

ROWAN ROOTS

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Brown-Fisher Association

Rowan County, North Carolina

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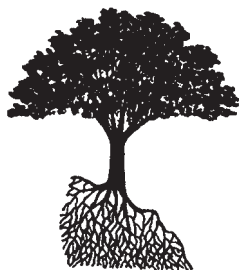


COOK UP A FAMILY FAVORITE

There are generations and generations of Rowan County and Fisher families spread across the United States and other parts of the world. And there was one thing certain when the families arrived in America - they would ensure that their children did not go without food. Over the years, cherished family recipes have been passed down through the generations. Delicacies such as German stollen pastries have become family favorites.

With clans as large as the Browns and the Fishers there have been many, many recipes handed down through the years. In the early 2000s, the Association solicited these very recipes for compilation into a cookbook titled Family Favorites. The project was spearheaded by the late Betty Dan Nicholas Spencer and the late Juanita Fisher Lagg, who submitted her own favorite dessert, Chocolate Sauerkraut Cake. (Now that sounds like a unique recipe indeed!) Fortunately, the Association has an ample supply of these cookbooks remaining. Perhaps you might find a recipe that your mother or grandmother submitted for the book? And there's probably a few more unique recipes in there too. Are you out of things to do during Covid-19 isolation? Try cooking some of these scrumptious goodies.

Act now to purchase this family keepsake. You'll not find these cookbooks at your local bookstore (They're still out there, so give them your support with other purchases or on Amazon). You will find Family Favorites on the shop page of our website at www.brownfisher.org.



CORONAVIRUS IMPACTS ASSOCIATION EVENTS

America is nearing the end of one of the most consequential years in its history. What more can be said about 2020? The world last experienced a similar pandemic, the Spanish Flu, over a century ago in 1918-1921. Then, too, folks were told to distance themselves, wash their hands and wear face coverings, America still lost 675,000 lives. A few years later, in 1925, the Brown Memorial Association was formed to organize an annual family reunion. Although the family lost an unknown number of descendants, perhaps the Spanish Flu had the positive effect of bringing the family together for fellowship and support.

2020 ANNUAL MEETING

America's 2020 coronavirus experience has affected virtually every facet of our lives and our Annual Reunion and Rowan Museum's Germanfest were not immune. The Association by-laws require that we hold an annual meeting, and Board member Sarah Brown made it possible for the meeting to be held as scheduled by video conference using Zoom conferencing service. If you missed the meeting it's still possible to view the recording on YouTube. Please refer to the link below to be taken to that website. Financially, the organization had another positive fiscal year in 2019-2020. Treasurer Larry Brown reported \$50,213.71 in our investment account, \$60,414.61 in our money market account and \$1,662.33 in our checking account. The Annual Meeting was quite successful considering the circumstances. We were thrilled to have descendants join us from as far away as Arizona and Washington states! It was so successful that your Board agreed to explore providing videoconferencing of our next annual meeting on Saturday, September 18 (3rd Saturday), 2021. Mark your calendars now!

GERMANFEST

Rowan Museum also was forced to cancel its annual Germanfest fundraiser, a significant source of its annual operating funds, which is normally held in conjunction with our annual reunion. In its place, Museum Executive Director Aaron Kepley answered questions from those attending and showed a 20 minute videotaped discussion with Professor Gary Freeze, a renowned history instructor who recently retired from Catawba College. The discussion centered on why the Brown and Fisher families migrated south from Pennsylvania to North Carolina and what they did once they arrived here. It is well worth setting aside time to view this excellent presentation. Videos of both the annual meeting and the Gary Freeze interview may be viewed on YouTube at the following link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWOn5FJ3Pt_XWN5ghz_YWXQ

NEW YEAR TRADITIONS

Here's hoping that the New Year brings tremendously good health and much prosperity to all. Everyone will welcome charting a new course in 2021. If you held to traditional superstitions, perhaps you filled up on black-eyed peas, collard greens and cornbread! If you and your family want to read the reason for that New Year's meal in the South, google "New Year's Eve black-eyed peas" to learn more.



WANTED- ORIGINAL BROWN AND FISHER BOOKS

Our lives will return to some semblance of normalcy after the coronavirus vaccines have been distributed and Americans regain confidence in resuming daily activities. We will go back to things like yard sales, estate sales and the like. If that is your cup of tea, the Association kindly asks that you be on the lookout for original copies of the Brown and Fisher family genealogy books. The Association no longer has any of these books and we are beginning to develop a list of items we would like to have available when the BFA Archives open in the new Visitor's and Education Center at Michael Brown's Stone House. (The Museum is moving away from referring to the house as 'Old Stone House' as there are multiple Old Stone House designations across the country, thereby complicating things when a Google search is conducted.) Though the pandemic has set back the project plan, the Museum is steadfast in its determination to complete the new facility.

The multiple Brown and Fisher books are extremely hard to find, so much so that the Brown books especially have been duplicated and are for sale on the internet. Unfortunately, the copyright period has expired on these books and therefore we have no recourse to prevent reproduction. However, we are somewhat confident that members of the family still have one or more of these books gathering dust on a bookshelf and might be willing to donate the book(s) to the Association, especially considering they are now available electronically on our website (www.brownfisher.org/books.html). Please contact us via email (info@brownfisher.org) or by phone (704-762-1173) if you have knowledge of the location of any of these books.



Members of the Brown Fisher Association for the Year Ending 2020

We gratefully acknowledge our loyal member whose support allows us to strengthen the roots of our ever-growing Brown-Fisher family tree.

