



Wesley Thomas Hargrett
(1862-1945)
At Age 68

THE
HARGRETTS OF GEORGIA
AND
THEIR ORIGINS IN
GERMANY AND NORTH CAROLINA

By
Felix Hargrett
"

Revised and Corrected Edition

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CHAPTER II

HARGETT ARRIVALS IN AMERICA, 1737-1753

Commencing in 1727 lists of eighteenth century arrivals of Palatines or Germans at the port of Philadelphia were required by law to be kept. The lists were preserved and have been published in printed form.¹ Thousands of Germans entered America in the eighteenth century through Boston, New York, Baltimore, Charleston, Savannah and other ports. But whatever settlers landed at these ports, their names are lost, at least for the most part, because no record was systematically made of their names at the time. In Philadelphia alone did the authorities require the preparation of complete and detailed lists of the newcomers.

We have seen that the name Hargett was uncommon among the Palatines who came to England in 1709. It was even more uncommon among the thousands of Germans who arrived in Philadelphia in the great tide of immigration in the middle decades of the eighteenth century. The lists of more than thirty thousand German immigrants taking the oaths of abjuration and allegiance upon landing in Philadelphia in these years contain the names Bauer, Hoffman, Klein, Müller, Schmidt, Schneider and others, each literally by the hundreds; the names Brandt, Braun, Fischer, Jung, Koch, Schumaker and others, each by the scores. In contrast, the name Hargett in all its varying forms appears in the lists only six times—twice as Herget, and once each as Hüget, Hügett, Hergedt and

¹Strassburger, Pennsylvania German Pioneers, *passim*.

Herguth. For this reason it is comparatively easy to distinguish the Hargetts one from another and to trace the subsequent movements of some of them in the several colonies to which they proceeded.

The Hargetts Who Came

The six Hargetts, in chronological order of their arrival in Philadelphia during the years 1737 to 1753, were as follows:

- 1) Petter [Peter] Hügett. In a List of Men Passengers of Sixteen Years of Age and Upwards Imported in the Ship Samuel, Hugh Percy, Master, From Rotterdam, but Last from Cowes [England], August 30, 1737.¹ Thus far no other information has been discovered about him. We do not know where he settled, though there is reason to believe that he went to eastern North Carolina, possibly near New Bern.
- 2) Franz Carel Hüget. In a List of Palatines Imported in the Ship Glasgow, Walter Sterling, Commander, From Rotterdam, but Last from Cowes [England], September 9, 1738.² No further information about the subsequent whereabouts of Franz Carel has been found.
- 3) Friedrich Herget. In a List of Foreigners Imported in the Ship Edinburg, James Russel, Master, from Rotterdam, but Last From Portsmouth [England], September 8, 1748.³ Friedrich probably went to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania,

¹Ibid., II, 174 (List 44 C).

²Ibid., II, 204 (List 53 C).

³Ibid., II, 403 (List 117 C).

where a Gertrude Herguth, daughter of one Frederick Herguth and his wife Anna Barbara, was born December 1, 1748, and was baptized January 28, 1750, all as recorded in the baptismal list of the First Reformed Church of Lancaster. No other mention of Frederick has been found in the Pennsylvania records. More specifically, he is not listed in the first United States census (1790) of Pennsylvania, nor for that matter does the name Hargett in any of its forms appear in that compilation. This fact indicates that Frederick had died or had left Pennsylvania before 1790. The author leans rather toward the belief that he went to North Carolina in the early 1750s and that he is the same Frederick who in 1755 was living in Beaufort County of that province, who received a grant of land on the Tar River in the same county in 1756, who acquired land in Pitt County in 1762, and who died there later that year.¹

- 4) Johan Henrich [Johann Heinrich] Herget. In a List of Foreigners from Swabia, Wirtemberg and Darmstadt Imported in the Ship Jacob, Capt. Adolph de Grove, From Amsterdam, but Last from Shields in England, October 2, 1749.² The records are abundant and clear that Johann Heinrich settled in Anson County, North Carolina, later moving to Mecklenburg County where he and his wife Anna, who had probably come with him from Germany, reared a large family and where he lived until his death in 1803. He is the only

¹For further comment about him see "Frederick Hargett, Revolutionary Leader, and Some Other Hargetts in Eastern North Carolina," Appendix F hereof.

²Strassburger, Pennsylvania German Pioneers, III, 473 (List 140 C).

