

THE FIRST HAM(M)ON(D) FAMILIES IN KENTUCKY

by
Neal Owen Hammon

Although it would appear that all of the Hamon¹ families of England, Normandy, and America are of common Danish Viking origin, the millennium that has elapsed since the Viking migrations would preclude tracing the various branches of the family to a common source through individuals. Some, if not all, of the Hamons in America descended from the family that settled near the village of Scarning, in Norfolk, England, in 840 A. D. About 700 years later my branch of the family moved from this location to Clerkenwell, just outside London, prior to coming to America.

In the earliest colonial period we can identify at least four separate branches of the Hamon family in America. These include one residing in Massachusetts, one in Maryland, and two in Virginia. In addition, seven other individuals with the surname of Hamon were in Virginia prior to 1650, but their descendants, if any, have not been identified. The New England family originated with William Hammond (1575-1655) of Watertown, Massachusetts, but none of this branch is known to have moved to Kentucky.² The Maryland family was established near Baltimore by 1660, and may be related to the Virginia family that settled in Richmond County, circa 1634. The latter are descendants of Charles Hamond, Sr., whose sons Job, John, and Martyn migrated to America.³

My own ancestor belonged to one of the Virginia branches of the family, about which much genealogical information is known.⁴ John Ham'ond and his son, Ambrose, arrived in Virginia in 1666 and lived in old Rappahannock County, later Caroline County. John had probably resided in America prior to this date, but had returned to England to remarry. After residing in Virginia over 100 years, many of his descendants moved to Wilkes County, North Carolina, where they accidentally became neighbors of a young Quaker from Pennsylvania named Daniel Boone.

Approximately one hundred and fifty years elapsed between the time that the Hamon families arrived in America and the time that they began to move into Kentucky. As was generally the case in pre-Revolutionary times, certain individuals were constantly moving westward with the advancing frontier. Thus, the first Hamons to settle in Kentucky were of the fifth generation in America!

There is no actual record of the date that the first member of the Hamon family arrived in Kentucky. Possibly some were longhunters who roamed the area prior to the establishment of the first settlement in Harrodsburg in 1774. We know that by 1775, when Colonel Henderson called his Transylvania Convention at "Boonsbough"⁵, Nathan Hammond appeared as a delegate from Boiling Springs. The Draper Papers relate that this same Nathan Hammond was killed by Indians on his settlement claim near the present Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, and that the nearby Hammon(d) Creek⁶ is named for him. In 1793 the records show that the heirs of Nathan Hammond, "a resident of Am-Arundel"⁷, were granted 3067 acres of land by the Court of Appeals.⁸ We can therefore conclude that Nathan was a member of the Maryland branch of the family.

In August 1775 Colonel Henderson mentions in his journal "one John Hamon" who went to Harrodsburg in the spring of 1775 to plant corn for the families of Hugh McGary, Richard Hogan, and Thomas Denton, prior to their coming to Kentucky. Due to the condition of the manuscript it cannot be determined if the name was Hammon or Harmon. Since Val Harmon "and his boys" were on the Green River in 1775 and passed through Boonsbough on 7 July on their way back to "the settlements" (on the Holston) according to the same manuscript, it is unlikely that Henderson would prefix "one" in speaking of John Harmon, Val's son. There was a John Hammon, on the other hand, from the "Upper Yarkin" section of North Carolina, where the McGarys, Hogans and Dentons also lived. This particular John Hammon⁹, who was later at Bryan's Station, stated in his Revolutionary War deposition that he "came to the west as a young man, an 'adventurer'".

The next record of the Hammon family in Kentucky is in 1777, when Martin Hammon signed a petition to the General Assembly of Virginia which related to salt.¹⁰ This same Martin Hammon also entered two parcels of land in Jefferson County in 1780 for acreage on "Flatt Creek, a branch of Licking Creek". In 1782, together with John Hammon mentioned above, he was among the successful defenders during the siege of Bryan's Station. In 1793 Martin Hammon acquired more land on Flatt Creek, in Montgomery County, about 20 miles west of Paris.