LIFETIME CHARTER MEMBERS

Edward Addison Brown - #17
 Mrs. Howard Hunter Brown - #8
 Stephen Whitfield Brown - #24
 Paul and Lois Brown Carter - #12
 Marie Cuthrell - #33
 Anna Barbara Fisher - #5
 Hilbert Cobb and Susan Gullledge Fisher - #43
 Paul E. (deceased) and Sue Palmer Fisher - #13
 Thomas Clapp Fisher, III - #3
 Tom, Jr. and Sylvia Wiseman Harrell (deceased) - #39
 Ruth Jones Hope - #18
 George and Margaret Kluttz - #31
 Patty Owen Koontz - #47
 Peggy Brown Lloyd - #32
 Charles Thomas Mathews, MD - #27
 C. Herman Mauney - #44
 Frances Rufty - #15
 Mrs. R. D. W. Saussy, Jr. - #40
 Anne Matthews Sayer - #30
 Eulene Shepherd - #45
 Bobby and Betty Dan Spencer (deceased) #2

LIFETIME MEMBERS

Judith Austin - #172
 Joshua Earl Barker - #145
 Matthew Kyle Barker - #144
 Patricia Bonds Beck - #161
 Ben G. Beeker - #170
 Harry Miller Beeker - #128
 John M., M.D. and Katherine Benbow - #120
 Todd C. and Gigi Berg - #97
 Parks I., Jr. and Mary W. Berryhill - #117
 Alice Jean Bostian - #168
 Ann Stoner Bostian - #105
 Mrs. Samuel Wendell Bowyer - #129
 Angela Brown - #49
 Benjamin Craig Brown - #122
 Benjamin H. E. and Candace Elliott Brown - #123
 Bobby Ray Brown - #155
 Gregory K. and Tammy Brown - #50
 Howard W. Brown, Jr. - #153
 Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Lee Brown, Jr. - #82
 Ken Brown - #181
 Larry and Zubecca Brown - #109
 Lawrence D. Brown, M.D. - #132
 Paul A. and Melissa Brown - #95

Philip Michael Brown, Jr. - #160
 Phillip Jackson Brown - #154
 Randy N. Brown - #151
 Sarah Zubecca Brown - #121
 Stewart Deane Brown - #146
 William Grant Brown - #175
 Darvin J. Bruce - #140
 Robert J. and Kathy B. Budny - #51
 Catherine "Beckie" Brown Burrows - #139
 Cal and Sarah Brown Cannon - #150
 Donald, III and Ann Scott Gilliam Clement - #53
 Edward Grant Clement - #130
 Emma Anne Clifton - #115
 Paul Kenneth Clifton, II - #187
 Sarah Ester Clifton - #100
 Mary Fisher Ingle Council - #149
 Claude Michael and Jane Bonds Deal - #147
 Jennifer Delaney - #158
 Peter M. Delaney - #186
 Stephanie Ferraro Delaney - #178
 Kristy Eddleman - #169
 Wanda White Edmondson - #171
 Ralph Goldson Edwards, Jr. - #126
 Margaret L. Elliott - #180
 C. Larry Fisher - #137
 Daniel Philip and Nan Fisher - #61
 Laurie Fisher - #156
 Luke C. and Diane Fisher - #52
 Patrick S. and Sarah Parsons Fisher - #125
 Mr. and Mrs. Walter D. Fisher, Jr. - #114
 Paul and Martha Fogleman - #111
 Joseph Duane, Jr. and Jan Gilliam - #69
 Robert E., Sr. and Betty Goodwin - #74
 Elmer R. Graber, M.D. - #107
 Shannon Taylor Hahn - #184
 Mr. and Mrs. Charles H. Hale, Jr. - #71
 Dr. Ben and Melene Gilliam Hatcher - #70
 Josh Haynes - #166
 Robert Dodd Haynes - #101
 Kaye Brown Hirst - #108
 Charlotte Eller Hobbs - #138
 Patricia Miller Howell - #136
 Madeline Fink Johnson - #131
 Ann Brown Kesler - #176
 Rodney Dale Kesler - #164
 Glenn, Jr. and Susan Ketner - #119
 Lois Kirk - #55
 Mr. and Mrs. William Charles Lewis - #159
 Angie Taylor Lovingood - #185
 Deudre Ann Brown Maglione - #80
 Grace Brown Marlatt - #112



LIFETIME MEMBERS CONT.

Dudley Jackson Martin, III - #134
 Evelyn Brown Martin - #65
 Michael Calvin Martin - #135
 Daniel S. and Pam McCombs McDonald - #113
 Michael and Amy McPherson - #179
 Lisa Taylor McRoberts - #183
 Carolyn Edwards Miller - #96
 Mr. and Mrs. Robert Palm Miller = #104
 Lauren Haynes O'Brien - #165
 Anne Edwards Overstreet - #133
 Mrs. William Fisher Palmer - #68
 Mr. and Mrs. Wade Hampton Penny - #124
 Catherine Sue Brown Pickett - #141
 Ann Earle Julian Powell - #56
 Camilla Fisher Pratt - #152
 Mr. and Mrs. Richard A. Ratcliffe - #79
 Betty M. Reed - #67
 Nathaniel Ribelin - #163
 Norman and Pam Ribelin - #148
 Mary Frances Brown Ritchie - #142
 B. Douglas and Lynne Kepley Robinson - #110
 Dan Hicks Satterwhite - #162
 Fred Burgin Satterwhite - #93
 Cynthia "Cindy" Schroeder - #143
 Jeffrey A. and Marilyn C. Sexton - # TBD
 Andrew Robert Smith - #99
 Mr. and Mrs. James F. Smith - #66
 Katie Smith - #94
 Lucas Allen Smith - #98
 Martin Lee Smith - #81
 Nicholas George Smith - #102
 Patricia and Robert Smith - #48
 Sally Jane Smith - #103
 David Smithson - #91
 Melinda Wyant Smithson - #89
 Todd Smithson - #90
 Dorothy Brown Stamper - #87
 Jane Brown Taubert - #173
 Deborah Brown Taylor - #181
 Doug and Nancy Brown Trice - 177
 Barbara Brown Whitener - #77
 Amy Harrell Williams - #76
 Keith Wallace, Jr. and Martha Wolf - #78
 Walker, III and Murtis Gilliam Worth - #72
 Carl and Mary Ida Hodge Yost - #62
 Kimberly Roe Yuhasz - #174

