

MARYLAND ^{NEW MUNSTER}
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consisted simply of the rites of the Protestant Episcopal Church, no addresses being made.

He was buried in Greenmount Cemetery near the stone wall along the North Avenue boundary of the cemetery. Nearby are the graves of his devoted friends Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Turnbull. Marking Lanier's grave is an irregularly shaped boulder of pink granite from his native Georgia upon which is a bronze tablet giving his name, the dates of his birth and death, a delineation of a rising sun, and the line:

I AM LIT WITH THE SUN.

On the day of his funeral *The Sun* said: "His death removes from American literature one of its brightest intellects, and takes from Baltimore a gentleman whose gifts added many laurels to her fame." There appeared in the *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser* an editorial which said:

A purer and a nobler man the records of literature could not show. If ever a knightly heart beat in the breast of a fragile man, it did in his. Not any of the heroes of the Round Table or of Froissart, that he loved so, ever lived a life of higher chivalry than he. He was so stainless in his life, so courteous to opponents, so punctilious in honor, so scornful of a lie or of a sham, so free from envy, so brave and patient under troubles, that he seemed like one of the Knights of the Holy Grail, a Galahad or Percival, living amid the prosaic contentions of the nineteenth century. An artist of rare musical gifts, a poet, a man of letters—it is sad to lose all these, but saddest that best of all his poems, his life.

NEW MUNSTER

By CARL ROSS MCKENRICK

A plaque placed alongside the improved highway extending from Newark, Delaware, to Rising Sun, Maryland, near the crossing of the Big Elk in Cecil County bears the following legend:

NEW MUNSTER

A Tract of 6000 Acres laid out in 1683 by George Talbot (then Surveyor-General of Maryland) for Edwin O'Dwire and 15 other Irishmen. Its northern boundary extended into what is now the State of Pennsylvania.

Its odd allusion to the "15 other Irishmen" naturally excites the curiosity of the fleeting motorist. Though only slightly noticed by historians, the event recorded deserves more than passing comment. It ties in with a broad background of provincial history and expands widely into national. This paper deals with the obvious query why and wherefore the "other Irishmen."

The certificate of survey sets down the metes and bounds minutely and quaintly:

Beginning at a marked poplar on a high bank over the west side of the Main Fresh of Elk River, and about a pistol shott to the mouth of a rivulet called the Shure, [etc.]

The area embraced ten square miles, one third of which extended into the present Chester County, Pennsylvania, and almost touching the Delaware line on the east, but all well within Lord Baltimore's original grant. The Big Elk pierces the approximate center, the Little Elk is to the West and the headwaters of "Christeen" Creek at the eastern end. It is highly arable, rolling land now thinly populated.

A well preserved eighteenth century stone dwelling stands on the roadside near the marker with foundation marks of extensive farm buildings. There are a few other such landmarks within the tract, including the old Dysart Inn at Appleton Cross Roads, claiming origin in 1714 and known variously as "Seven Stars" and "Fox Chase." By the Big Elk—a great source of water power in early days—there stood until recently the stone walls of a very large mill building. Other similar relics have disappeared. The present day center of interest is the "Fair Hill" steeplechase course, just beyond the western boundary, owned by Mr. William Du Pont and associates. Much of New Munster itself has been acquired by the same group for stock farm purposes. Enough that the physical remains of the tract are incon-

spicuous and unimportant, and but for its unique connection with Maryland and national history, its story would be as colorless as the average title abstract.

The able local historian, George Johnston, has preserved many facts relating to the settlement, in conjunction with the romantic and daring exploits of Colonel George Talbot on the border when the Penn-Baltimore controversy was rife; also in explanation of the numerous old Presbyterian churches and cemeteries thereabouts.

He concludes, as all researchers must, that Talbot's "other Irishmen" turned out to be Ulster Scots, whether by accident or design, but does not attempt to establish that fact as a logical sequence of the Calvert settlement policy and the imminent need of thwarting William Penn. Nor has he claimed for Cecil County the credit it deserves as one of the earliest and most influential centers of Scotch Irish settlement. The admitted importance of this breed in later history makes worth while an inquiry as to its local seed bed.