Hargett among the six who entered at Philadelphia during the years 1737 to 1753 in whom we have more than passing interest, for it was from him that the Georgia Hargretts are descended. As we shall see, at least on one occasion in later years he signed his name Johann Heinrich Hargett, and finally, his will of 1803 bore the signature Henry Hargett, Senior. The progenitor of the Hargretts of Georgia, he was the great-great-great-grandfather of my father Wesley Thomas Hargett (1862-1945). There will be much more about Johann Heinrich further on in these notes.

- 5) Petter [Peter] Hergedt. In a List of Foreigners Imported in the Ship Two Brothers, Capt. Thomas Arnot, From Rotterdam, and Last From Cowes, August 28, 1750.¹ Peter settled in Frederick County, Maryland. In the words of the historian of that region, "The rich farm lands were taken up by a host of honest, thrifty, laborious German immigrants, who had fled the oppressive restrictions of their own fatherland to seek a refuge for themselves and their families and whose names underwent many distortions and mutilations at the hands of the English representatives of the Lord Proprietor (of Pennsylvania), as they labored to write them down from the sound, upon the pages of our early records."² Peter had a son Abraham, born April 4, 1753, and other sons and daughters.³ He appears in the

¹Ibid., II, 508 (List 153 C).

²Thomas John Chew Williams, History of Frederick County, Maryland. From the Earliest Settlement (Baltimore, 1967), 1256.

³James Mehrling Holscroft, Names in Stone: 75,000 Cemetery Inscriptions From Frederick County, Maryland (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1966).

first census (1790) and in the second census (1800) as the head of a family in Maryland. He died presumably between 1800 and 1810, for his name does not appear in the census of the latter year. His descendants have lived in Frederick County ever since, and to this day the Hargetts there are numerous, prominent and respected.

- 6) Johannes Herguth. In a List of Foreigners Imported in the Ship Edinburg, Capt. James Russel, From Rotterdam, but Last from Portsmouth, September 14, 1753.¹ Born on July 15, 1708 in Rosenthal, Hesse, of Lutheran parentage, in 1737 he married Josephine Geyerbach, born July 25, 1716, who came with him to Pennsylvania. Their children included John Henry born in Germany on February 11, 1749, and Catherine Elizabeth born in Pennsylvania on September 29, 1758.² In the records of his daughter's baptism he is called John Henry Herguth, another example of the almost universal practice among the Germans who came to the American colonies of promptly Anglicizing their names.

¹Strassburger, Pennsylvania German Pioneers, II, 627 (List 199 C).

²John W. Jordan, Pennsylvania Historical Society Notes and Queries (1896), 212. Hesse, which this baptism record states was the birthplace of Johannes Herguth, was a duchy which lay along the east bank of the Rhine River between the cities of Mainz and Heidelberg. This is the closest the records come to identifying specifically the locality from which an emigrating Hargett came. Johann Heinrich Herget and his fellow-passengers on the Ship Jacob which arrived in 1749 came, as we have seen, from "Swabia, Wirtemberg and Darmstadt." These references to Darmstadt and Hesse suggest the probability that Johann Heinrich and Peter both came from Darmstadt or its vicinity, as well as Frederick, the 1748 arrival.

Possible Kinship Among Them

It may be that some of these Hargetts were kin to each other but in what degree, if any, is not known. Family tradition likes to have it that those who came in 1748, 1749 and 1750—Friedrich, Johann Heinrich and Peter, in that order—were related to each other, and there is some foundation, though hardly a firm one, for that supposition. Their signatures on their oaths of allegiance, the originals of which are (as we have seen) preserved in the archives of the State of Pennsylvania and reproduced in facsimile in Strassburger's Pennsylvania Pioneers, were, in the rather tortured German script of the day, strikingly similar one to another. Two of the three spelled their names Herget, though in Peter's case someone did insert a "d" to make it Hergedt. All three left their homeland within the space of two years or so. The three were evidently within a few years of each other in age; they certainly were in flourishing early manhood at about the same time; Friedrich had a daughter born to him in 1749; Johann Heinrich's first son was born in 1751; Peter's first son was born about 1752. We know for a fact that Johann Heinrich lived (in Piedmont North Carolina) until 1803 and that Peter (the 1750 arrival who settled in Maryland) survived until sometime between 1800 and 1810. There is some reason to believe that Friedrich died in 1762 (in Eastern North Carolina) when he was still a young man.