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Henry Hill Brown
 Sandra Allen Phillips

William Joseph Ruble
 Cindy Ritchie Thomas

ANNUAL MEMBERS

Yorke Beaver	Ralph L. Jr. and Sandra C. Mowery
John and Donna Bonds	Jennifer Deal Ousley
Andrew Maxwell and Sara W. Brown	Daniel M. Patterson
David K. and Pat F. Brown	Ted D. and Shirley Kirk Peeler
Lane Clark and Claudette O. Brown	Carrie G. Ribelin
Shirley Ellis Brown	Gregory C. and Doris J. Rogers
Steven Dee Brown	Shirley Kesler Ruble
Dorothy Brown Eller	William Milton Ruble
George W. Fisher	Hayley Brown Shealy
Courtney Fussell	Leigh Brown Shelton
Roberta and Don Kesler	Tara Shelton
Louise L. Klohr	Kimberly Fisher Shuping
Robert D. Jr. and Sandy Lyerly	Paul Bryan Walker
Ashley Caudle Martin	Millie Shelton Washburn
Patricia Bringle Masters	Kim Whitener
Brenda Ramsey Maupin	Margaret Joan Brown Wilhelm
Phoebe Holshouser McGinnis	Richard and Margaret Ramsey Willis
Franklin E. and Dawn Frick Merrell	Judy Bonds Wooten
Bonnie Whitener Mole	

DONOR MEMBERS

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Kristina B. Black	Robert S. Shepherd
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Charles Michael Goodman	Loretta Sue Fink Washam
James C. and Tina Flynn Gunter	Jonathan Wise
Robert Landrum	Robert Wise
Jo Anne Hall Ritchie	

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WE REMEMBER THESE DESCENDANTS WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY



Paul Edward Fisher, a MICHAEL (James) BROWN and a Fisher family descendant, was born 15 November 1937 in Rowan County, NC, and died there 30 October 2020. He is interred at Chestnut Hill Cemetery in Salisbury, NC.

Fondly known around Salisbury as “Mr. Can Do”, Paul had a leading role in just about every community improvement project in Salisbury-Rowan over the last 50 years. A Lifetime Charter member of BFA, Paul went to work for the family business, F&M Bank in Granite Quarry, upon completing college and, at the young age of 34, became its President upon the untimely death of his father, Jacob Eli (J.E.). Under Paul’s leadership, F&M Bank grew to become the largest financial institution in the county and among the most respected banks in the state.

Through the influence afforded by the bank, Paul helped ensure that many of Rowan County’s most cherished structures were fortified and preserved for the future. Over the years, the bank supported large projects and the ongoing efforts to preserve Michael Brown’s (Old) Stone House and other family properties.

Sylvia Wiseman Harrell,

a MICHAEL (Moses) BROWN descendant, was born 26 May 1931 in Rowan County, North Carolina, and died there 12 February 2020. She is interred in Chestnut Hill Cemetery, Salisbury, NC.

A well-known writer for the Salisbury Post newspaper, Sylvia put her journalistic talents to work for the Association, serving as newsletter editor for several years. She later served as President of the Board of Directors for several years as well.

We can no longer rely upon the daily newspaper to keep track of significant events (births, weddings, deaths) that occur in our members’ lives, so we really need your help in keeping our records current. Please notify us via e-mail at info@brownfisher.org whenever events such as these occur for any of your relatives.

Thank you!

Margaret Pauline Cauble Lyerly,

a MICHAEL (David) BROWN descendant, was born 26 October 1921 in Rowan County, NC and died there 29 August 2020 due to complications from Covid-19. Pauline assisted her husband Claude with the family business, the 50-50 Grocery on E. Bank Street in Salisbury, and later retired as secretary at East Rowan High School.



Betty Dan Nicholas Spencer, a MICHAEL (Moses) BROWN descendant, was born 28 January 1936 in Rowan County, NC, and died there 13 December 2020. She is interred in Chestnut Hill Cemetery, Salisbury, NC.

A Lifetime Charter member of BFA, Betty Dan, daughter of Murtis Lucille Maynard and Dan Miller Nicholas, was well-known in Salisbury for her extensive knowledge and considerable skills in many, many things. Perhaps her greatest talent was her ability to master the smallest of details, especially when it came to history and family genealogy.

The genealogy of her family was of keen interest to Betty Dan, and, in 1994, she and the late Juanita Fisher Lagg spearheaded an effort to form the Brown-Fisher Association we know today. Together they made hundreds of telephone calls to document the names and addresses of the descendants of the Brown and Fisher clans. The BFA Board appointed Betty Dan as the first and only official Historian of the Association and she spent countless hours researching the families, compiling over 150 binders of information as of the late 1990s. Her plans were to convert that research into a book about the Moses Brown descendants, a work which has yet to be published.

