

# THE SHARON FAMILY

This History of the Sharon Family in America begins with the earliest of these Scotch-Irish immigrants who arrived in Philadelphia in the 1720s and continues up to the present day. The History basically follows my direct lineage, but also contains the known information on all the early branches of this family.

The Sharon family came to this country in the early 1720s and settled in eastern Pennsylvania. In the next few generations, the family spread west into the wilds of central Pennsylvania. After the Revolution, branches spread out into Kentucky and Ohio. My line went to Illinois, and by 1900 there were Sharons from coast to coast.

The Sharon family was a very typical early American pioneering family. It has been enjoyable and interesting to track down their history. I hope the reader finds it equally so.

This section of the Sharon History gives a brief introduction to my family and makes mention of several other non-related families of similar name.

There is a brief introduction to the Scotch-Irish settlers of colonial Pennsylvania and a look at the Cumberland Valley of central Pennsylvania, where so many of these early Scots settled.

The Sharon, or Sherron, Sharron, Sherran, Family is one of the typical *Scotch-Irish* families that came to America in the early 1700s. These people were originally from the lowland areas of Scotland and they went to Ulster in Northern Ireland during the reign of King James. Northern Ireland became less desirable after James left the throne. Rather than return to a rather bleak Scotland, many of these hardy people accepted the invitation of William Penn to join his colony in the new land of America.

Two Sherran brothers, William and Thomas, arrived with their young families in the Port of Philadelphia sometime in the mid 1720s. Like most of the Scotch-Irish families, they had no desire to live in cities and moved westward as soon as they landed in America. At that time, Chester County was the westernmost county in Pennsylvania.

In 1727 both brothers were living in Sadsbury Township of Chester County. While these two brothers lived and died in Chester County, their children, including my William Sherran, moved to Lancaster County in the early 1740s and then on into the soon to be formed Cumberland County in the late 1740s.

Some of the family remained in Cumberland County until the Revolution. My line, that of James Sharron, and several others went further westward across the mountains into Juniata County in the very early 1750s where they were to remain through the American Revolution. James' son, William Sharron, my ancestor, fought in Revolution. Afterwards he married and in 1780 moved to Westmoreland County in Western Pennsylvania where his children were born.

In about 1802, William and his family moved to eastern Ohio and the family remained in Jefferson County, Ohio for the next two generations. William Sherran's son, William Sharon II, and the next generation, Smiley Sharon, remained and died in Ohio. Smiley's sons, John Kirk Sharon and Joseph Kithcart Sharon, were the first to travel westward into southern Illinois. Both

of these brothers are in my line as two cousins later married.

The next two generations, Addison Joseph Sharon and my mother, Meda Sharon were raised in Carrollton, Illinois, and I was born there in Illinois as well, near Chicago in Evanston, Illinois.

The Sharon Family in America has spread throughout the United States over the last 250 years. From Pennsylvania, the family branched out with various members going to Ohio, Kentucky and Canada. Within the next 50 years they had spread as far away as California.

My line has had farmers, doctors, bankers, lawyers, merchants and a United States Senator.

The spelling of the name went from Sherran to Sherron to Sharron to Sharon over the next century. It has remained Sharon ever since.

I found another Sherron family in the 1700s in both New Jersey and Delaware. This family came from England and were all Episcopalian. My Sherrons were Scotch Presbyterians from Scotland via Northern Ireland.

By the 1800s there were a number of other Sherrons and Sharrons, but they were mostly from the Republic of Ireland and were all Catholic. More than likely all these various families came originally from Scotland but went their separate ways in the 1600s.

There are sections included on other branches of the family to show how the family split up and who went where and when. Such as history can never be complete, but this should be a good beginning. To my knowledge there are no other written histories of the Sharon Family, so hopefully this may be a source of assistance to others trying to sort out their family lines.

I have tried to break down this history into states. First Pennsylvania, then Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois and finally California. It is a history of a pioneering family as it spread westward.

Please keep in mind that our early ancestors were not the best of record keepers. Most of the history is based on solid evidence, but there are a few missing parts and the author has had to make a few *judgement calls*. I have been careful to try and separate fact from guess and the reader should do the same.

The addendum to this history contain transcripts of many early wills as these were sometimes the only traces left of our forbearers. The addendum also contains abstracts of old deeds and histories of several families that married into the Sharon Family in the early days. There are also short histories of some other Sherron families that are not related to ours, but their early histories are interesting.

I hope the reader finds this history as interesting as I have while I researched and tried to work the whole thing out.

The history begins with some brief background information on the Scotch Irish in America and what early Pennsylvania was like.

# THE SCOTCH IRISH IN PENNSYLVANIA

The Sharon family (Sherron or Sherran as it was originally spelled) were a part of the Scotch Irish peoples who flocked to central Pennsylvania in the mid eighteenth century. This section is a brief history of just who these Scotch Irish settlers were and why they came to America.

First off, the term is somewhat misleading. These were not Irish or a mixture of Scotch and Irish bloods. These were Scots who lived in Northern Ireland, Ulster, but never thought of it as any form of home land. This feeling carried over to America where they initially tended to surround themselves with other Scots who came from both Scotland and Ulster.

Ulster had for centuries been separated from the southern portion of Ireland by differences in religion, racial origins and politics. The southern Irish were Celtic in origin, the northern Irish were first Roman and then English. The problems in Ireland today go back over a thousand years.