Moreover, during the earlier years of the three in America the first syllable of their name, Her- or Hü- (pronounced Her), disappeared in favor of Har-, and the name uniformly (except for an occasional lapse) became ever afterwards Hargett in Maryland, in Eastern North Carolina and in Piedmont North Carolina, areas a few hundred miles distant from each other. This fact suggests that there may have been some association or at least communication among them which would have tended toward uniformity in the spelling of their names. While no evidence has been found to show that

they were related to each other at all, it seems probable that some of them were.

Everything we know about the five Hargetts (other than Johann Heinrich) who arrived in Philadelphia in the years 1737 to 1753 has now been set down in these pages. We shall therefore at this time say auf Wiedersehen to them and their issue, and confine ourselves hereafter to Johann Heinrich, our ancestor in the direct line, to the family which he established, and to his descendants.

Two exceptions will however be made to this sweeping farewell to all other Hargetts in lines collateral to our own. Frederick Hargett, a prominent and important figure in the Revolution and during the early statehood of North Carolina, will be noticed at some length in Appendix F, and his last will and testament will form Appendix G of these pages. Also in Appendix F will be found references to another Frederick Hargett who died in Pitt County, North Carolina, in 1762 who may have been the Frederick Herget (the 1748 arrival in Philadelphia) who, as we have seen, was living in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in 1749 and 1750. The two were probably related to Johann Heinrich Hargett of Mecklenburg County from whom the Georgia Hargretts are descended, but the degree of kinship is not known to us.

CHAPTER III TO PIEDMONT NORTH CAROLINA

Johann Heinrich Hargett who came from Germany to reach our shores in 1749 was the American progenitor of the family of that name in Piedmont North Carolina and of the Hargretts of Georgia. It is therefore his history and that of his descendants which will occupy the remainder of this book. He was born in Germany, probably in the general vicinity of Darmstadt, about 1725 or 1730. As we have seen, he was one of the 249 persons from "Swabia, Wirtemberg & Darmstadt" who arrived in Philadelphia in the ship Jacob, Captain Adolph de Grove, from Amsterdam, but last from Shields, England, and who signed oaths of allegiance and abjuration on October 2, 1749, to become subjects of George II of England.¹

It seems that he was among those fortunate voyagers who possessed money enough to pay for their passage across the Atlantic. While we have no certain knowledge of the matter, this conclusion is suggested by the fact that he did not remain in Pennsylvania or elsewhere in the Middle Colonies for the three, four or five years customarily spent in those regions by Redemptioners who had to work out their passage money before being free to go where they wished and to follow an occupation of their choice. Instead, he appears to have proceeded without appreciable delay to

¹Strassburger, Pennsylvania German Pioneers, II, 473 (List 140 C).

North Carolina where, according to family records, his first son Henry was born in 1751, his first daughter Elizabeth two years later in 1753.¹

Why North Carolina?

What led Johann Heinrich Hargett, a German immigrant then twenty or twenty-five years old, only recently landed in Philadelphia, to decide against remaining with his many fellow-countrymen in Pennsylvania? Why did he not join earlier German settlers in Maryland or Virginia? What prompted him instead to go so far away as North Carolina? The answers are probably those given by history which tells us that by the middle decades of the eighteenth century the back parts of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia east of the Appalachian mountains were being rapidly populated by newcomers. Desirable lands in the older, established areas could be obtained only with some difficulty and expense, and would-be settlers did not yet venture to cross the mountain barrier into the forests inhabited by the Indians and still claimed by the French. Consequently, immigrants in their considerable numbers had to travel southward until they could find lands which were available to them and which they could afford to buy.

Many of these people ended their odyssey only upon reaching the back country of North Carolina. Land in that province was cheaper than in any of the colonies to the north; moreover, the North Carolina provincial authorities were striving to attract newcomers to the frontier regions

¹Jessie Ramsey (Mrs. William) Stell, Russellville, Alabama, letter September 14, 1971, to Adelaide Hargrett (Mrs. James C.) Rousseau (hereafter cited Stell letter, September 14, 1971). Mrs. Stell, a direct descendant of Johann Heinrich Hargett, cited family records then in her possession.

by offering them unoccupied Crown lands almost free for the asking.¹ Their long journey over, the new settlers put down in the counties of Anson and Rowan, the fertile soils of which were watered by the Yadkin, the Pee Dee and the Catawba rivers. Johann Heinrich Hargett was among these people.