It is simply impossible to convey the impact Betty Dan has had upon not just the history of our families but upon that of the people of Salisbury and Rowan County as well. She will be missed tremendously.

THE IVAN BROWN STORY

In Ivan Brown's "My Stroll Down Memory Lane" he wrote of his great, great, great grandfather Caleb Brown. As a young boy born in Tennessee, with an un-named father, Caleb came to Darke County, Ohio in about 1813 to settle in an area that was mostly perfect wilderness. There ends Ivan's narrative with his great, great, great grandfather being nameless and coming up from Tennessee. His has always remained a mysterious family history. But thanks to the internet and Google and others who have explored their own genealogies, this story can now be expanded and made more complete, tracing the Browns back to Europe.

For interest and novelty, first, the Pilgrim passenger list on the Mayflower that landed in 1620 was checked to see if there were any Browns on that voyage. Surprisingly there was a Peter Browne who lived from 1594 to 1633 and who made that journey across the Atlantic. It did not take much investigating to show that Ivan was not related to this Peter Browne and that this was pretty much of a dead end. The search did come up with his actual European heritage, so that is where to begin this narrative. What is also most interesting is that Ivan, during WWII while crossing the Rhine River in Cologne, Germany, crossed over some of the same waters and land that his ancestors passed over during their journey up the Rhine to America and towards the New World way back in 1738. What is also interesting is that his forefathers were in a way "transportation specialists" of their time, and that Ivan's life occupation was working within a company (General Motors) where transportation has been at its very core.

The timeline is Europe. Continental Europe. It is a Europe that has gone through much political and religious struggle. King Louis the 14th, the Sun King of France, has driven east in attempts to expand his territories and influence over the continent. He invaded eastwards from France in 1674, again in 1688, and finally in 1707. It was said that as Louis grew older, he grew more intolerant, particularly towards those of the Protestant faiths. A generation before, Catholics and Lutherans and Calvinists had been battling it out in religious wars and persecutions during the 30 Years War which finally concluded in 1648 with the Treaty of Westphalia. The Palatinate region of what is now Germany, about halfway between Paris and Berlin, is our area of interest and concern. Germany was not a nation then, but scatterings of duchies, counties, and jurisdictions with overlords and counts and dukes, part of the then Holy Roman Empire. This area is now called the Rhineland-Pfalz region of Germany. It is just southwest of the Rhine River. The capital city of this area is Mainz on the Rhine River, and

its most famous citizen is Johannes Gutenberg, inventor of the first printing press in 1439, who printed the first Bible. Those living in these areas owed heavy taxes to those above them in a kind of serfdom arrangement. Hard winters caused famine and death especially in 1708, the worst ever on record all over Europe, and it was not an easy life for those in this area. One wrote "There were petty princes in the region trying to imitate the opulence of the Sun King, Louis the 14th, and yet religious bickering, poverty, cold, and famine" (exist). Considering such a situation, many looked for a better life and way. America was a possibility. The (primary) question was not why did a person and his family (want to) leave (this region), but rather why would anyone want to stay?

Enter Hans Jakob Braun. He was born sometime about 1675 in a town called Hintersasse in this area of the Rhineland-Pfalz in modern Germany. This man was Ivan's great, great, great, great, great grandfather. Along the way, Jakob worked as a blacksmith (farrier) and married in 1701 a Verena Agnes who was born in 1681. Both appeared to have died as young adults, he in 1705, and she in 1710. They lived during this time of great European turmoil. One wonders if any of this turmoil contributed to their early deaths. During their lifetimes, while the Sun King was conquering their territory, Newton discovered calculus, Vermeer was painting "The Pearl Necklace", Moliere was writing comedies in Paris, and Stradivarius was making his first violin. They had three children and the first of them was named Johan Stephen Christian Braun, and he was born on February 2, 1703 in (the city of) Ruschberg, (in what is) now Germany. This child, who went by Stephen, is Ivan's great, great, great, great, great grandfather, and he grew up to marry Maria Eva Hamen (born April 28, 1710) and they had 4 children while in Europe. Their wedding is recorded as March 13, 1730, and they were wed in Ruschberg. They resided in Niedermohr in the Rhine Pfalz region of Germany.

In the spring of 1738, Stephen, also apparently a blacksmith by trade, gathered up his wife Maria and their four children (ages 2 - 8 years old) and decided to set out for a new way of life and a new world. They were in their mid-thirties and both of his parents had long passed on. During the span of their lives was the time of The Enlightenment, of Enlightened Despots. Baroque was the style. Voltaire and Rousseau were writing away in France and in Switzerland, Handel was composing in London, Bach was composing in Leipzig, and Fredrick William was making himself the King of Prussia. John Wesley was starting the new Methodist Church movement. The first cuckoo clock was being made in the Black