The origins of Scotland were likewise diverse. The highland Scot was Celtic like the Irish, but the lowland Scot was like the English in most ways.

Ireland was always a thorn in the English side. King James the First, a Scotch Presbyterian, confiscated most lands in Northern Ireland and opened them up to the *Great Plantation* by Scots in the early 1600s. A great many lowland Scots, all Presbyterians, flooded to Ulster for virtually free lands.

An even greater number came in the late 1600s and early 1700s under similar conditions during the reign of William and Mary. Scots were offered long term leases at low rents and the native Irish were deprived of their lands, and forced to move south into the heart of the island. Counties in northeast Ulster such as Antrim were populated almost exclusively by Scotch Presbyterians.

Things began to go sour in the early 1700s when leases began to expire and higher rents were charged and when drought and famines hit in 1717, 1727 and 1740.

These Scotch peoples had no real attachment to either the land or to Ireland. Some returned to Scotland, but a great number simply packed it up and sailed for America.

In the late 1600s, William Penn had been granted what is now Pennsylvania in order to establish a colony free of religious persecution. The Scotch Presbyterians were never truly free in Ireland and were, in fact, discriminated against during the reign of King James the second who was converted to Catholicism. Penn's Colony seemed to offer the perfect solution.

The Scotch Irish were the third major group to go to Pennsylvania, being preceded by first the English and then the Germans. The Scots were a very independent and hardy group of people. When they began arriving in the Philadelphia area, they saw the opportunities as limited and immediately began heading west into Lancaster County.

By the 1730s, the Scotch Irish were a large enough community to be a threat to the Germans who were solidly located in the Lancaster county area. The Germans petitioned the authorities to open up lands further west in Indian country and, in effect, force the Scotch to move towards the Susquehanna and beyond.

This was just fine with these hardy and basically fearless people. They wanted unclaimed lands to start their own farms and homes and have adequate lands for their children to settle on. They pushed on into the Cumberland Valley in the late 1730s and early 1740s. By 1750 there were some 5000 people in the Valley, all but less than fifty of the families were Scotch Irish.

A very good history of the Ulster Scotchman and the Scotch Irish in Pennsylvania is found in a book by Wayland Dunaway, THE SCOTCH IRISH OF COLONIAL PENNSYLVANIA.

In the 1720s, Pennsylvania was broken into only three counties, Philadelphia, Bucks and Chester. Lancaster County was formed from Chester County in 1729 and Cumberland County was formed from Lancaster County in 1750.

It was first into Chester and Lancaster County and then into the Cumberland Valley that the first Sharon Families came in the early 1700s. The first of our family pops up in Chester County and then soon in Lancaster County. In fact they may have been in the same place when the county changed boundaries and name.

# THE CUMBERLAND VALLEY

The Cumberland Valley contained some of the most scenic and fertile lands in Pennsylvania and rapidly became the center of the Scotch Irish in America. Even through the Revolution, the population was made up of over 90 percent by these people.

The Cumberland Valley was a part of Lancaster County up until 1750 when Cumberland County was formed as a county by itself. In 1750 Cumberland County included not only what is now Cumberland, but what is now Mifflin, Juniata, Franklin, Derry and Perry Counties as well.

One of the first settlements was established by Benjamin Chambers near the present town of Chambersburg in what is now Franklin County. One of the first Sharons to settle in the area was William, who married Margaret Chambers who was more than likely a member of Benjamin Chambers' family. I have no proof, but in the 1730s there were not a lot of choices for wives in the area.

One has to keep in mind that the Cumberland Valley was at, or even beyond, the edge of civilization and the French and Indian War with the English was raging. The newly arrived settlers tended to join together not only for comradeship but for protection. Forts were built and massacres were not uncommon, especially in the Juniata Valley to the northwest where my line of Sharons went in the 1750s.

The Land Purchase of 1754 from the Indians made this area somewhat safe for settlement. My ancestor, James Sharon and his sons were one of the very first settlers in this area north of the Tuscarora mountains.

In the book HISTORY OF PENNSYLVANIA by William Egle, we get a fairly good idea of the time.

*"Soon after the defeat of the Virginia forces and the capitulation of Fort Necessity on July 4, 1754, the inhabitants of the frontiers of the Cumberland Valley were in imminent danger of being surprised by the Indians. The people petitioned Governor Hamilton for protection by furnishing them arms and ammunition. After the defeat of General Braddock, the alarmed people once and again begged of the Governor for a supply of arms and ammunition.*

*Governor Morris, Hamilton's successor, summoned the Assembly to meet in November. No sooner assembled when he called their attention to the true, but sad, state of affairs. In order to protect the inhabitants against the incursions of the Indians west of the Susquehanna, a chain or line of blockhouses, stockades and forts was erected from the Susquehanna to the Potomac, some at public expenses, others by individuals at their own cost. To these places of protection, hundreds of refugees resorted to escape the tomahawk and scalping knife, or worse yet, capture and the stake. In this chain or line of places of defense, they may be named in order, beginning at or near the Susquehanna .. McCormick's Fort in East Pennsborough Township near the Susquehanna, (he then lists all the forts).*

*Notwithstanding this cordon and the vigilance of the people, the hostile savages made marauding incursions into the Cumberland Valley, along the Blue Mountains for*

*the distance of eighty miles."*

McCormick's Fort was built by and named for John McCormick. John's daughter, Elizabeth McCormick married James Sherron.