At the period, 1683, a half century had elapsed since Charles I granted his then favorite, George Calvert, the most liberal character yet known, with rights about equivalent to those the "King hath in his palace."

A realistic land settlement program followed. Fealty to the proprietary and payment of a moderate quit rent were the only conditions generally affixed to a grant of land. Every adult adventurer might have 50 to 100 acres upon the mere act of immigration. Traces of the feudal system were apparent in the offer of manors, 2000 to 6000 acres to chosen individuals and groups, with appurtenant rights such as court-baron and frank-pledge. But the tenancy idea did not thrive here, where individual aspirations seemed to spring from the land itself. All estates granted became practically allodial or fee simple. Civil and religious privileges were liberal. Competitive conditions among the projectors of colonies required such liberality. The harassed as well as the venturesome were to be encouraged and fortunately the Calverts were not imbued with theocratic or utopian notions to hamper plantation and development.

From the problem of merely settling the land and assuring revenue therefrom, it was soon necessary to face that of preserving the integrity and protecting the boundaries of the province. Following the settlement with Claiborne and suppression of minor Indian uprisings, there developed uncertainties as to Virginia, with actual threats of invasion on the seaboard side to follow, culminating with Penn's claim to a twenty-mile strip on the north "to the fortieth degree" at the period of the New Munster grant.

The "conditions of plantation" were being altered progressively to attract settlers to the disputed areas. The advent of Governor William Stone, a Protestant, in 1648 marked a new influx of settlers. In his commission Lord Baltimore set forth that Stone

hath undertaken to procure five hundred people of British or Irish descent to come from other places and plant and reside within our said province for the advancement of our colony there.

An act of religious toleration was adopted the following year and the bid for settlers soon enlarged to include "those of French, Dutch and Italian descent." Stone's first experiment in mass migration was the seating of the Puritans ostracized by Virginia at Providence on the Severn. It proved an unhappy one. The colonies were quick to react to the violent clashes between creeds across the water and the Puritan party here in the flush of its ascendancy, seized the reins of government. After a sizable battle on the Severn in 1655, Stone was made prisoner and escaped execution by a hair.

Meanwhile Lord Baltimore was urging the establishment of permanent settlements "on that tract of land commonly called the Eastern Shore, lying between the Bay of Chesapeake and the Sea . . . for the better publication and remembrance of the bounds between Virginia and Maryland and prevention of controversies which may hereafter happen between the inhabitants of Virginia and those of our province."

Virginia having exiled the Quakers by statute and shown disfavor to nonconformists generally, Governor Calvert issued a proclamation November 6, 1661, under authority of Cecil Lord Baltimore "that the late inhabitants of Northampton-Accomack County, Virginia, be granted lands upon the Eastern Shore of the Province . . . to the end that this part of the province next adjoining said county be peopled." The first settlements in the area which became Somerset County date from this period and were chiefly composed of these migrants.

By 1667, the English had completed their conquest of Dutch territory on the Hudson and Delaware, and the Duke of York succeeded to the Dutch rights. The Council are informed that several persons "are seated on the seaboard side and do pretend to be under the Government of New York" and the question of territorial rights was to be determined by quick occupancy pending "a right understanding betwixt the two governments."

Colonel William Stevens was chosen as a medium for securing the settlement of that region, then known as "The Hoarkill" and later embraced within Somerset County. A special warrant for 8000 acres

ther from me, being resolved notwithstanding this order to keep possession of what is surveyed, and to be on the defensive part rather than forced to complain.

Lord Baltimore's allusion to settlements at the heads of rivers and lands seated by Talbot points directly to New Munster. It was a *fait accompli*, though but a fragment of the great seating project intended to checkmate Penn.