John Hammon,⁹ my ancestor, was born in Goochland County, Virginia in 1760, but moved to Wilkes County, North Carolina, in 1774. As men-

tioned previously, he may have traveled to Kentucky in 1775 to "plant corn" for his neighbors. In 1776, at age 16, he was serving with the North Carolina Militia and later fought at the battle of Kings Mountain. On 13 June 1782, the records show that this John Hammon "of the county of Wilkes in North Carolina" sold land in Albemarle County, Virginia, to Thomas Johnson (who had been with Daniel Boone when he blazed the trail into Kentucky for the Transylvania Company in 1775). He then moved immediately to Kentucky, arriving in time to be recorded as one of the defenders of Bryan's Station, and was also with Benjamin Logan on the Ohio campaign against the Indians. In 1788 he signed the petition to the General Assembly of Virginia. A full account of the life of this John Hammon is published in the Filson Club Quarterly, Vol. 23, No. 3, July 1949. He died in Owen County, Kentucky in 1868 at the age of 108 years.

In all probability John and Martin Hammon were closely related, being either half brothers or cousins. Although the first name Martin is very common to the other Virginia family,¹¹ this individual moved to Wilkes County, North Carolina, before our John Hammon and his two uncles, from where he enlisted and fought in a campaign against the Cherokee Indians in 1771. James and possibly Edmund Hammon also appear to be half brothers of John and are therefore likely to be the full brothers of Martin. James Hammon signed the same petition in Kentucky as did John in 1788,¹⁰ and is known to have lived near Bryan's Station until his death in 1806. Fayette County records show that livestock and other items were purchased from the estate of James by John Hammon. James was fairly wealthy for the times, having both land and slaves. The son of this man, also named James, on 4 February 1811 in Scott County, Kentucky, signed the will of Captain John Craig, who was the leader at Bryan's Station during the siege.

The next entry of interest is in 1783 when Phillip Hammon claimed 1800 acres of land on Paint Lick Creek, in Fayette County. He apparently settled on this claim as he is listed as a Madison County taxpayer in 1790. He later moved to the Red River Valley near the present Clay City, where he is listed on the Montgomery tax rolls in 1797. Many of his male children moved to Alabama and he followed in 1823.

Phillip Hammon (or Hamman) was born in 1753 in Hess or Baden, Germany, and arrived in Philadelphia on October 16, 1772, together with Peter Hammon (Hamman), relationship unknown.¹⁵ He is said to have been a Huguenot, fleeing from persecution in the Palatinate. Phillip Hammon, along with John Pryor, was known as the savior of Greentriber, because of a 160 mile trip made during Lord Dunsmore's War to warn Fort Donnally of an impending attack by Indians.¹⁶ Phillip later served in Captain Arbuckles Company of the 12th Virginia Regiment during the Revolution.¹⁷

In 1790, Gervin Hammon, Sr., and Gervin Hammon, Jr., appear on the tax rolls of Nelson County, Kentucky, together with Job Hammond. If we could presume that these three men are related, then it would be probable that they are descendants of Charles, Sr. Job might be the great grandson of the first Job Hammond (B3), who migrated to America. We also find in the records that a Christopher Hammonds owned land on Clifty Creek in Livingston County in 1799, but no other information is known about this man.

In 1794 a John Hammond acquired a military warrant in Kentucky for having served three years as a soldier of the "Virginia line". This is probably the John Hammond who obtained land in Pulaski, Wayne and Christian Counties after 1799, and who is listed in the publication, "Kinfolks of William Parke",¹² etc. He and his family later moved to Missouri and all the descendants are known. The author of that publication believes William W. Hammons and Thomas Hamon to be the brothers of this John Hammond, despite the manner in which they spelled their names. This family is not directly related to the John Hammon of Bryan's Station, although they could possibly be distant cousins. It is more likely that this man descended from Charles, Sr. (B-1).

Shortly after the Revolutionary War, Obediah Hammons, Jr., and his brother, Peter, moved to Kentucky. The former was a veteran from Virginia,¹³ but he had also lived in North Carolina for a time. These brothers settled in Eastern Kentucky where many of their descendants can still be found. Peter Hammon's home is shown, just south of Manchester, Kentucky, on the Munsell Map of 1818.¹⁴ Obediah and Peter had a brother, Isaac, but it is not known if he ever lived in Kentucky.