The Indian problems continued and East Pennsborough was attacked in both the spring and summer of 1757. The fighting continued on and off into the early 1760s when the Indians were finally forced further westward.

During the American Revolution the vast majority of soldiers fighting for independence were Scotch-Irish and virtually all of the Sharons of fighting age took part in the War.

After the Revolution, a great many of the Scotch Irish moved into southwest Pennsylvania and by 1790 they predominated in Westmoreland and Fayette Counties. Several Sharon families went there in the early 1790s and then went separate ways into West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio.

The history of central and southwestern Pennsylvania was forged by these Scotch immigrants from Ulster and the Sharon Family was a very big part of this history.

# THE SHARON FAMILY IN COLONIAL PENNSYLVANIA

The following section details, as best as I can do, the lives and families of the various Sharons who lived in Pennsylvania during the 1700s. After 1800 only one family remained in central Pennsylvania, that of Samuel Sharon. By 1800 my line had moved to Ohio as had some other branches, and still other branches had headed south into Kentucky and north into Canada.

The following section is what I know of the early Sharon families in Pennsylvania. That the Sharon Family was Scotch Irish and came to America in the early 1700s, probably by entry into the Port of Philadelphia, is not in question. What is in question is just which Sharons arrived and what were their relationships. This was a question not easily answered.

In 1892, Hubert Howe Bancroft published a multi-volume work, THE CHRONICLES OF THE BUILDERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH. In Volume IV, pages 22 to 102, he details the life of William Sharon, the senator from Nevada and silver millionaire. In the first part of this chapter, Bancroft sets forth the origins of the Sharon Family in America. This particular section is found either word for word or paraphrased in a number of different books and histories. There is no real substantiation, but we must assume that there is indeed some basis for establishing the early history and lineage of the Sharon family in America.

Margaret Sharon of Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada, is a descendant of the Hugh Sharon and his son Thomas who went to Canada around 1800. A few years ago, Margaret went to the Bancroft Library in San Francisco and found the notes he used in writing this large undertaking. In the Sharon files, she found a note to the effect that Bancroft obtained the early history from *sources in Pennsylvania*, nothing more.

The following is a part of what Bancroft wrote:

*"One William Sharon, a well-to-do farmer from Ayrshire, Scotland, a stern, rigid dissenter, and a man of no mean ability, was among the early Ulster planters. His eldest son, James, married early in life to Eleanor Finley. Like many others of the Scotch Irish in Ulster, they were dissatisfied with the home of their adoption. There were no ancestral ties which bound them in fealty thereto, and when the invitation came from the New World, they were not loath to leave. Although a few settled in New England and New York, the great majority went into Pennsylvania, the laws of that province granting greater privileges than any of the other colonies. James Sharon, with his wife and their sons, Hugh and William, located in the Cumberland valley, not far from the North or Blue mountains, in 1737.*

*William Sharon, whose wife was Margaret Chambers, died March 2, 1751, leaving seven children, five daughters and two sons. The eldest daughter, Isabel married a Calhoun, and from them descended the South Carolina nullifier, John Caldwell Calhoun. The younger son, William, resided in what is now Fermanagh Township, Mifflin County, Pennsylvania. It was at his house the men of that locality met in 1776, when the company of Captain John Hamilton was raised, and in which William served as an ensign, doing duty upon the frontiers. It was here also that the backwoodsmen organized themselves for the defense against the British and their Indian allies, who were threatening the West Branch Valley.*

*Hugh Sharon, the son of James and brother of the first named William, settled north of the Kittatinny or Blue mountains, where he became a highly prominent pioneer. Of his children we have only the record of his son Samuel. He was a patriot of the revolution, serving as lieutenant of a company of associators, who were in active service in the New Jersey campaign of 1776. He was also a justice of the peace for many years. His wife was Sarah Russell.*

*The great-grandfather of Senator Sharon was James Sharon, the son of William Sharon and Margaret Chambers, the last named William being the grandson of the Ayrshire, Scotland, farmer of the same name who settled in Ulster, as before stated. James was an elder in the Presbyterian church, and was also a revolutionary patriot. He was an active partisan, and commanded a company of Cumberland county associators in the campaign around Philadelphia in September 1777. He had, among other children, Hugh, James and William, the latter being the grandfather of the senator. Hugh and William inherited their father's several tracts of land in Fermanagh Township, Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, whither he, James Sharon, had removed upon the death of his father. This land was sold in 1793, previous to which this James' son William had removed to western Pennsylvania. Before leaving for that locality, he married Mrs. Sarah Whitaker, a daughter of George Smiley, of the Juniata Valley. They reared a family of four sons, James, William, Smiley and John, who were all born in western Pennsylvania. In 1798 they left Pennsylvania and settled in West Virginia. They remained there for several years, and about the year 1802 removed to Wells Township, Jefferson County, Ohio, near the town of Smithfield, where the parents resided until their death."*

The story then continues through the life of William Sharon, the Senator, and his family.