Weeks of Overland Travel

When our ancestor and his companions set out from Philadelphia they doubtless followed the route then being pursued by large numbers of German and Scotch-Irish settlers on their way south in quest of new homes. This was a road which at the time was in the making as a result of the general movement southward of immigrants from Pennsylvania to the western portions of Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina. Known as the Great Wagon Road, this former Indian path had become a major artery of travel in British North America long before the Revolution, a road which continued its important role into the days of the new republic.²

After leaving Philadelphia, after passing through Lancaster and York in Pennsylvania, Frederick in Maryland, and Winchester in Virginia, this road carried streams of immigrants the length of the Great Vale of Virginia, now celebrated as the Shenandoah Valley. At the southern end of that beautiful region, near a large salt lick frequented by deer and buffalo, the bands of travelers forded the Staunton (now the Roanoke) River at or near what was to become the site of the present-day city of Roanoke. In

¹G. D. Bernheim, History of the German Settlements and of the Lutheran Church in North and South Carolina from the Earliest Period of the Colonization of the Dutch, German and Swiss Settlers to the Close of the Present Century (Philadelphia, 1872, hereafter cited Bernheim, German Settlements in North and South Carolina), passim.

²Park Rouse, Jr., The Great Wagon Road from Philadelphia to the South (New York, 1973), passim.

wagons, on horseback and afoot these sturdy, determined people then pushed through the passes of the Blue Ridge Mountains to reach the rolling country of Piedmont Virginia before crossing the Dan River and entering North Carolina. There the way continued down the valley of the Yadkin River to the vicinity of Salisbury. After proceeding along the Rocky River for another fifty miles, the travelers finally arrived in Anson County, the destination of most of them.¹

In its southern reaches where it was generally called the Carolina Road, the way was often no more than a trail rough-hewn through the forest, poorly graded and poorly drained, full of holes and ruts. The overland journey from Philadelphia, in all some six hundred miles, most of it through a wilderness, and much of it, as travelers along that frontier in colonial days tell us, entailing toil and hardship of the most arduous kind, had taken probably nine or ten weeks.²

¹The course of the Great Wagon Road is shown on the maps reproduced in William P. Cumming, The Southeast in Early Maps (Princeton University Press, 1958); the Virginia portion on Peter Jefferson and Joseph Fry, "A Map of the Inhabited Parts of Virginia" (London, 1753 or 1754); the North Carolina portion on John A. Colles, "A Compleat Map of North Carolina" (London, 1770), plate 54. Upon leaving North Carolina the road divided into two branches at Camden, South Carolina, one to Charleston, the other to Augusta, Georgia.

²For a graphic account of a journey from Pennsylvania to North Carolina in 1753, most of it over the Great Wagon Road, see "Diary of a Journey of Moravians from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, to Bethabara in Wachovia, North Carolina," in Newton D. Mereness, ed., Travels in the American Colonies (New York, 1916), 325-356. This journey, which took forty-seven days, was probably of shorter duration than others over the same general route about the same time, because the 1753 travelers were twelve young "Single Brethren."

Other Possible Routes

There were, of course, other ways for our ancestor to have made the journey from Philadelphia to the North Carolina back country. He could have taken passage from Philadelphia on a coast-wise sailing vessel to one of the North Carolina posts of Edenton, New Bern or Wilmington and traveled through the country over wretched roads and across difficult watercourses. The distance cross-country would have been one hundred and fifty to three hundred miles, depending upon which port he had entered. He could have come by sea to Georgetown or Charleston, South Carolina, and gone upcountry along the Pee Dee River to Anson County in North Carolina, as we are told some German settlers did. Nevertheless, the recorded patterns of immigration into the southern provinces in this period suggest that our ancestor reached his new home by neither of these routes but traveled overland through Maryland and Virginia as most of the people did who came to settle in this part of North Carolina in the middle decades of the eighteenth century.

Anson County

However he got there, Johann Heinrich Hargett and his wife were living in Anson County in 1751 or earlier, family records revealing that in 1751 his first son Henry was born there and two years later, in 1753, his first daughter.¹

Anson County was created in 1748 to meet the needs of a growing population. Commencing at the South Carolina border, the eastern boundary of the county extended for some distance up Drowning Creek (now the Lumber River) and thence northward to the colony of Virginia. The newly formed county ran westward without limit. Only a few miles west of the Pee

¹Stell letter, September 14, 1971.