With the feudal element present in all Maryland grants, the Proprietor may well have relied upon the allegiance and support of his settlers in defense of his title under ancient custom. But the old order had passed and, as matters turned, the fifteen Irishmen or whoever settled these parts, were spared any call as liegemen. They were henceforth free to pursue their individual interests, and to bring about the doom of feudalism, along with other forms of political servitude.

With this background of events and settlement policy, we come to the speculative inquiry, Who were Edwin (or Edmond) O'Dwire and the fifteen other Irishmen?

It will be noted from the Proprietary's commission to George Talbot in 1683, that the tenures granted the "takers up" of the land should be, *at their election*, "leases for one and thirty years" or "firm grants to them and their heirs forever."

It may be merely coincidence, or a lack of certainty in the grant of "New Munster" itself, that the earliest deeds to actual settlers of the tract were executed and recorded in 1714, just 31 years after the original grant in 1683. Occupation of the land being the primary objective of the Proprietary, and possession the traditional "nine-points" to the settler, the choice of tenure was unimportant at the time. It became important, however, by the time the lease period had expired when permanent domiciles had been established and improvements made. Title had meanwhile passed from O'Dwire to several other non-resident holders. That O'Dwire never "seated" himself on the land, in the sense contemplated by the Proprietary's commission to Talbot, seems clear. While there is no conveyance from him on record, an instrument executed in 1691 refers to him as "late of this province."

Eventually, one Thomas Stevenson, of Bensalem, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, acquired title to a substantial portion of the tract, about 3,000 acres, and in May 1714 deeded about 1150 acres to a "company" consisting of Matthew Wallace, yeoman, James Alexander, farmer, Arthur Alexander, farmer, David Alexander, weaver, James Alexander, weaver, and Joseph Alexander, tanner. This deed, con-

veying title in fee simple, executed under Stevenson's power of attorney to "my friend John MacKnitt, of Back Creek in Cecil County, Md.," recites that inasmuch as the above grantees, Matthew Wallace and company, had "for some years last past improved and possessed said tract" and divided same "among themselves, each man according to his holden,"

1. the said Stevenson being minded to sell ye said tract, thought it most equitable, honest and right that they, ye said possessors thereof should have the first offer to buy

provided they complied with his terms as to price, which they had done.

Thomas Stevenson had previously,—prior to 1710—conveyed land in Bucks County to a group of Dutch settlers who formed the Bensalem Presbyterian Church, thus evidencing a personal interest in church organization. Incidentally, the Neshaminy Church nearby, seat of the famous "Log College" was also of Dutch derivation, as was that at New Castle, whereas the Maryland churches appear to have all had a Scotch Irish basis.

Johnston, in his history of Cecil County, concludes from the Stevenson deed that the grantees named were among the "fifteen other Irishmen" and, therefore, original settlers. This is plausible as can be, short of a factual demonstration. All parties to the 1714 transaction were of Scotch derivation. Stevenson's "friend," John MacKnitt, was located in Somerset County, Maryland, at an earlier date and has been identified as a member of one of the earliest Presbyterian congregations. There is record there of the marriage in 1693 of John MacKnitt with Jane Wallis (Wallace). One of the James Alexanders of New Munster married Margaret, daughter of John MacKnitt. Their son John MacKnitt Alexander migrated to North Carolina and became secretary of the Mecklenburg Convention of 1775. There are numerous other chains of association between individuals in this group.

Henry Jones Ford, in his scholarly and well authenticated work, *The Scotch Irish in America*, refers to the group settlement on the New Munster tract as the earliest definitely recorded. Not surprisingly, he assumes that there must have been fifteen *real* Irishmen besides O'Dwire, and from the name "New Munster" surmises that they came from *south* Ireland. He was apparently unmindful of George Talbot's curious penchant for Irish place names which caused him to re-name the Northeast River "Shannon" and Susquehanna Manor "New Connaught," and of the border-protective purpose underlying the project of the "County of New Ireland."

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"Irishmen" in common parlance meant, of course, all who hailed from Ireland, without distinguishing the Scotch element in Ulster from the native Irish. The former constituted the main body of immigrants and had the same fondness for Erin and its euphonic names. The hybrid name "Scotch-Irish" was a later American invention.