It is easy to find where Bancroft found several of the above sections in his research on the Sharon Family. The section on the Reverend James Russell Sharon came word for word from THE HISTORICAL JOURNAL, vol. II, no. 3 published by John F. Meginness in 1894 as did a certain amount of the William from Ayrshire story. This is found on pages 299 -300. The above description of James Russell Sharon came word for word from a 1890 HISTORY OF THE SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE PAXTANG CHURCH, by Mathias McAlarney on pages 81 and 82.

If indeed Bancroft took all his material from actual printed early sources, then maybe there was some validity to this line of descent.

The problem is that certain details are simply wrong or missing or muddled. The William Sharon who married Margaret Chambers left a will, a transcript of which is in the addenda to this work, in 1750, but he wrote a codicil in 1751 making a bequest to his brother James. This being the case there may have been three brothers: William, Hugh and now James. On the other hand I could find absolutely no reason to include Hugh in this group. There were William and James who both had a son named Hugh and these folks become accounted for in the later 1750s and on, but there was no indication whatsoever of any adult Hugh Sharon before these sons enter into the picture.

Everyone has been taking the Bancroft lineage as fact, but I simply couldn't resolve all the facts with this story. I started looking to either try to prove, or disprove this family line.

Cumberland County only came into existence in 1750, before that it was included in Lancaster

County from 1729 to 1750 and Lancaster was included in an original county, Chester County, prior to 1729. I felt that perhaps the answers lay in the old records of these other counties.

In April of 1986 I took a short trip down to Central Pennsylvania. I checked the old records in the various County Courthouses and the State Archives, and I was right.

There was a whole family history lying there unnoticed for 250 years. I found the *William from Ayrshire*, his children and their children. The history of the Sharon family in America begins with the history I found buried away in the basement of the Lancaster County Courthouse, Lancaster, Pennsylvania and in the archives of Chester County, Pennsylvania.

All we can derive early information from are the early records that were recorded in the various courthouses. No one was kind enough to leave elaborate journals to make our job easier. The early ancestors could not write and were frankly too busy with the rigors of pioneer life to care what people tried to piece together two centuries later. It is up to us to try and piece out a history based on what is still available in the current days. This history, especially in the very early days is only my opinion as to what were the early chain of events.

Although the family name is now universally spelled *SHARON*, you will see that the early spellings were quite different and varied over an entire range of versions during the 1700s. In fact, many of the early records in central Pennsylvania listed the family as *Shannon* as the lower case 'r' looks a lot like the lower case 'n' in colonial script.

From what I can determine through old wills and tax records, there were two brothers, William Sherran and Thomas Sherran, who came together from Ulster to Philadelphia in the early to mid 1720s. They made what arrangements were necessary for lands in the new country and moved to the Township of Sadsbury in what was then Chester County, Pennsylvania.

It is interesting to note that the eldest sons of both Thomas and William Sherran were named John. It was very common to name the first male after the father's father. If this was the case, then the father of these two men might be a John Sherran. However, there is no record of a John Sherran, possibly the father, coming to America with his sons, but it does give us a name to try and trace back in Ulster. The following sections gives what I know or can guess about these two brothers and their families.

## THOMAS SHERRAN

Thomas Sherran appears as a married taxpayer as early as 1727 in Sadsbury Township of what was then Chester County, Pennsylvania. The rest of what I know is from the wills these two brothers left, Thomas in 1737 and William in 1741.

Both of these wills were found in the very early records of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Lancaster was formed as a county in 1729 and Sadsbury Township was then included in this new county. Transcripts of both these wills are included in the addendum of this work.

The will of Thomas Sherran made no mention of William or his children, nor did William's make any reference to Thomas' family. I therefore feel they were brothers rather than any father and son relationship. They were also about the same age.

Thomas Sherran (or sometimes spelled Thomas Sharran) was a farmer who spent the remainder of his life after reaching America in Sadsbury Township of Lancaster County.

He wrote his will on April 4th, 1737 and must have died shortly afterwards as the will was proved in court on April 27th of the same year. The will was witnessed by William McClure. The McClures were to later go with William Sherran to Pennsborough in Cumberland County in the 1740s.

Thomas Sherran's will indicated that his wife, Agness Sherran was still alive. I have no idea what her maiden name was. He also listed his children. His eldest son, John Sherran was to receive half of his farm and his son Samuel was to receive the other half when he came of age.

This indicates that Samuel was still under the age of sixteen in 1737. The will also mentions two daughters; Anna who was under the age of sixteen and her older sister Margaret who was married to a Thomas at the time. The will also mentions his youngest son Thomas. Thomas must have been quite young. Thomas is promised some fifteen pounds when he comes of age.

I do not know what became of the two daughters, but it is hard to trace daughters unless a lot more is known of their husband's families. The sons are much easier to trace.

It seems that all of Thomas Sherran's sons remained in Chester County at least through the Revolution. Records are spotty, but they pop up through the 1750s, 1760 and in the Lancaster Militia during the Revolution.

## The Children of Thomas Sherran

The following is what I know about the children of Thomas Sherran.

### John Sherran

John Sherran was born about 1720, most likely in Ulster, Northern Ireland.

John seems to have moved to West Nantmeal Township, Chester County and remained there through the 1750s, then he went into West Caln Township, Chester County where he is listed as a Freeman (unmarried land owner) on the tax lists until 1768. Now I think that this last reference is to a son, John, and not to the father. The following references all obviously pertain to a younger John who was more than likely his son.