Dee River, which flowed south through the eastern part of the county, lay the hunting grounds of the Waxhaw Indians. Hargett and his fellow-settlers commenced clearing the heavily timbered, thinly populated forests, converting them into farms. These hard-working men and women were pioneers in the true sense of the word.

Many of the earliest settlers of Anson County, and indeed of the wider piedmont regions of the province, had come from the same direction. Scotch-Irish and Germans in considerable numbers rolled southward, as we have seen, from Pennsylvania and Virginia, probably the largest group of those who were then swelling the population of North Carolina. They came for the most part in organized bodies, and there seems to have been a steady stream of them for a number of years.¹ A correspondent of the South Carolina and American General Gazette in 1758 says: "There is scarcely any history either ancient or modern, which affords an account of such a rapid and sudden increase of inhabitants in a back country, as that of North Carolina." Most of the newcomers were Scotch-Irish, but Germans formed a large percentage of the total. In 1771, it was stated that in Mecklenburg and its adjacent counties there were already settled nearly three thousand German Protestant families comprising some fifteen thousand persons in all, and that many more German settlers were arriving almost weekly from Pennsylvania and other provinces to the north.²

¹R. D. W. Connor, History of North Carolina (2 vols., Chicago and New York, 1919), I, 170.

²Ibid., I, 177.

Rooted in North Carolina

Documentary records in the public domain now come to the aid of the family historian. They reveal that Johann Heinrich Hargett and his wife Anna were living in Anson County, North Carolina, when another son was born to them on July 25, 1754. This was Peter who later recorded the following information about the place and date of his birth and the whereabouts of his parents in the 1750s and 1760s:

According to the information received from his Parents, he was born on the 25th of July 1754 in the County of Liberty on Cartledge's Creek, a branch of the Big Peedee in the State of South Carolina. When he was about 8 or 10 years of age his parents removed to the County of Mecklenburg in North Carolina.¹

Now, Cartledge's Creek is in North Carolina, not South Carolina; it flows from the northeast into the Pee Dee River in what was then Anson County, North Carolina. There was no Liberty County in either province. In the 1760s Peter's father and mother did remove to Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, but the move was from Anson County, North Carolina, not from Liberty County, South Carolina. Peter's advanced age in 1833 (he was then almost eighty years old), his absence for more than a half-century from the distant scenes of his youth, the situation of Anson County which lay immediately on the border of the adjoining province of South Carolina—all these facts probably account for an old man's mistaken notion that South Carolina was his birthplace and that he had spent his early boyhood there. No other evidence exists so far as the author is aware to suggest that Peter or his parents ever lived in South Carolina.

¹Statement in the application made on May 14, 1833, by Peter Hargett then (and since 1780 or 1781) living in Kentucky, for a pension for service as a soldier in Colonel Polk's Mecklenburg Regiment of the North Carolina Line during the War for American Independence.

Johann Heinrich Becomes Plain John Henry

At about this time, or perhaps somewhat earlier, like many if not most of his fellow colonists from Germany, Johann Heinrich changed his Christian name, no doubt as a practical necessity in an adopted land where English-speaking people predominated and where of course their language was the standard one. Thereafter, for the rest of his life, he called himself Henry Hargett or on occasion John Henry Hargett, sometimes signing his name one way, sometimes the other. At the close of his life in 1803, as we shall in time see, he signed his will Henry Hargett.

Land Grants

The almost universal practice in those days of very cheap public lands offered by the Crown authorities to attract settlers was for the newcomer, upon reaching the place where he wished to live, and finding a vacant tract to his liking, to settle upon it, commence at once to clear and cultivate the land, have the tract surveyed and its boundaries marked, applying later, at his convenience, for a grant and title from the provincial authorities.¹ Thus the earliest recorded grant to Henry, who had evidently come to Anson County in 1751 or earlier, appears to be one dated 1760. The land records of the province show that on December 5 of that year he received from Arthur Dobbs, Royal Governor of the Colony, a grant of "200 acres of land in Anson County, on the northeast side of the Pee Dee River on the north side of its tributary the middle fork of Cartledges Creek, including his

¹The title-deeds of their lands "were always dated some years after their actual settlement, affording them time to decide upon a permanent location, . . . having to run no risk in losing their titles by the delay of a few years." Bernheim, German Settlements in North and South Carolina, 153.

improvements."¹ Three years later, by a grant issued April 20, 1763, he obtained 100 additional acres on the northeast side of the Pee Dee, presumably adjoining his earlier 200 acres.² In the same year Henry Hargett appears in a list of taxables in Anson County.³ Here on his farm he and his wife Anna and their growing family lived until 1763 or 1764. Like all the German people who settled in this section of North Carolina, they were Protestants, doubtless of the Lutheran or German Reformed denomination.

