THE LANDING OF THE FIRST BALTHASERS

Now when did the first Balthasers land in America and where? I have told you when and where many Germans or Palatines settled in America, but when and where did the first Balthasers land in the New World? Did they land in New York, Pennsylvania, or Maryland? It is almost certain that they settled first in one of these three states. If we are descendants of the French, they might have been with the Huguenots that settled in Maryland, for there are many Balthasers in Maryland, and in the Cumberland Valley.

In the Pennsylvania Archives, (Series 2, Vol. 17, Page 356), we find the list of immigrants on the ship St. Andrew which sailed from Rotterdam to Plymouth and then to Philadelphia. It landed in Philadelphia Sept. 23, 1752, and the first name on this list of passengers was Jacob Balzer; Casper Baltzer arrived Sept. 26, 1752; Philip Baltzer Oct. 6,1767, and Wilhelm Baltzer, Oct. 16, 1772.

From these records it appears that there was no Balthaser in Berks county previous to 1752 when the county was organized; and it looks to me that one of these four Baltzers that arrived between 1752 and 1772 was our direct ancestor, and that they came to Berks county from Philadelphia, and settled in the vicinity of Reading and Hamburg.

In examining the first Census of the United States, which was taken in 1790, we find a widow Baltzer living in Caernarvon Township who had three children; a William Baltzer of Reading who had one child, and a Henry Baltzer of Richmond Township who had seven children, a total of sixteen. As these are official records it appears that there were only sixteen Balthasers in what is now Berks County in 1790.

In the Pennsylvania Archives, (3rd Series, Vol. 18, page 259), we find that Henry Baldaser, of Richmond township was taxed for 100 acres of land in 1779; and as he had seven children in 1790 when the first census was taken (3 sons over 16, 2 sons under 16 and 2 daughters,) he was likely the father of John Jacob Balthaser, my great grandfather.

[*"A Concise History of the Balthasers,"* by Francis W. Balthaser, 1924, Source #19]