Forest of (what is now) Germany. King George the 2nd of England was welcoming newcomers to populate his British American Colonies, and William Penn and his Quakers were inviting Dutch and Germans to “come on over” and reside in these new lands. Enlightenment or not, this, looking like a good alternative to the otherwise lives before them, tempted many in this Rhineland region to pack it up and start anew. The first immigrations from the Rhineland started in 1709. “Newlanders”, a kind old-time salesman of ship tickets, went into the Rhineland to give their pitch of a new promised land, a “Holy Experiment”, a “Golden Promise” from London, with promotions of even free travel (in return) for some years of “redeeming” (being an indentured servant). Enticements were made particularly to populate the areas of the Carolinas in this new world. Little was mentioned of potential hardships, or of hostile Indians, but one of the pamphlets did include a small footnote, almost like a modern stock advisement, (that) “no one can promise anything certain”. But like many in the area, Stephen and Maria began their journey to America with their 4 children: Jakob (8), Michael (6), Elizabeth (4) and Catherina (2)). The route began in their town, over land to Mainz, the capital city, right on the Rhine River. From there, they journeyed up and over the Rhine to reach the port city of Rotterdam in the Netherlands, passing the same picturesque scenery a tourist going up the Rhine would see today, as well as the magnificent Cologne Cathedral. That journey alone took 6 weeks, requiring them to pass through about 40 toll stations along the way. There in Rotterdam, they waited for their ship. The ships sailed usually in the Spring to arrive for settlement in America before the hard winters could set in and to allow them time to prepare accordingly. The entire journey usually lasted about 6 months and was a grueling experience. While we do not know the exact reason for their immigration, quotes from others during this same time included “We come to America to establish our families, to secure land for our children on which they will be able to support themselves upon after we die”, and “I came out of parental necessity, to be able to provide for my wife and for my children”.

In 1727, it was required by law to begin to (document) those making the journey to America. It is by this we have a record and that we know the Brauns did indeed make the passage. The ship Glasgow, and its sister ship, Two Sisters which traveled with it, took on their new passengers at Rotterdam in the Netherlands in 1738. Listed on board the Glasgow were a total of 349 passengers. There were 120 men (quantified as any male over 16), 221 women and children, and 8 crew members for a total of 349 on board. The men would register their names for themselves as was the custom, but the women and children were not listed individually. Many men could neither read nor write and thus signed their name with an X and someone else recorded the name, resulting in many grammatical errors. Passenger #77 could and did write his name, signing it “Stephen Braun “of Ruschberg in the Palatine region of Germany. The commander of the Glasgow is recorded as being Walter Sterling. It is possible that there were more than

the recorded number of passengers as the commanders were taxed per each passenger, so it is possible that numbers were under recorded. Given that the average ship during this time held about 200, the 349 on board would be a very, very tight ship. The Glasgow set out from Rotterdam and sailed across the English Channel to Cowes, England which is on the Island of Wight, southwest of London. There, they made allegiances to the King of England, who at that time was King George the 2nd, and then departed again to sail west to the Americas, now subjects of the King and of Britain.

While we think of pleasure vessels and travel today, this trip, and any in 1738, was no lark. Besides overcrowding there was dysentery, typhus, and multiple deaths in route, with some having to be buried at sea along the way. The year 1738 was a particularly high year for German immigration with 24 different ships making the journey. Of the over 6,500 people in total who set forth, 2,260 would die at some point in the travels. Others have written of what it was like to travel over in a ship at that time: “The trip should only be made by poor industrious persons whose life has become unbearable and who are willing to risk the voyage as a matter of life or death.” Another wrote: “It was hard, cramped quarters, lice all over and they gave us horrible salted corned pork, peas, barley and codfish. The stinking, black, thick and wormy water that had been used to cook the above was used for drinking water”. You can imagine this, then add to it seasickness and the frequent storms at sea. While there is no record by Stephen himself of their journey, records by descendent family confirm that their trip was not unlike the above and very, very difficult.

The Glasgow, with the entire Braun family aboard, completed the arduous journey across the Atlantic on September 9th, 1738 where it (sailed) up the Delaware River and arrived safely into the port of Philadelphia in the British Colony of Pennsylvania. This date marks our family’s arrival upon American soil and marks the beginning of new lives for themselves as young German-Americans.

They first headed inland from Philadelphia into (the) East Cocalico Township of Lancaster County in Pennsylvania, and they remained there until about 1750. This was a growing German immigrant community and was located around present day Adamstown, somewhat northeast of the city of Lancaster itself. What William Penn did not tell them was that they would be a kind of buffer zone between the English colonists in the east and the Indians in the west along the Appalachian Mountains. Yet they thrived there. They resided within the German settlements for about 12 years, had 5 more children along the way, farmed, continued the blacksmith trade and began building wagons. We do not know if they had some years of required indentured service in compensation for their travel to America but records show at least 50-60 percent of German immigrants came over as “redeemers” and had to serve 4-8 years as indentured servants to pay off the cost before being free of it. We know that communities

(comprised) of German farmers prospered, and Benjamin Rush would write : “The German farm was easily distinguished from those of others, by good fences, the extent of the orchard, the fertility of the soil, the productivity of the fields and the luxuriance of the meadows.” The produce, like today in the Amish country in Lancaster County, was taken into Philadelphia for market. The Pennsylvania Dutch (Deutche) as they began to be called, brought (from Germany) a knowledge of crops, livestock raising, farming methods and such that were (easy to incorporate into their new lives). Success likes company, so as word (“letters to home”) got back of a community and its prosperity, more immigrants would be enticed to also make the journey to Pennsylvania. At the start of the American Revolution, these immigrants totaled some 225,000 which led some, even the likes of Benjamin Franklin, to ponder if there were too many of German origin and if they would eventually overwhelm the English culture. Unlike Benjamin Rush’s kind comments, he would write “Unfortunately they are generally the most stupid of their own nation.” But others would write that someone of this background “appreciates order, has a gift for organization, invention and enterprise, is willing to save and invest and above all, regards work not just to earn a living but as one of the fundamental purposes of life. Diligence, perseverance, and industry is deeply ingrained in this national character.”