To Mecklenburg County

The Revolutionary War pension application which Peter Hargett, Henry's son, made many years later (in 1833) when he was an old man contains the statement, which we have already noticed, that, "When he [Peter] was about 8 or 10 years of age his parents removed to the County of Mecklenburg in North Carolina," that is to say, about 1763 or 1764. The land in Mecklenburg County to which Henry moved and upon which he then settled is identified by a grant entered April 6, 1768, and issued to him on December 24 of the same year, as 200 acres on both sides of Stewarts Fork of Richardsons Creek.⁴ This was about twenty miles west of his earlier Anson County stand on Cartledges Creek where that stream flowed into the Pee Dee River. Stewarts Fork rises only a mile or two northwest of the present-day town of Monroe, about eighteen or twenty miles southeast of the city of

¹Land Grant Book 15, File 1955, p. 31.

²Ibid., Grant 72.

³"1763 Tax List of Anson County, North Carolina," in The North Carolinian. A Quarterly Journal of Genealogy and History (Raleigh), II, 2 (June, 1957), 296.

⁴Land Grant Book 20, p. 395, file 1692.

Charlotte, and after flowing east and northeast for a few miles empties into Richardsons Creek at a point about six miles northeast of Monroe. Somewhere along Stewarts Fork, which appears on modern maps, lay the farm upon which Henry lived for the rest of his life and where he and his wife reared their large family.

Henry's name next appears in the Mecklenburg County records on December 30, 1774, when a deed of sale from one John Cole and his wife Mary Cole to one John Ashley "was proved in open court by oath of John Henry Hargett evidence thereto."¹ Also, on January 3, 1775, a deed of sale from John Ashley to Rees Shelby for 300 acres of land on both sides of Richardsons Creek was proved in open court of Mecklenburg County "by the oath of Henry Hargett evidence thereto."²

The American Colonies in Revolt

During the years Henry was working his farm on Stewarts Fork of Richardsons Creek a fierce spirit of independence had seized the people, and public affairs were reaching a crisis. In April, 1775, occurred the battle at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, the next month Boston was occupied by a hostile British army, and the cause of Boston soon came to be the cause of all the American colonies. In May, 1775, upon the call of Colonel Thomas Polk, two elected delegates from each militia district of Mecklenburg County met at the county courthouse in Charlotte Town and adopted resolutions declaring that the colonies should assert their independence from Great Britain. Many North Carolinians and others like

¹Mecklenburg County Court Minutes, Book I, 1774-1780. Abstracted, Compiled and Edited by Doris Futch Briscoe from the Original Manuscript Record in the Custody of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History (Charlotte, 1966), 15.

²Ibid., 16.

to contend that these Mecklenburg Resolutions constitute the earliest actual declaration of American independence. Be that as it may, relations between the colonies and their mother country continued to worsen until the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, in convention at Philadelphia, declared the American colonies to be free and independent. War soon followed.

Henry Hargett, Patriot

Forty-five to fifty years old at this juncture, Henry Hargett, a farmer with a wife and some ten children, must have found his hands full in earning a living. He does not appear, probably for that reason, to have borne arms as a soldier, but as a patriot loyal to the cause of the colonies he did serve his fellow patriots during the Revolution as an overseer of roads in his county, a fact evidenced by the following excerpt from the Mecklenburg County minutes:

1776. Ordered that the following persons be appointed overseers of the public roads within this county (viz) . . .
Samuel Smith from Clear Creek to Goose Creek
Henry Hargett from Goose Creek to Camp Creek
Charles Fifer [Phifer] from Camp Creek to the South Carolina line.¹

The public road, a portion of which Henry Hargett was charged with overseeing and upon which his farm probably lay, ran through the middle of Mecklenburg County, from Rocky River on the north to the South Carolina boundary line on the south. (The present-day U.S. Highway 601 generally follows the route of the old road.) This important thoroughfare seems to have been a stretch of the Great Wagon Road (or, in these parts, the Carolina Road) upon which we have already commented at some length.