John Sherran was in Lancaster County to join the Militia during the Revolution. He appears in 1782 in the 5th Company, 7th Battalion of the Lancaster Militia. This does not indicate he moved to Lancaster County. Most soldiers were sworn into service in Lancaster County as the army was mustered in to fight the British. John Sherran is shown in the records as taking the Oath of Allegiance in Lancaster County in the summer of 1777.

After the Revolution, John and his family moved to Westmoreland County in southwestern Pennsylvania. Several of the other Sharon families went there in the late 1780s and early 1790s. He first appears in a court case in 1783 when he tried to evict a tenant from his lands. There was a land grant given a John Sharron in Westmoreland County in 1795. After this, I have no other information on the family.

### Samuel Sherran

Samuel Sherran was born around 1725, probably in Pennsylvania.

Samuel doesn't appear on any tax lists, but a Samuel Sherran is shown as serving as a private in the 5th Company, 6th Battalion of the Lancaster Militia in 1781.

This soldier was probably Samuel's son and not he himself. The elder Samuel would have been in his fifties and probably too old to have been in the Militia. The younger Samuel later went into Allegheny County in the western part of Pennsylvania after the Revolution.

There is a brief story of this Samuel Sherran later in this section, but after the year 1800 he probably died.

Now keep in mind that I am only guessing Samuel, the soldier, was a son of Samuel the first. He could just as well have been a son of John or Thomas. I have no clues whatsoever. He is here only because of name similarity.

### Thomas Sherran

Thomas was born about 1730 in Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Thomas Sherran, the youngest son is the one that I am not certain about. There was a Thomas

Sheron who served in the Cumberland Militia in 1782, but I do not think this is the same Thomas. There was a Thomas who was listed as being married in the 1768 tax list for West Caln Township, Chester County.

The only other reference that I can find is that in the court records there was a Thomas Sheren died intestate (without leaving a will) in West Caln, Chester County in 1803. I do not know if this is the same Thomas or not; in 1803 he would have been into his seventies.

There is a record of a Thomas Sherran serving in the Lancaster Militia. This is probably a younger Thomas and it is quite possible that he was killed in the fighting. Even Sharons are mortal. I have nothing else on Thomas after the Revolutionary War time period.

## **Margaret Sherran**

Margaret was the eldest daughter, and possibly the eldest child. When her father wrote his will in 1737, she was married to a Thomas, but no last name was given.

## **Anna Sherran**

All I know of Anna was that she was under the age of sixteen when here father wrote his will in 1737.

My line of the Sharon family begins with the other brother, **William Sherran**, who came from Ulster to America.

## WILLIAM SHERRAN

William Sherran was probably the first in my direct Sharon Lineage to arrive in America. From reading his will and from some guesswork, this was the William from Ayrshire and Ulster referred to in Bancroft's Chronicles. I felt that there had to be at least a shred of truth in these old published works, but I could not pin the line down until I found the actual old wills in the basement archives of the Lancaster County Courthouse in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

I assume that William Sherran was indeed of Scottish stock and that he, or more than likely his parents or grandparents, immigrated to Ulster, Northern Ireland. As set forth in the initial section on the Scotch-Irish, many of these people came to America for many reasons, mostly economic.

As William Sherran had grandchildren by the time he left his will in 1741, I assume that he was probably in his late fifties or sixties at that time. This would place his birth sometime in the late 1680s to 1690 and more than likely in Ayrshire, Scotland. He went to Ulster, Ireland in the early 1700s.

He more than likely married about 1710 to 1715 while living in Ireland and brought his young family over to America in the mid 1720s. By this time he would have been around thirty and undoubtedly married. His will shows his wife to be Mary Sherran, but I have no idea of her maiden name. Mary was still alive at the time of his death in early 1742.

William Sherran and his family probably arrived in the Port of Philadelphia around 1726 and it seems they headed immediately westward into what is now Lancaster County. This was very typical of the Scotch-Irish immigrants at the time.

His will, a transcript of which is in the addendum, indicates that he was a farmer all his life. This was, of course, the most common occupation of the early Scotch-Irish settlers in America. The only reason that they came to America was to be free in their Presbyterian religion and to obtain some reasonably priced land to farm and support their families.

William Sherran lived and died in Sadsbury Township which is on the eastern border of Lancaster County. This was pretty much the western extent of civilization in the 1720s and 1730s.

Everything else I know of William Sherran comes from his will. This will mentions his wife, Mary, who also signed and acknowledged the will. The will was witnessed by a John Sherran, who was undoubtedly the surviving eldest son of his brother, Thomas Sherran. This John was also living in Sadsbury on an adjacent farm.

The will then lists his children who were: William his eldest; James and Hugh, his other two sons and his daughters who were still living at the time, Gresall and Jean. He also mentions his son in law, Robert Line and granddaughters Martha and Margaret McCallpin. These last two mentions indicate that he had two other married daughters, who had probably died by 1741.

Bancroft indicated that the original William had only two sons, William and Hugh, but I knew that there had to be a James as well. This James was mentioned in the codicil to his brother William's will in 1751/2. Finding the senior William Sherran's will proved out my feelings exactly.

