

IN SEARCH OF WILLIAM McNABB-----by Walter Craig Davidson

First, I should like to point out that after 45 years of researching the McNabb clan, I have never found even the slightest shred of evidence or documentation that Wm. McNabb, father of Baptiste & the other children, came from Scotland or, indeed, had anything whatsoever to do with Scotland. Further, I have not seen even a pretense to such documentation in the research results written by anyone else. Thus, before one disagrees with the following account of Wm. McNabb's history, let them present a better documented research result.

The account of Wm. McNabb living, marrying and moving from Glendochart, Scotland to Virginia ca. 1740's has never seemed valid to me. (WCD) If he had left the children and emigrated alone, it would have made more sense, as he could have always sent for them or gone back after them. But to take off to the Colonies with five children ranging in ages from 5 or 6 to 12 or 13, just never seemed to me to be what a prudent Scot would do; especially just after the death of his wife, Betty Aiken, or Aken, McNabb. I have evidence, presented in the following pages, that there is more than a possibility that Wm. McNabb, he of the 1749 land deed in Augusta Co., Virginia, came from Dansbury (Now Stroudsburg) Monroe Co., Penn., where his father Wm. McNabb, Senior, was a blacksmith** ca. 1720's. Also in the Lower Smithfield Township of Dansbury, Delaware Valley, Shawnee, (Bethlehem), and Wind Gap, was Gideon van Aken, who lived in Wind Gap and was probably the father of the first wife of Wm. McNabb, Junior, Betty Aiken or Aken.

Possibly, the McNabbs of Dansbury, Penn. (Now Stroudsburg) descend from James Micknab (McNabb) who sailed from Downes, England December 8, 1651, aboard the "John & Sarah"--Master John Greene-- and landed in Boston, Mass., before 24 February 1652. James went to work for the Lynn Iron Works. Keep in mind that under the Guild system, the McNabb Clan had a long history as armorers.** This at a time in history when the occupation of the father fairly well determined the occupation of the sons; however, not exclusively so. In any case, 70 years after James McNabb went to work in the iron works, Wm. McNabb, Senior, was a blacksmith, in Monroe County, Penn..

**I am indebted to Carol Fortenbacher, Nunica, Mi., whose research established the fact of the McNabb Clan as armorers, in Scotland.

At a time when it was necessary to execute an Oath of Importation in Orange County, Virginia, in order to obtain a grant of land in Virginia, not one but several exhaustive searches of the records of Orange County, Va. failed to provide the researcher with any evidence that Wm. McNabb had ever made such an oath. Yet, he received a grant in 1749 in Augusta Co., Virginia. Thus there is reason to believe that he was born in the Colonies, was a white male citizen, and did not need an Oath, in order to receive a grant. There are records of Oaths given by immigrants, dated both before and after the 1749 date of Wm. McNabb's grant but none for him.

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