¹Ibid., 115.

Soldier Sons

While the German-born Henry Hargett supported the patriots' cause in the Revolution by carrying out his duties as overseer of public roads his eldest son, also named Henry, who was born in 1751, served as a soldier in a regiment of light dragoons in General Sumter's Brigade of South Carolina.¹ Further comment on that service will appear when we come to set down the facts we have about the younger Henry. Peter, another son, who was born in 1754, was, as his pension application reveals, drafted at Charlotte into the North Carolina troops of the Continental Line in the summer of 1778 for a term of nine months. He was a member of the regiment commanded by Colonel Thomas Polk. These troops embarked on a campaign which carried them to Camden, South Carolina, thence to the mouth of the Waccamaw River, and finally to Charleston where Peter was honorably discharged at the expiration of his term. He then returned to his home in Mecklenburg County. His pension application stated that he assisted in the burial of the dead after the Battle of King's Mountain which occurred on October 7, 1780, some twenty or twenty-five miles west of his home. Shortly afterwards he removed to Kentucky where he established a family and where he died in 1836.²

The Hargetts were, as these records bear out, active supporters of the colonists' cause and helped establish the independence of the new republic. The war over, they resumed the quiet lives of farming people, rearing their families and going about the business of making a living.

¹Sarah Sullivan Ervin, South Carolinians in the Revolution (Baltimore, 1965), 61.

²Peter Hargett's pension application, National Archives, File S-31092.

Later Years

The name of Henry Hargett the elder next appears in the records as the recipient of a grant from the state entered December 31, 1778, issued October 22, 1782, of 150 acres on the waters of Richardsons Creek, Mecklenburg County.¹ This tract presumably adjoined his farm of some 200 acres which he had received by way of grant ten years earlier. Again, four years later, by a grant entered August 7, 1786, issued November 26 of the same year, he received 110 additional acres on Stump Lick, a tributary of Richardsons Creek, "at 2 pounds for every 100 acres."²

The next record we find of him is in the first census of the United States (1790) as the head of a family in Mecklenburg County, comprising in addition to himself one free white male under the age of sixteen and two free white females who were doubtless his wife Anna and a daughter. He did not own any slaves.

Still acquiring land, on November 1, 1797, he received by grant from the state 93 additional acres on Richardsons Creek "at 10 pounds for every 100 acres."³ Again, a few months later, as the records reveal, Henry Hargett, Senior, received 150 acres more by a grant from the state, entered February 10, 1794, issued April 12, 1798—more land presumably adjoining his old farm.⁴ With these additions his farm had now grown to something like 600 acres in size.

¹Land Grant Book 42, Grant 179, p. 282.

²Land Grant Book 14, Grant 833, p. 177.

³Ibid., Grant 939, p. 268.

⁴Land Grant Book 42, Grant 1405.

An Important Record

We come now to a document of much importance in the history of the family. By a deed dated September 15, 1797, "Henry Hargett, Senior, of the State of North Carolina, and the County of Mecklenburg" conveyed to his son Joseph 100 acres of land on the north side of Stewarts Fork, "it being part of said Henry Hargett's old survey." What is most significant about the transaction is that Henry signed the deed "Johann Heinrich Harget alias Henry Hargett."¹ Thus the fact is established beyond doubt that the Henry Hargett who lived in Anson County in the 1750s and early 1760s, who moved to Mecklenburg County about 1763 or 1764 to rear a large family and to live there as a farmer until his death in 1803, was the Johann Heinrich Hargett (born in Germany about 1725 to 1730) who arrived in Philadelphia in 1749. Another, independent confirmation of his Old World origin is found much later in the statement of a North Carolina historian that "among the earliest settlers of the eastern portion of Mecklenburg County was Henry Hargett, from Germany."²

In the Census of 1800 Henry Hargett once more appears as the head of a family in Mecklenburg County, a family now reduced to himself and his wife Anna, both "forty-five years of age and upwards," the way in which all persons older than forty-five were recorded. Again Henry is not shown as a slaveholder.

¹Mecklenburg County Book of Deeds, Alexander 15, p. 71.

²Robert Ney McNeely, "Union County and the Old Waxhaw Settlement," in The North Carolina Booklet (Raleigh), XII (1912), 11.