I might as well take the time right now to explain the above date of 1751/2. As you all know England had a long-standing feud with the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church, and the countries it influenced, had adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1582. This is the form of calendar that we all use today with each year beginning on January the first. The British Empire was the only holdout to the new form of date keeping and retained the use of the old Julian calendar up to the year 1753. Up until that year the American colonies still retained the old form of date keeping. Under the Julian calendar the new year began on March 25th of each year. This date was the theoretical date of the conception of Jesus. The word December, comes from the Latin 'Deca' meaning ten as it was indeed the tenth month of the year in the Julian calendar. Many of the old dates covering the time period from January 1st through March 24th are shown with a *two year slash*, such as 1751/52, in order to accurately show when the event took place. Anyway, enough of this background color and on with the story.

William Sherran wrote his will on May 13th, 1741 and it was proved on March 25th (New Year's Day) of 1742. He more than likely died sometime in the month of March 1741/2. William Sherran (2nd) was granted administration papers on March 25th, and was required to provide the court with an inventory of the estate by April 25, 1742.

## The Children of William Sherran

The following is what I know about the sons of William Sherran, or at least the sons mentioned in his will.

The will also lists two unmarried daughters and two married daughters. I have very little details on these four girls. Unless more is known about their husbands, it is virtually impossible to trace daughters in the early days.

You will note spelling differences in the last name of these children. I am trying to use the spelling that each person actually seemed to use himself. Historical accuracy and all that stuff.

### Gresall Sherran

She was a daughter who married a McCallpin and had, at the time, two daughters:

**MARTHA McCALLPIN**

**MARGARET McCALLPIN**

### Daughter Sherran

She was a daughter who married Robert Line and had presumably died by the time the will was written as she was not mentioned by name.

### Jean Sherran

Jean was also still living in 1741. Again, she may have been single at home or a wife of one of the two men mentioned above.

## **John Sherron**

His eldest son, John Sherran, was probably born in Northern Ireland in about 1705 to 1710. As a young single man, he left home early and ventured even further west to the banks of the Susquehanna in the late 1720s.

This John Sherran went west to obtain new lands and settled in the Township of Hempfield. As Lancaster County was formed in 1729, Hempfield lay in its bounds.

John was single and died in the first part of June 1731. He wrote his will on June 6, 1731 and it was proved in court on June 15, 1731, which was after his death. He left everything to his father, William Sherran.

## **William Sherron**

It is through this son, William Sherron, that my Sharon line has descended. His life will be treated more completely in the next section.

## **Hugh Sherran**

One major problem that I had with the Bancroft genealogy was that I couldn't find any early references to a Hugh Sharon in Cumberland County along with his brothers William and James. When I searched the courthouse and the files of the Historical Society in Chester County, I found the answer to this problem.

It was simply that Hugh Sherran never ventured west with his brothers. He probably remained on his father's farm and took it over upon his dad's death.

Hugh appears in the tax rolls of Chester County first in East Caln Township from 1737 to 1740 and then in West Caln Township from 1748 to 1756. The Court Estate records indicate that he died without leaving a will in 1760 while still living in West Caln Township.

I have no information on any children of this Hugh Sherran.

## **James Sherron**

In the Bancroft story we read of a James Sherron who married early in life to Eleanor Finley and who was the father of my William Sherron. I could never find this connection, and once I found the old Lancaster wills, I felt that he may have been a little mistaken on this point as he was on a few others.

I feel that the James who married Eleanor was William's brother and not his father. This makes sense as Bancroft missed out on listing William's brother James completely, yet we know he existed. James was probably an older brother as when he died in 1753 there was no will and seemingly no young family around at that time. Also remember that Bancroft was writing a history 150 years after the fact as far as the early stuff goes.

There is a rather lengthy genealogy of the family of one Michael Finley contained on pages 490 to 492 of Hanna's HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS OF HARRISON COUNTY OHIO. Michael Finley was born in Scotland or Northern Ireland in 1680 to 1690. He immigrated from County

Armagh, Ireland to America, landing in Philadelphia September 28, 1734. He came with his wife, seven or eight sons and an unmentioned number of daughters. They settled first in Bucks County and then moved to Chester County and lived in Sadsbury Township from 1737 to 1747 or possibly later.

This is exactly when William Sherran and his family lived in Sadsbury. I have no proof, but James Sherron would have been the same age as several of Michael Finley's children and very possibly there was an Eleanor Finley among them.

James Sherron went to Cumberland and died without leaving a will in 1753. Estate administration papers were granted to Ann Sherron and another James Sherron. A copy of this estate file is in the addendum.

Bancroft mentioned that James married early in life to Eleanor Finley. Since Eleanor was not mentioned in the estate papers, she more than likely had died by 1753.

As to who Ann and James were. I feel they were his adult children. They would have to be over the age of sixteen as they were old enough to administer his estate.

The administration papers were filed in Orphan's Court and are in the records there. This might indicate that there were minor children as well, although none were mentioned by name.

This younger James Sherron was his son and married Elizabeth McCormick. Ann was more than likely a daughter who was unmarried and was living with and taking care of her father. This was quite common in the period.

The following is what I know about the children of James Sherron:

## **ISABELLA SHERRON**

Isabella was born in the early 1740s, probably in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. She would have been under the age of sixteen when her father died and was one of the minor children alive that caused the estate to be recorded in Orphan's Court.