When a bufferland was in contemplation by Maryland she seems to have instinctively favored the same racial element that had proved a salutary influence on the seaboard side. A refractory type was desirable—capable of defending their rights to the inch and yet to be trusted against usurpation. Her experience with the Puritan importation from Virginia had been unhappy and perhaps the immobile and stolid qualities of other settler types seemed less appropriate to the work in hand.

New Castle had become a chief port of entry for the middle colonies and when superseded by Philadelphia later, Penn directed the inflow from Ireland toward the Maryland border. Quaker control of the Pennsylvania Assembly was to be held intact. Unfriendly attitudes elsewhere also influenced the drift of Scotch Irish. Theocratic New England scowled menacingly at all who were not of the prevailing "elect," while New York had actually enacted proscriptive laws. Virginia had its Established Church and all non-conformists were a source of irritation. She eventually tolerated Scotch settlers west of the Blue Ridge, but perhaps, for protective purposes also.

Tested by experience in the province and reputation gained in their native heaths, these Scots were good border material. At any rate the selection appears to have been deliberate on the part of the provincial leaders and a happy exercise of free choice by the settlers as well. Talbot was evidently satisfied to designate the class wanted with complete indifference to individual names.

The extent to which transplantation of this breed developed in the first half of the eighteenth century was a matter of amazement on both sides of the Atlantic. Edmund Burke commented that in 1729 of six thousand immigrants to Pennsylvania, four-fifths at least were from Ireland. In that year, James Logan, Secretary of Pennsylvania, wrote: "It looks as though Ireland is to send all its inhabitants hither, for last week not less than six ships arrived." He consolingly tells the Penns that "they generally settle near the Maryland line." But they were "bold and indigent strangers" in his view, who when challenged for titles, cannily reply: "*You solicited for colonists and we came accordingly.*" In later appreciation of their intrinsic qualities, however, Logan when feeling the need of protection from

Indians in the Susquehanna Valley "thought it prudent to plant a settlement of such men as those who formerly had so bravely defended Londonderry and Inniskillen, as a frontier in case of disturbance."

Priority of settlement by the Wallace-Alexander group is strongly evidenced by the organization of Head of Christiana Church on the eastern border of the tract before 1708, following an earlier organization at New Castle. Soon thereafter a perfect cordon of churches surrounded the tract—"The Rock" on Little Elk; Lewisville (Upper Elk); Birmingham on Lower Brandywine; White Clay, Red Clay, New London, Bethel, Pencader and Appoquinimy (Drawyers), among others.

Rev. George Gillespie, of Head of Christiana Church, wrote in 1723 that "near to 200 families have come into our parts from Ireland and more are following. They are generally Presbyterians."

In subsequent history, the initial settlement on the New Munster tract is merged with an expanded area. Two later grants, "Society" and "Fair Hill," immediately to the west, assumed like character. The "twelve-mile circle" around New Castle may be taken as the symbol of this spreading population, with a bulge to the west and northwest. There was a liberal infusion of Welsh, French Huguenots and Dutch who did not differ essentially in creed or mode of life. The Germans, for the most part, were to the north, while the Swedes remained close to the Delaware.

In 1701 William Penn adopted Calvert's scheme for border protection by projecting into Maryland territory a grant of about 8500 acres known as the "Nottingham Lots" to the west of Fair Hill; where the "Brick Meeting House" at Calvert still stands. He also invaded Maryland along the Delaware border with a "Welsh Tract" of much greater area. These were retaliating movements (which George Talbot was not here to resist) intended to give color to Penn's territorial claims. Quaker settlements were induced in each. The neighborhood relationship apparently proved amiable; at least until the Whiggish disposition of the Scotch Irish and certain western frontier problems became assertive.