They lived in Lancaster County for 12 years. They were (of the) Lutheran (faith) and thus helped found, and in 1747, build a stone structure that became the present day Muddy Creek Evangelical Lutheran Church. As neither early church records nor burial site markings survived, Maria apparently died within this area sometime before 1750 and was buried there within the Muddy Creek Church Cemetery adjacent to the church and west of Adamstown. At least Stephen and his two older sons decided that they would take off for new lands, and they moved to Rowan County in the Carolinas. To get there, they traversed an old Indian trail, the Carolina Trail, that skirts southwards east of the Appalachians, then into the Carolinas (now North Carolina), south past Salisbury in Rowan County where they settled. Land was less expensive in these areas compared to Lancaster County, going for about ten cents an acre. Settling here required contending with the Cherokee Indians, who killed some of their fellow German neighbors during these primitive years leading up to the French and Indian War which occurred from 1754-1763. Stephen continued to work as a blacksmith, set up some farming fields, and helped create wagons. These were made using the template of the ‘Conestoga’ Wagon, a German (style) wagon, built near the Conestoga River in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. They were very well made, surpassed others built at the time, were deemed the “ships of inland commerce” and were considered the ‘Mercedes Benz’ of wagons. It is probable that Stephen (built) wagons like these and held these skills.

After arrival and establishing themselves in North Carolina about 1750 or 1751, a decision was made to

Anglicize their last name, and it was then they made the effort to formally change the name of Braun, into the current name of Brown.

Of Stephen’s boys who migrated to North Carolina, the first child, Jakob, was Ivan’s great, great, great, great grandfather. Johan “Jakob” (anglicized to ‘Jacob’) Brown Sr. (1731-1814) married Elizabeth Goettgen (1730- 1814). They had born to them some 11 children. During their lifetime, Thomas Paine was writing Common Sense, Ben Franklin wrote his Almanac and British Tea was being thrown into the harbor in Boston. Come the War of Independence and the American Revolution, this Jacob Brown, a wagon maker, would supply his wagons to help the cause of the Colonists’ liberation from England. Similarly, most German Americans supported the American Revolution by making guns, giving food, and creating and repairing wagons as was Jacob’s skill. (Jacob’s younger brother Michael, who also came over on the Glasgow, established a plantation exceeding 3000 acres encompassing the current day town of Granite Quarry, and much of eastern Rowan County, North Carolina. He built the Old Stone House there in 1766 which was restored in the 1950s, is now a living history museum. On Sept 28, 1971 it was placed on the US National Register of Historical Places and it is the oldest existing structure in Rowan County, North Carolina. Both Michael and probably his father Stephen, who died in 1763, are buried in the Brown Cemetery adjacent to this historic spot. One of Michael’s sons fought in the American Revolution. Nearby is an 1850s house that was built by Michael’s grandson Solomon and his wife Amy Miller Brown, and was later inherited by their eldest son Nathan who fought in the Civil War, being taken prisoner three times. This house is presently under restoration for use as the Nathan Brown House Museum. Both the Old Stone House and the Nathan Brown House are sources of community pride and gathering. There is a Brown Family Association in the area with well over a hundred members. Michael’s family continued in the Lutheran faith, with several descendants becoming ministers, so it’s fitting that Christiana Evangelical Lutheran Church would be founded in part by his great grandson Nathan and would be built adjacent to Nathan’s house.)

After the American Revolution, expansion westward increased. It had been British policy to keep everyone east of the mountains so not to provoke the Indians nor the French further, but after the American Revolution a western frontier was opening. In 1796 “Jacob the Wagon Maker” decided leave North Carolina and to cross over the Appalachian Mountains to settle into new lands, thus moving into what is now the small town of Telford in Washington County in Eastern Tennessee. Jonesboro is the closest large town to it and claims to be the oldest town/city in Tennessee. They purchased and established themselves on a 235 acre farm there. When Jacob and Elizabeth died in Tennessee, they were buried on the Brown family farm. Their simple limestone carved grave-stones were discovered on the property in 1987 and these we

removed for safe keeping. Their original log cabin was found, dismantled and preserved also. Having had 11 children as they did, there are many Browns now populating Eastern Tennessee.

Philip (1758-1848) was the 5th child of the 11 born to Jacob and Elizabeth. This is Ivan's great, great, great grandfather. He was born in Rowan County, North Carolina in 1758. He married and had two children, but his wife died, and he remarried Catherine Slyger (1797-1821) on December 20th, 1796. They had born to them 12 additional children. He, like his father, lived a time in Washington County in Eastern Tennessee, but then he, following the likes of Daniel Boone, who originated outside Rowan County, NC himself, took his family through the Cumberland Gap and up through Kentucky to Liberty, Indiana for a year before finally, in 1813, moving into Darke County in Ohio. They were some of the first settlers in this Ohio wilderness country after the Treaty of Greenville was signed between Anthony Wayne and the Indian tribes on August 2, 1795. They established the Brown presence within Darke County and created and settled onto an 80 acre farm. During their lifetimes Thomas Jefferson was President, Napoleon was coming to a rise in France after the French Revolution, and the United States territory was greatly expanded by the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. They founded the first Mennonite church in the area. They died in Darke County but, while their burial sites are unknown, they are probably buried somewhere upon the original Brown family farm there in Ohio.

When Philip and Catherine Brown left Tennessee and settled into Darke County Ohio they took with them their many children. One of those children, born on October 1st, 1806 in Tennessee and only aged 7 during their journey, was named Caleb Brown. This is the same Caleb Brown who is the great, great, grandfather identified by Ivan who came up and out of Tennessee with his family as recorded in The History of Darke County records.