Isabella, married Sam Huston, a neighbor, as detailed in the following account taken from a 1905 history, BIOGRAPHICAL ANNALS OF CUMBERLAND COUNTY, Sam Huston's father was John Huston who came from Ulster, Ireland in 1735. Later generations included the famous Sam Houston of Alamo and Texas fame.

*"Samuel Huston recorded a land warrant in East Pennsborough in 1752. He was married to a Isabella Sharon."*

It would appear that Samuel Huston married Isabella Sherron sometime around 1758 or 1759 as their first child was born in 1760 according to early histories.

Sam and Isabella remained all their lives on this homestead near what is now Hogestown, Pennsylvania. Samuel died in 1784 and Isabella in 1804. Both are buried in the old Pine Hill Burying Ground. The article continues to say,

*"It is known that a James Sharon and his son, James, lived upon and owned a tract of*

*land in East Pennsborough, immediately to the west of where Samuel Huston, but the last of the family disappeared from the locality soon after the Hustons came."*

The importance of the above is to show that James had a son named James. The 1787 sale of *The Rose of Sharon* was made by this young James who was living in Tyrone Township, Cumberland County. This fact separates James's son James who remained in Middleton and Tyrone Townships in the south from William's son James who went north into Fermanagh Township.

Sam Huston wrote his will on September 15, 1784 and it was probated on October 12, 1784. He died during that time period. What is known of his children comes mostly from that document and from BIOGRAPHICAL ANNALS OF CUMBERLAND COUNTY, published in 1905.

The following is what I know about the children of Samuel Huston and Isabella Sharon

**WILLIAM HUSTON** was the eldest child. He was a Captain in a regiment of Cumberland County Militia called into service in August 1776. He may have died in the Revolution, I have nothing else.

**SAMUEL HUSTON** married Esther Waugh. They had these children: **John, Samuel, James, Richard, Esther** and **William Huston**.

**MARGARET HUSTON** Margaret married a cousin, John Huston son of Christopher Huston. They moved to West Pennsboro. They raised these children: **Jonathan, James, John, Samuel, William, Ann, Isabella Huston** and a **daughter** who married a Kinkaid.

**MARY HUSTON** married John Mateer (original spelling McTeer). They moved from East Pennsboro to Lower Allen Township. John was a captain in the Revolution. They had the following children: **Samuel, John, Andrew, Alice, Isabella, Mary** and **Ann Mateer**. John died in April of 1780 at age fifty four and Mary died in February 1812 at age seventy three.

**ANN HUSTON** married James Gibson. They moved and nothing more is known.

**JANE HUSTON** married John Creigh from Ulster, Ireland who came to America in 1761. John was a lawyer and a colonel in the American Army. He was also a member of the County Convention that declared Independence. After the War, he was a judge. They had **Isabella, Thomas, Samuel, John, Mary** and **Elizabeth Creigh**. This family remained very prominent in the area for the next three generations.

**JAMES HUSTON** was born in 1754 and served in the Revolution. He had bought a farm in Center Township and was the only son not listed by name in his father's will written in 1784. After the Revolution, he moved to Penn's Valley and there married Catherine Ewing. Catherine was raised in Huntingdon County near McCormick's Fort. At age twelve, she was captured by Indians and walked to Canada. She was later exchanged and returned first to Philadelphia and then to her parents. They had these children: **Samuel, Mary, Thomas, Isabella, Catherine** and **Margaret Huston**.

**ISABELLA HUSTON** was born October 14, 1765. She married James Clendenin, the youngest son of John Clendenin and Janet Huston. They had these children: **Jonathan, John, Margaret, William, Jennie, Mary, Annie, Isabella** and **James Clendenin**. James Clendenin died and Isabella married a widower, Nathaniel Eckels. They continued to live in Silver Spring Township and had two more children: **William** and **Francis**

## **Eckels.**

**JOHN HUSTON** was one of the two youngest sons living at the time of his father's will in 1784. He was bequeathed his father's farm in East Pennsboro and lived there until his death in 1811. The estate was tied up in litigation until 1824.

**JONATHAN HUSTON** was the youngest child. He was left half of his father's farm, but seems to have divided it and taken a farm to the north, as his brother John was on the original portion. Jonathan married Margaret Rankin McIntyre and remained on the farm until his death. Jonathan died in Silver Spring on November 10, 1830 at age sixty and Margaret died there on August 24, 1846 at age seventy six.

## **JAMES SHERRON II**

James Sherron the second was born in the mid 1730s, 1733 to 1735, probably in Sadsbury Township, Lancaster County. He moved westward and lived in East Pennsborough, Cumberland County. He was probably the only son of James Sherron Senior.

Sometime during the 1750s he married Elizabeth McCormick in East Pennsborough Township of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. Elizabeth was one of the five children of John McCormick and Jean Cathay. An early genealogy of her family has been included in this addendum.

James and Elizabeth had six children. They were James, William, Elizabeth, Sarah, Mary and Isabella. All were mentioned by name in the Will of Jean Cathay McCormick in 1788.

This James' cousins, James, William and Hugh, went north into what is now Juniata County, but this James and his family all remained in the southern portion of the county in Tyrone Township, which is now included in Perry County. Elizabeth's family lived in Tyrone as well.

James appears on the tax list in East Pennsborough Township in as late as 1758, after which he appears in Middletown Township from 1760 to 1770 when he appears in Tyrone Township.

