

THE NATIONALITY OF THE BALTHASERS

Looking out upon this moving picture of the German pioneers as they spread gradually over the vast territory of the New World we are irresistibly reminded of our own ancestors, the Balthasers. It has been almost definitely established that our ancestors belonged to these Palatines, whether they were Germans, French Huguenots, or Dutch is not quite definite.

The Palatinate was not only inhabited by Germans, but also by colonists from Switzerland, Holland, France and even England. The Pfalz or Upper Palatinate was named so by the French Huguenots. You will thus see that there are at least three sources to which we can trace our ancestors as to their nationality: Germans, French Huguenots, and Dutch. That we are the descendants of the Germans is the most plausible, but we may be descendants of the French Huguenots who found refuge in England in the 17th century, for in volume 10 of the "Returns of Aliens in the City of London from the reign of Henry VIII to that of James I" appear these names: Baltaser, Balthazer, and Baltaser.

Some authorities claim that we are the descendants of the Dutch. In reading the History of Holland we find that Balthaser was King of Holland at one time. If this be true, then we have some royal blood coursing through our veins. It seems to me as though we are the descendants resulting from the intermarriage of the persecuted Germans, French and Dutch that for a long time lived in the Palatinate, and who finally emigrated to America. One reason that makes me arrive at such a conclusion is the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect which most of the older Balthasers still use to this day. While it is no language, it is a dialect resulting from German, English, and French words and phrases.

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