Caleb (1806-1876) settled in with his wife Mary Miller (1812-1892) and they farmed in Ohio. They lived during the time of Lincoln and during the Civil War. At least one of his sons fought in the Civil War, and, as in other families divided at the time, this relative might have battled other relatives of the Confederacy from North Carolina or Tennessee. Both Caleb and Mary are buried in Abbotsville Cemetery in Darke County and are identified by an old large white obelisk tombstone.

They had a son Jacob M. Brown (1833-1906) who married Elizabeth Eddington (1833-1904) in 1854. This Jacob M. Brown is Ivan's great grandfather. Jacob M. became one of the most successful farmers in Darke County and became the first Ohio Brown to be photographed. There remains one single photographic record of he and his family in a formal setting.

He was President of the Darke County Fair Board for many years as shown on poster advertisements at the time. Both Jacob and Elizabeth are buried in Abbotsville Cemetery.

They had a son Crawford Brown (1859-1937) who married Ida Ellen Robeson (1864-1888) in 1883 and this Crawford Brown is Ivan's grandfather. He also served as President of the Darke County Fair Board and he too is listed on a poster from the Fair. Ivan recalled visiting his farm in his youth and several of the furniture items from his grandparents' estate have passed through the family including an old white marbled table that once held a radio, and an old throne-like chair that Ivan remembered his grandfather sitting in as he listened to that radio or reading.

Crawford and Ida Ellen had two sons and one was Hugh Brown (1885-1948) and this was Ivan's father. Hugh Brown wed Mamie Jane Allread (1886-1975) on September 1st, 1906. Mamie Allread came from Allread (then known as Allred) lineage dating back to English colonists in the Carolinas also. This line includes William Allred who fought in the American Revolution along with General Anthony Wayne. Mamie's mother came from the Shields family whose lineage goes back to Ireland and who now also populate the Carolinas.

Hugh and Mamie had four children, listed in order of birth: Ellen, Lowell, Ivan, and Cletus (C.W.). So Ivan's family, now American, comes from German, English and Irish descent and this is a part of Ivan's unique Brown family story. The family is woven into the American story itself at many levels. And now they all know.

This record of his family heritage was given to Ivan by his children on his 90th birthday.

EDITOR'S NOTE – Ivan Brown celebrated his 90th birthday in 2010. To celebrate, his children planned a "family history tour", taking Ivan and his extended family south to Tennessee and North Carolina, tracing their family roots. They included Rowan County in their tour, stopping at the Rowan Museum, where they saw a Conestoga wagon, Michael Brown's Old Stone House and the Nathan Brown House. The family ended their tour with a celebration in Charleston, SC, where they presented this written history of his family which included many, many details he had never known. As with all submitted material, we cannot confirm/deny many of those details, so as always "take them with a grain of salt"!



The Mystery of Michael Braun: His Life, Work, and House

By Prof. Gary Freeze

Why did Michael Braun ever come to Rowan County, and why once he got here, did he stay? These two questions must have been asked by more than one of his many descendants in the three centuries since his birth in 1721. After all, Americans have been a people on the move from the very early period of our colonial roots. The call of the frontier that began in places like the environs of Philadelphia kept its appeal until some of us went all the way to the Pacific Ocean. Not so, the case for many of the Brauns who became Browns and stayed to become some of the most influential citizens of western North Carolina.

This short essay is an attempt to help Braun descendants understand why their illustrious ancestor put down the family roots when and where he did. Indirectly, the piece is also an attempt to give more complexity and context to the heritage of the Stone House, Rowan's most famous homestead. Let us then explore the whys and wherefoths of Michael Braun.

It is easy to explain why Braun braved the waves and came to America from the Palatinate area along the Rhine River in Germany. Opportunity costs were better in the New World, given the urbanization patterns along the Rhine and the ossification of the regional economy by the early 1720s. Recent religious wars, which Carl Hammer detailed in his fine essay in the most recent Brown history book, had reoriented European society and dislocated thousands. One has to believe that the great decision to emigrate was based upon the ability to make a better life on the other side of the Atlantic.

We have to assume that Michael Braun made such a life upon arrival in Pennsylvania in 1737. One of the few points we know about him was his occupation as a wheelwright, as he was identified as such in an early Rowan deed. It is unlikely that he just took up that occupation once he arrived here in Carolina. One of two other conditions must have been the case: either he had been apprenticed in such a trade back in Germany (but if he had, he would have violated its terms to have come to America at the age he did) or (more likely) he somehow picked up that skill once coming to Pennsylvania. That colony was a laboratory for finding success in a trade, as was the case with Benjamin Franklin who found a welcome and growing demand for his talents with the printing press. Perhaps—we shall simply speculate here—that Braun was really good at the trade, and perhaps—as Roscoe Brown Fisher has suggested in early scholarship—he found work with the wagon making industry that was located in and around Philadelphia, particularly in Lancaster County, just to the west. Since a large number of Germans was in the area, Braun may

well have gained contacts, and experience there, as an earlier local historian, J. K. Rouse, has suggested.

Speculation about his success in Pennsylvania leads to the logical next question: Why leave? After all, Pennsylvania was the best governed colony and most vibrant economic market in British North America. Logic would suggest that he had a better future—and could have built a similar house—there, as opposed to the Carolina wilderness. The most obvious answer to that question is land, or rather, the growing price of it, as Germans, Ulster Scots and other emigrants filled in the valleys between the ridges to the west of Philadelphia. It could simply be that Braun left Pennsylvania for the same reason he departed Europe: opportunity rose and costs were lower over the next horizon. Perhaps he even thought ahead to the resources his children would need in land. This is a plausible idea, given the thousands of acres he acquired, plus the fact that most of his children stayed nearby on the “estate”—so to speak—that he created in and around Dunn's Mountain. There were more than a half dozen Browns in the vicinity at the time of his death in 1807. It is highly unlikely that could have been created back in Pennsylvania.