The 223 acre farm that James and Elizabeth lived on was aptly named '*Rose of Sharon*' and was passed onto his son who later sold it.

His father obtained these lands in the 1740s more by *tomahawk claim* than anything else. James Sherron, probably his son rather than himself, obtained a legal warrant on the land and the improvements on February 23, 1786. The land was patented to James Sherron on June 19, 1787 by Benjamin Franklin. With clear title, James then sold the land on August 1st of that year. *Rose of Sharon* contained some 223 acres all together. There is an abstract of the James Sherron land Warrant in the addendum.

For a long time, I felt this particular James was my direct line, but I have since pretty well established that he is not. What leads me to believe this is what is recorded in Jefferson County, Ohio in the late 1790s. I do not believe that *my* William Sharon came to Jefferson County until after 1800. There was another William there as early as 1797. The two only lived a few miles apart and both had fathers named James. You can see my problem right off the bat.

Anyway, the other William Sharron in Ohio died in 1799. In 1800 an Elizabeth Sharron was listed as a *Pioneer of Jefferson County*. Since William had died and did not mention his wife, then this Elizabeth had to be his mother and the Matriarch of the family in 1800. Further, his will

was witnessed by her brother, Hudson McCormick and her other brother John McCormick junior was an executor.

There was also a pencil note in my grandmother Sharon's files that 'Betty McCormick' was part of this William's family. This eliminated James and Elizabeth from my line. Oh well, easy come, easy go as they say.

Back to James Sherron the second. I assume that James died sometime in the 1790s. When his son William moved to Ohio in the late 1790s, only Elizabeth his mother went with him. She then died in Jefferson County, Ohio sometime after 1800. I have no death dates on either.

The following is what I either know or can guess about the children of James and Elizabeth Sherron.

**WILLIAM SHERRON** was born sometime in the 1750s in East Pennsborough. This makes him about the same age as my William so it was quite fortunate he seems to have remained in the southern part of Cumberland County. He first appears on the tax lists in 1767 living in Middletown Township where his parents lived. It appears that he remained in this area and that he married there. Like others, it seems that he did not marry until after the Revolution probably in the mid 1780s. I do not know whom he married. In the 1790 Pennsylvania Census he is shown as having one son under the age of 16. I don't know if this son was William, as William was not born until 1791. The census takers in those days had to do a lot of travelling and may not have gotten out to count until 1791. I only have a record of the one son, William so if there was another son, he must have died young. The census also showed six females. One was probably his wife and the others included the five daughters mentioned in his 1799 Will left in Jefferson County, Ohio: Betsy, Jinny, Isabella, Sarah and Ann. William left Cumberland county and went to Jefferson County, Ohio in about 1796 when he sold the last of his lands in Tyrone Township which is now in Perry County. His mother, Elizabeth, went with him. He moved to what was at the time Washington County of the Western Territories. He is listed as currently residing there when he recorded one of the very first deeds at the Steubenville Land Office on August 25, 1797. He died in Jefferson County in 1799. His will is included in this addendum. The farm in Ohio went to his son, William. This son's life is included in the section on the OHIO SHARONS. I have no further information on the daughters who were very young in 1799.

**JAMES SHERRON 3RD** I have very little information on young James. In a 1786 deed he is listed as a Skin Dresser living in Tyrone. The 1790 census shows him living with only one female, presumably a wife, but I do not know for certain. He purchased more lands in Tyrone Township in 1794 and in Middletown Township in 1796. He then simply disappears. He is not listed in the 1800 census. He then went west sometime before 1810, though I cannot find him in the 1810 census either. He was, however, in Beaver County where he left a Will dated April 17, 1812 and probated after his death on June 5, 1813. His will states he was "late of Carlisle, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania." It also states he was living in Sewickly Township of Beaver County. Beaver county, as you will see later was where Hugh Sharron was in 1800. It would appear that this Hugh might have been a son of James. Based on the Will, he only lists three daughters and leaves half his estate to the 20 grandchildren. The three daughters mentioned were:

**Jane Sharon** the eldest and by 1812, she had died and was buried in Pittsburgh. She had children listed but no married name was listed.

**Margaret Sharon** who was married and had children. Again, no married name.

**Elizabeth Sharon** was given half the farm and I assume she was still unmarried in 1812.

**ELIZABETH SHERRON** the only information that I have on Elizabeth is that she married a William Steele in Carlisle at the First Presbyterian Church on November 4, 1788. This was taken from the LDS files and the entry sheet was dated 1932 so I cannot reach that person anymore.

**ISABELLA SHERRON** a similar LDS listing for Isabella, *alias Peggy*, shows that she married George Ferguson at the First Presbyterian Church in Carlisle on January 13, 1791.

**MARY SHERRON** the only thing I know about Mary is that she was listed in the will of her grandmother, Jean Cathay McCormick, as were all the above children. This simply means she was alive and well in 1788. I have nothing else on Mary.

### **ANN SHERRON**

Other than the fact she was mentioned as an adult in her father's estate papers, I have nothing on Ann. As she was over sixteen in 1753, she would have been born in the late 1730s in Lancaster County. I have no record of her marrying.

The next section covers the life and family of **William Sherron**, the son of William Sherran. It is through this William that my lineage descends.