The pressing need for education made a tutor of every parson. At least four pioneer schools, each conducted by a classical scholar had sprung up in this area by 1740 and were to become famous for their foundational work. Francis Alison preached and taught at New London; Samuel Finley at Nottingham; Samuel Blair at Faggs Manor and Thomas Evans at Pencader. They gathered what was to become an illustrious roll of pupils,—governors, statesmen and leaders in

the professions. Among others, John Ewing, James Latta, Matthew Wilson, Samuel Davies, Joseph Alexander, Charles Thomson (secretary, Continental Congress), Governor Thomas McKean (Penna.), Governor John Henry (Md.), Governor Alexander Martin (N. C.), Richard Stockton (Signer, N. J.), George Read (Signer, Del.), James Smith (Signer, Penna.), Dr. Benjamin Rush (Signer, Penna.), Dr. John Archer, John Bayard, Ebenezer Hazard, James Waddell, Hugh Williamson and Alexander McWhorter. Robert Smith, alumnus of Faggs Manor, in turn founded a notable academy at Pequa.

Davies, Finley and the Blairs joined with the Tennents, of Log College on the Neshaminy, in the founding of the College of New Jersey (Princeton). For the Academy at Philadelphia, later to become the University of Pennsylvania, Benjamin Franklin drafted Alison and Ewing. Other colleges may be directly traced to the same root—Hampden-Sidney, Dickinson, Washington and Lee, to name a few. Newark Academy, now the University of Delaware was the outgrowth of the New London school. Ford credits the origin of the University of North Carolina to the pioneer school of Joseph Alexander, of New Munster (Princeton 1760) in Mecklenburg County.

The influence of the itinerant minister—the circuit rider of the day—is more difficult to appraise, but a great horde of them came out of New Castle Presbytery. Some, fortunately, were diarists, and their records are revealing. For instance, one John Cuthbertson landed at New Castle from Ireland August 5, 1751. The same day, he relates, "Rode twenty miles to the home of Moses Andrews" (at New Munster). Two days later he rides "Fifteen miles to Joseph Rosses at New London." This is the beginning of a missionary tour lasting forty years and covering 60,000 miles on horseback, according to the record. There were many others, Beatty, the two Brainards, McClure, Fithian (Beatty's son-in-law), Duffield, the Finleys and McMillan; to mention a few. Not all these started from New Castle, but all went under the same direction, during the pre-Revolution period.

The peregrinating preacher was a means of wide dissemination of both political and religious doctrine. These coalesced perfectly in the rising spirit of individualism. Little wonder that the conservative party laid upon the dissident Scotch Irish the charge of fomenting the Revolution.

"Unauthorized" settlements were made by Scotch Irish west of the Susquehanna as early as 1730 on the Conococheague (now Franklin County, Pa.) and they are referred to in Pennsylvania history as "intruders under Lord Baltimore's title." They spread steadily

through the Susquehanna and Juniata valleys and by way of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia into North Carolina. The New Munster section was the most prolific source of these early migrations.

By the time of the Braddock expedition in 1755 the Scotch Irish were pushing the frontier even beyond the point of safety from Indian attack. Every adult had become of necessity a rifleman and every congregation a convenient military unit.

In Cumberland County John Armstrong found the nucleus for his expedition against Kittanning (1756) in the first Presbyterian church. Parson John Steele of the same county, but late of New Castle, became Captain Steele, and his meeting-house "Fort Steele." John Elder, known as the "fighting Parson" became Captain Elder and commander of a fort on the Susquehanna. John Craighead fought and preached alternately and, according to the D. A. R. monument near Chambersburg, Pa. "led every man in his congregation" into battle. It is said that when Rev. James Finley of "The Rock" church migrated to Western Pennsylvania, at least thirty neighboring families followed his lead.