The unsolved mystery of the family, however, is not the origin of these or activities of the aforementioned male members, but who was the "Mrs. Hammons (who) came into Crab Orchard in her linsey-woolsey wounded in the head with an arrow", after the Jacob Baughman defeat on the Wilderness Road at the head of Dix River in 1782?¹⁸

Footnotes

- 1 The spelling "Hamon" is used hereafter in lieu of Ham(m)on(d)(s) for simplicity. Other spelling of the name is as it appears on the records. In this writer's opinion, the variation of the spelling is most often due to the whims of the clerk, or recorder, rather than the opinion of the subject. This is as true today as it must have been two hundred years ago.
- 2 "History of Genealogies of the Hammond Families in America", by Frederick Stam Hammond, 1902.
- 3 This information is from the Draper Papers. The descendants of Charles, Sr., are listed in the Appendix and are given identification prefix of "B".
- 4 This information has been collected over a period of thirty years by my father, Stratton Owen Hammon. Our family is listed and given the identifying prefix of "A" in the Appendix.
- 5 His spelling.
- 6 Hamon Creek and Hamon Lick were frequently mentioned in early Kentucky land records. The former is in Anderson County, and still goes by that name. It was originally the point where Jefferson, Lincoln, and Fayette Counties joined. After much searching, I finally located a "Hammond Lick Creek" on Munsell's 1818 map of Kentucky. It would have been the western fork of Otter Creek in Madison County, which is located just south of Boonesboro. A "Hammon Gap" is found in Knox County just north of Harbourville, on what was once Boone's Trace.
- 7 Incorrect spelling of Ann Arundel County, Maryland.
- 8 Book A2, Page 287, of Appeals Deeds.
- 9 Designated A-11 in Appendix; life covered in "John Hammon, Revolutionary Soldier and Kentucky Pioneer", by Stratton O. Hammon, Filson Club Quarterly, Vol. 23, No. 3, July 1949.
- 10 Petitions of the early inhabitants of Kentucky, James R. Robertson, Filson Club Publication No. 27, Petition No. 58, Pages 121, 122, 205.
- 11 Lineage of this Hamon family can be traced as follows: Charles, Sr. to Martyn to Martin to Martin. See Appendix, Bl. 5, ll, 29.
- 12 Kinfolks of William Parke, Synah Perry & Josiah Wilson, Margaret Crow by Margie Ellis Howell, 1967.
- 13 From his Revolutionary War pension papers.
- 14 Map can be seen at the Kentucky Historical Society and the Library of Congress.

- 15 Pennsylvania German Pioneers by Ralph Strassburger, Vol. 1, p 741.
- 16 History of Monroe County, W. Va., by Owen F. Morton.
- 17 U. S. Pension Certificate 33359: Enlisted spring of 1776 in Greenbrier County, Va., as private, and was stationed both at Fort Pitt and Fort Randolph at the mouth of the Kanawha River. Was honorably discharged in 1779.
- 18 From the William Whitley Narrative as quoted from the Kentucky Historical Society Vol. 36, p 197, or History of Kentucky, Collins, 1887 Edition, p 692.

Post Script: After the completion of this article I had the opportunity to correspond with Mrs. Bennett Hughes, of Louisville, a descendant of Phillip Hammon(Cl). She informed me that the above reference relates to Phillip's wife, Christina Cook Hammon, who was wounded at Baughman's defeat. This family also suffered the loss of an infant child at this time. This information was found in the Dictionary of Alabama Biography, by Thomas Owen, Vol. 4, p 736.

.....

POSTMASTERS AT LONG FALLS CREEK POST OFFICE [McLean County, Kentucky]
(National Archives and Records Service)

Contributed by Katharyn C. Leachman, Cleopatra Place, Colhoun, Ky. 42327

	Dates of Appointment
Moseley, John	June 12, 1828
	March 13, 1844
Moseley, James P.	Sept. 20, 1859
Name changed to GLENVILLE	
Givens, Wm. S.	Sept. 20, 1859
Hansford, William	June 13, 1862
Ayer, Alexander Outlaw (Dr.)	Nov. 25, 1862
Moseley, Versillious L.	Mar. 12, 1864
Name changed back to LONG FALLS	
	Sept. 21, 1864
Turpin, Alex. J.	Dec. 4, 1866
Troutman, Joseph F.	Sept. 14, 1875
Kigel, John H.	Aug. 13, 1877
Name changed back to GLENVILLE	
	Aug. 8, 1884
Troutman, Jos. F.	Aug. 21, 1891
Hansford, John A.	April 3, 1893
Troutman, Jos. F.	June 3, 1897
Peak, Edgar Lee	April 28, 1905

Discontinued

(Mr. Peak still living, in his home, alone (Jan. 5, 1968) in Glenville.

.....

FUNERAL: The Funeral of Mrs. ELIZABETH CUNNINGHAM, wife of H. R. Cunningham, will take place from the residence of George Cunningham, on Mero street, at 10 o'clock, tomorrow morning.
[Frankfort, Franklin Co., Ky.] Friday, Sept. 13, 1850.