acres and William is listed as owning 191 acres in Fayette County. The survey was completed in 1787, but many of the properties were actually surveyed earlier. The History of Fayette County does not state exactly when the survey of the Robertson lands was done., but in 1788 neither William or Andrew are listed as a property owner in Bullskin.

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<sup>7</sup> *Hardin and Harding of Virginia and Kentucky, Dorothy Ford Wulfeck, Naugatuck, CN.*

<sup>8</sup> *History of Fayette County, Pennsylvania, edited by Frankin Ellis, L. H. Everts & Co., Philadelphia, 1882.*

John Hardin and Martin Hardin, brothers, were among the first settlers in the Mononagahela Valley. All of Martin's family moved to Kentucky and became prominent citizens of that state. Martin Hardin emigrated from Fauquier County, Virginia to George's Creek in Fayette County, Pennsylvania in 1765 when his son John was 12 years old. They also lived in The Nicholson Township in Fayette County. *The History of Fayette County* states that the John Hardin, son of Martin, moved to Kentucky in 1786 and that his father and brothers preceded him.<sup>2</sup> In the same year he volunteered under Geroge Rogers Clark for the expedition against the Indians on the Wabash and was appointed quartermaster. He was also engaged in other Indian campaigns and was killed in the campaign against the Miami villages in the fall of 1792.

*Fauquier and Culpeper Counties, Virginia*

On 24 September 1761, a William Robertson and Peter Taylor entered into a lease and release for land. Witnesses were Joseph Hudnall, Jr., John Stone and Samuel Porter. On 27-28 September 1767 a William Robertson and Frances Ann, his wife entered into a lease and release with John James, a bricklayer, it being the same land that William purchased from Peter Taylor. Witnesses were William Brent, James Williams, and Henry Martin.<sup>9</sup>

There is also a William Robertson, whose wife was Elizabeth, who entered into several real estate transactions in Culpeper County, which is adjacent to Fauquier. One in 1782 with a James Yowell involving property on the south fork of Mountain Run.<sup>10</sup> Witnesses were Ambrose Coleman, Richard Parker, John Sutton and William Cox. There is another real estate transaction in 1783 between Richard Parker (presumably the same Richard Parker who witnessed the 1782 transaction) and his wife Grissell and William Lewis, involving property on Mountain Run which also mentions the Yowell property.<sup>11</sup> Richard and Gissell Parker were the names of the second wife of John Robertson, son of William of Nelson County, Kentucky. John Robertson and Mary Parker were married in Nelson County, Kentucky on 29 March 1787. The 1783 transaction also mentions a James Garnet. William Robertson of Nelson County's daughter, Elizabeth, was married first to a Garnet before marrying Joseph James on 4 August 1784 in Nelson County, Kentucky.

There were at least two other William Robertsons who lived in Culpeper during the same time who were married to women with the first name of Elizabeth. One was William Robertson (ca. 1755 – 1831) whose first wife was Elizabeth Collins. This William was the son of William Robertson and Sarah Cotton. The other William was married to Elizabeth Latham, daughter of John Latham.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Pages from Kay Baganoff, March 2001, source unknown.

<sup>10</sup> *Culpeper County Deed Book L 1781-1783, pages 176-178.*

<sup>11</sup> *Culpeper County Deed Book l 1781-1783, pages 331-333.*

<sup>12</sup> *Robertson Family in Culpeper County, Virigina, J. F.. Dorman, 1964.*