There were those who envisaged "Canaan" in the south. For them, the trail turned into the Valley of Virginia. There were Scotch-Irish settlements as far down as the Yadkin and Catawba Rivers before 1745, and soon after a great exodus out of the New Munster region into Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, developed. Family groups, including the Alexanders, Polks, Brevards, Sharps, McWhorters, Grahams, Davidsons, Pattons and Harrises moved about the time the pioneer ministers, Hugh McAden, Alexander Craighead, Hezekiah J. Balch, Joseph Alexander and others were sent out by New Castle Presbytery as "missionaries" to the Carolinas. They were of the group that formed the county of Mecklenburg in 1763, became its first magistrates, organized at least seven Presbyterian churches and a number of schools, with deeds such as the Battle of King's Mountain to follow later.

There are no available statistics on this movement, but there is no doubt of its source and magnitude. One early historian (Alexander Hewatt) wrote:

About this time (1763) above a thousand families, with their effects in the space of one year resorted to Carolina, driving their cattle, hogs and horses overland before them.

Another (Dr. Hugh Williamson) writing in 1812, of the Yadkin River section:

Emigrants from the north of Ireland, by the way of Pennsylvania, flocked to that country, and a considerable part of North Carolina, is inhabited by those people or their descendants.

Closer inquiry will disclose that "Pennsylvania" as thus used means the Maryland borderland we have described. As examples of record evidence, one Cecil County will (1778) refers to three children, heads of families, and another (1789) to six "now residing in North Carolina." The chains of connection between this center and the entire Appalachian frontier are apparent in every study of these settlements.

Of the twenty-seven members of the Mecklenburg Convention who, according to legend on the Charlotte monument, signed the Declaration of Independence on May 20, 1775, at least twenty-four may be traced to New Munster, or its immediate environs. Six of these bore the name Alexander. A trite but telling illustration of the fruitfulness of the settlement is the fact that the Alexanders alone now consume about five pages in the Charlotte City Directory. Elsewhere, too, may be found equally striking examples of the spread of New Munster stock.

It seems well to close this story of New Munster at the eve of the Revolution although the thread of connection runs interminably through later history. Enough to have indicated what important consequences may arise out of a seemingly trivial event, such as the laying out of a tract of land for an uncertain group of Irishmen.

It is gratifying, of course, to find that the recalcitrant breed which James I thought "agreeth as well with monarchy as God with the devil" and sought to "harry out of the land" were found to be eminently fit and suitable for border settlement by Lord Baltimore and his deputy, Talbot.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

A carefully prepared description of "New Munster, New Ireland County, Maryland" by Michael J. O'Brien, Esq., appearing in the *Journal of the American Irish Historical Society*, vol. 26 (1927) deserves attention. Mr. O'Brien has incorrectly assumed, however, that the settlers were native or Celtic Irish.

Every channel of inquiry confirms the fact that practically all of the early settlers in this locality were protestant. No invidious distinction is intended, but it is clear that until sometime after the parish division by the Established Church in 1692, it had little foothold here, and until a much later date, no appreciable Catholic population appeared in the described area.

As indices of racial origin, the first census of 1790 covering North Milford Hundred, Cecil County, and the land and probate records of Cecil County may be relied upon.

A single probate record is typical: "Estate of William Ferguson" (Book 2/187) in 1762 mentions the names Alexander, Scott, Gillespie, Caruthers, Jordan, Wallace, Andrews, Caldwell and Longwill—all residents.

Ford in *Scotch Irish in America* says (181): "All accessible data indicates that the Chesapeake Bay settlements were the first distinctively Scotch Irish settlements made in America." This was prior to 1680.

And further (212): "Taking the earliest distinct mention of Scotch Irish settlements as the safest guide, their chronological order appears to be as follows:

1. Maryland 1680
2. South Carolina 1682
3. Pennsylvania 1708
4. New England 1718."

The following are of special value as authorities, aside from Maryland Archives, Land Office and County Records:

John Kilty's *Landholder's Assistant*. Baltimore, 1808. Invaluable on the early land system and government of Maryland.

George Johnston's *History of Cecil County*. Elkton, 1881. A work of exceptional merit.

Henry Jones Ford's *Scotch Irish in America*. Princeton, 1915.

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The following have more remote but important bearing:

Charles A. Hanna, *The Scotch Irish and The Wilderness Trail*.

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