A Life Closes

"I, Henry Hargett Senr., of the State of North Carolina and County of Mecklenburg being weak of body but of perfect Sense and memory," are the opening words of his will which the German-born patriarch of the family signed March 28, 1803.¹ He died shortly afterwards, for his will was admitted to record at the July 1803 term of the county court. He sleeps in an unknown grave. All his property—the plantation on which he lived, as well as 100 acres of land on Stump Lick, a tributary of Richardsons Creek, and everything else except a few head of cattle which he bequeathed to certain named members of his family—was left to his "well beloved wife Nanna Hargett" during her life. In the will he stipulated that after her death his whole estate was to be divided equally among his children: his sons Henry, Peter, Daniel, Joseph; his daughters Elizabeth Chaney, Rachel Pellum, Rebekah Broom, Mary Craig, Sarah Helmes and Agnes Laney.

The inventory of the estate, made on May 9, 1803, by sons Henry and Joseph, his executors, has been preserved. After mentioning the "400 acres of Land the old Plantation," and "100 acres of Land lying at the Stump Lick," both the inventory and the subsequent record of sales of the property list the livestock and then proceed to itemize in minute detail all the personal property on the plantation and in the house—harvested crops, vehicles, farm implements, tools, supplies, household furniture, kitchen utensils and a miscellany of articles including three Indian pans, a woman's saddle, a trumpet, a tomahawk, five gallons of whiskey and a prayerbook. The detailed inventory affords an interesting

¹The original will and the administration papers are to be found in the Mecklenburg County Wills, 1749-1869, VII, Part 1, Folios 1, 3 and 4, in the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh. The will and the inventory of the estate are reproduced in Appendices A and B hereof.

picture of what was doubtless a typical Piedmont North Carolina farm at the close of the eighteenth century.

Henry's widow Anna died about 1810. On April 16 of that year sons Henry and Joseph, as executors and administrators of their father's estate, conveyed to John Bennet's Church, of Mecklenburg County, two acres of land "above Widow Hargett's Spring, upon which the meeting house stood."¹ The Reverend John Bennet was a preacher of the Baptist persuasion who served the people of Mecklenburg County as early as 1790.² That the meeting house rested upon Widow Hargett's land during her lifetime and that the land subsequently became the property of the church strongly suggest that she and probably others of her family had by this time become Baptists and members of John Bennet's Church.

On January 4, 1811, sons Henry and Joseph, again as administrators of their father's estate, sold to one Hezekiah Williams "three certain tracts of land containing 398 acres lying on Stewarts Fork of Richardsons Creek," their father's old farm. These 398 acres, along with the 2 acres conveyed the previous year to John Bennet's Church, account for the "400 acres of land of the old plantation" which their father owned and on which he was living at the time of his death in 1803. Son Henry finally settled the estate accounts on August 17, 1813, and distributed the proceeds to the heirs.

¹Mecklenburg County Book of Deeds, Alexander 20, p. 254.

²McNeely, "Union County and the Old Waxhaw Settlement," 18.

CHAPTER IV
THREE MORE GENERATIONS IN
PIEDMONT NORTH CAROLINA

Henry Hargett II (1751-1827)

The next forefather of the Georgia Hargetts in the direct line, the second Henry Hargett, born in 1751 in Anson County, North Carolina, was the eldest son of Henry Hargett (born Johann Heinrich Hargett in Germany about 1725 to 1730) and his wife Anna. Young Henry grew up on his father's farm in Mecklenburg County in the late 1760s and early 1770s, but certain records reveal that by 1774 he had returned to Anson County. On October 11, 1774, one Reuben Phillips and his wife conveyed land (probably 100 acres) in Anson County to Henry Hargett.¹ Furthermore, in a deed dated October 27, 1777, by which a Micajah Pickett of South Carolina conveyed 100 acres in Anson County, northeast of the Pee Dee River, to William Pickett of Anson County, the land is described as "adjoining 100 acres of Henry Hargett."² Like his father, Henry was a farmer.

During the American Revolution one John Hargett served as a private under Captain Jacob Barnett in Colonel Hampton's Regiment of Light Dragoons, of General Sumter's South Carolina

¹Anson County, North Carolina. Abstract of Early Records. The May Wilson McBee Collection (no place, no date), II, 95. Copy consulted in the Charlotte Public Library.

²Ibid., 150.