In addition, there is the question of how much wealth he brought with him when he moved south. It seems unlikely that he moved with his family with little in material goods. After all, one of the mysteries of the Stone House is how he had earned the funds to pay for it. Such stone cutting and such acutements as the iron “stove” in the great kitchen fireplace put him far above the humble log cabin often associated with pioneer life. In fact, most historians would agree that given the workmanship of the final product, the Stone House was made by many hands, from experienced quarrymen to crafters of wood. The complex interior fireplaces were not something just any settler could fashion. Even the cryptic elements of the stone testamentary—where Braun signed and dated the completion of his 1766 mansion—bear witness to the need for expertise—and expense—in the making of such a house. So, we have to wonder: what tools, what other early possessions, most all, what kinds of funds had he gained in his “lost years” when he married and obviously had made a living in Pennsylvania. And the fact that he built the house almost ten years after arriving in Rowan.

There are also the clues provided by the Great Wagon Road itself. There must have existed an entrepreneurial incentive for a “wheelwright” to head that direction. It is often the case that the earliest migrant families had a particular skill

set that benefited from the pattern of migration. For example, Henry Weidner, the first German to live to the west of the Catawba River, used the money from selling deerskins to purchase iron bars for a smithing operation in his new neighborhood (his descendants would later establish Hickory, where for more than a century Whiteners were to that community what Browns were to Salisbury). Similarly, one of the Sherrills, who would be the pioneers on the Catawba itself, was called “Conestoga John” because of his connections to Lancaster County. Finally, John Knox, the first of the Knoxes to settle Rowan, was known to have been a horse trader along the route of the wagon road south. So, we can speculate strongly the wheelwright trade was itself an incentive for migration. If true, then the work that Braun did for the first decade of his residence in Rowan could have accumulated Stone House. But, that last speculation would beg the question: Why build the house where he built it? Tradition positions the main route of the Wagon Road down the main street of Salisbury, and the logic of a wagon shop there would suggest that a fine town house—one not that far different from the one that Horace Beard built later on North Main Street—would have been the right entrepreneurial choice. That one is hard to reconcile with putting a Stone House in an out of the way location next to Dunn’s Mountain. But, perhaps it was not out of the way at all. The Great Wagon Road was often like a set of capillaries in the body, endlessly subdividing and then coming back together, and some scholars—among them Jethro Ruple, who first linked Braun to “the supposed line of the Trading Path—have argued that a principal spur of the Wagon Road actually bypassed the new county seat. The real road, so to speak, went past Dunn’s Mountain, perhaps within a mile of the Stone House site.

Another point of support for this line of thinking is the knowledge that Braun ran a tavern, actually a kind of ordinary one that simply treated travelers and, perhaps, housed in that odd expanse of the upper floor, with its open portholes in the eaves, allowed them to bed down for the night. No tavern would have succeeded without a major road being nearby, so if there was a shop, there were roads nearby, and it does make sense that the house was built at the right spot. Perhaps, it was the crossroads effect. The colonial maps do show that along with the wagon road, there existed what became Stokes Ferry Road just to the north of the Stone House. That route was one of the key connectors to the coastal markets of North Carolina. Traders and haulers from all across the foothills of the back country would have taken one of three roads down to Cross Creek, the forerunner community of the city of Fayetteville, where goods could then be floated down the Cape Fear River to Wilmington. One went through what became High Point, another ran south from near the north side of the Trading Ford on the Yadkin, and the third one passed near the Stone House. Keep in mind that there is still the bafflement of how the “signage” etc. worked here. The problem with that idea has always been advertisement: There must have been some kind of “Colonial Craig’s List” for folks to know where to go to

get things done, but how would wayfarers find the Braun shop, even if it really did exist.

The mystery of how Braun was “found” remains. But, the logic of the location works even more strongly with the idea of there being two significant roads nearby, with the need for the colonial equivalent of a repairman. Yet, he had to have made some money, somewhere, somehow, that went beyond just mere farming.

Another vague idea about when, where, and why the Stone House came to be is the question of Braun’s business connections, particularly the set of promissory notes and partnerships that made business work in the colonial era. In this case, Braun was never just a farmer. His close association in land deals with John Dunn, the lawyer who was a primary founder of Salisbury, meant that Braun was a notegiver and a noteshaver. He would have had to have been in the center of the local credit market for buying, loaning, selling, and trading, the proof easily being his post Revolutionary move to town where he became a merchant. For all we know, that kind of merchandizing might easily have been part of his life back at the Stone House. Remember that he had also been a constable, a magistrate, a tax collector, an accountant for local defense spending by the county, and a tavern keeper. That diligence with numbers and accounts seems to have been with him all through his life.

Moreover, it was the norm for almost every one of Salisbury’s mercantile class to own a town home and keep a country place. Farming remained central to the creation of income streams, as they would hedge their bets with credit operations, land speculation, store keeping, and anything else they could own to generate revenue. Braun’s ownership of multiple lots and houses in Salisbury by the time of his death in 1807 is testament to his wide-ranging money-making talents. Like the evidence of a wheelwright shop, we simply lack the specifics, though we can see the general results of a successful entrepreneur.

To sum up, it is easy in retrospect to see that the Stone House and the builder of it were paired with complexity and success. As Braun took a skill he honed in Pennsylvania and built up capital in Carolina, he put down roots, established a homeplace, and became a prominent citizen of a place at the crossroads of early America.



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