
News, Updates, & More

Varner Family Genealogy

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FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Happy New Year!! As always, previous newsletters and additional genealogy information is found on the Varner Family website.

<http://brucevarner.com/VarnerGenealogy.htm>

It is confirmed, the fellowship hall at the Macks Creek Baptist Church has again been reserved for the 2017 family reunion. It will be held on Saturday, May 27th.

We had a wonderful turnout last year and hope for even better, this year. So start making your plans to attend!

The holiday special offers through the various DNA testing companies (Family Tree DNA, Ancestry, 23 & Me) are now likely over. If you were thinking about submitting DNA or upgrading your already provided DNA, you might check into any discounts still available.....

QUESTIONS / NEWS

No questions this month.

George Varner of Missouri Direct Line DNA

No updates this month.

Riggs/Varner Connection

Now that the new year is here, I will be re-contacting our Riggs descendants in Washington state to see if I can again prod them to submit for DNA testing.

Finding Where Varner's & Riggs Ancestors Intersect

One of the reasons I am drawn towards genealogy is my love of history. Just knowing the names and dates of my ancestors, to me is only so interesting. What brings those names, dates, and places to life is the history that was occurring during that period of time nationally and in that specific local. This interest also sometimes helps one think through possibilities to help fill the gaps we have in our family genealogy knowledge.

Recently I discussed the need to study more about our families back east to help resolve the mysteries that stump us. With that in mind, this month I am discussing details of where our families are proven to have lived. By looking into how migrations occurred in that timeframe we might find a missing piece that would allow us to step back another

location or generation. At the very least it will help paint a better image in everyone's mind of how our people might have migrated in that time period. Let's start with the furthest back we can prove.

Did the Riggs and Varner families come across each other before Missouri?¹ Where did the William Varner and George Varner families split?²

Help in answering these questions might come from trying to understanding how each family settled as it arrived in the colonies, and how each family migrated along the east coast before venturing to our parts of the country.

I have illustrated those proven locations back east for our two Varner families, and for the Riggs family. To make this document easier to download, I have only embedded smaller images in this article itself. To see the larger version,

¹ Our Edmund⁵ Riggs g-grandfather James³ Riggs was one of the first settlers on land that is now Matamoras, Grandview Township, Washington Co. Ohio before it was a state. This land is located on the Ohio River just across the river from what is now West Virginia. James³ son Edmund⁴ settled across the river in Virginia (Now W. Virginia), Where Edmund⁴ had a son Edmund⁵, which is our Edmund that came to Missouri.

There was a Samuel Varner, household head of 9 people living in the same area as James³ in the 1820 census. It is not known if they were in anyway related to us.

² Remember that William Virgil Varner and Billy Joe Varner are a 4 deviation match via DNA. This means that the Most Recent Common Ancestor (MRCA) could easily have occurred generations before North Carolina.

you can click on the image and be taken directly to the full size version on the Varner Family Genealogy Website.

Much of the migration information I have used in preparing this article is the result of the hard work compiled several years ago by Beverly Whitaker. Although I do not know her personally, she lives in Kansas City. Her website is: <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~gentutor/trails.html>

We know that George Varner of Missouri was born in Oglethorpe County, Georgia.³ This is the farthest back we can say for sure that the George Varner of Missouri genetic line is known.

We know that William Varner (Great-Great-Grandfather of William Virgil Varner) is proven to have lived in Rowan Co. North Carolina.⁴

For the Riggs family we know that James¹ Riggs (Great-Great-Grandfather of Edmund⁵ Riggs of Missouri) is first found in the colonies in Maryland, south of what would become Washington DC

³ George Varner lists his home and place of birth as Oglethorpe Co. GA. on his 1810 US Army enlistment papers.

⁴ **John Varner** (1765-1826)

William Varner (3/20/1802, Rowan Co. NC.-

7/15/1871, Gibson Co. TN.)

William H. Sandy Varner (1836, NC.-????, Gibson Co. TN.)

George Washington Varner (1870, Tenn.-4/18/1949, Pawnee OK.)

William Roy Varner (3/11/1910, Leflore OK.-6/20/77, Pawnee OK.)

William Virgil Varner (Living)

(James¹ is also found before this in England, but that is a different story).

Earliest Known Varner's & Riggs Locations on the East Coast



The only timeline back east we know about George Varner of Missouri is that he said himself, he was born in Oglethorpe Co. Georgia ca. 1789. It is not currently known how long his family may have been in Georgia before this. We know that so far, NONE of the currently DNA tested individuals who can trace their Varner families to Oglethorpe Co. during that timeframe match George Varner DNA. It should also be mentioned that the DNA Haplogroup of our George Varner as compared to all those other tested Varner families is so different, so they could not possibly be of the same family.

William Varner of Rowan Co. North Carolina was born there in 1802.

There is much confusion about William's siblings and parents. Mostly because other researchers have in the past used proximity to link the Varner's in this part of North Carolina to the descendants of Johannes Hans Adam Werner. There are enough DNA tested descendants of Hans to conclude that William is NOT descended from Hans. But previous conclusions concerning who all are Hans children, make it hard to confirm the siblings and parents for William Varner of North Carolina.

Cheryl Varner Walker concludes that the John Varner family of Rowan Co. is in fact the family of William. And that John² Varner is in fact the son of John¹ Varner of Maryland, and not the son of Hans. I believe she is correct, but it would help to locate a direct male descendant of this John² Varner family for DNA testing to settle the matter.

Assuming the above assumption is correct, William's sister Nancy (1st daughter of John²) was born in North Carolina in 1785 so it is believed that the family was in Rowan Co. at least by that year.

The main purpose of this discussion is to explain how these three families may have migrated to their earliest proven locations.

In the colonies roads were built to facilitate land movement between those colonies as land opportunities opened

up. As would be expected, people settled on the coast. Over the colonial years and as more people arrived in North America, settlements were opened every further inland. Once more than a few people settled an area, a road or path was required for trade and travel between areas.

I have listed some of those roadways that were close to the locations we know our ancestors migrated.

In the very early years of the colonies there was only the King's Road that hugged the coastline to attached the southern colonies. The problem with this path was that being on or near the coastline in title basin country, there were continual floods causing the roads to be unpassable much of the time. The solution, spurred by settlement, was roadways further inland.

One early such path was Fall Line Road. The "Fall Line" was that place back from the coast where the land became higher than in the title basin counties along the coast. Such location allowed such roads to be passable almost year round.

Fall Line Road⁵



The start of Fall Line Road occurred near Fredericksburg, VA. It travelled south and west through: Richmond, VA., Petersburg, VA., Warrenton, NC., Raleigh, NC (Wake C.H.), Cheraw, SC., Camden, SC., and on to Augusta, GA. Beginning about 1735, this roadway progressed over time to Georgia.

Next is the Upper Road which travel right though the Rowan Co. North Carolina area settled by the William Varner family.

Upper Road⁶



The start of Upper Road was also near Fredericksburg, VA. It then travelled south and west through: Hillsboro, NC., Salisbury, NC., Charlotte, NC., Spartanburg, SC., and Greenville, SC. Beginning about 1740, this roadway progressed through inland South Carolina.

The Riggs family took a different route. Rather than the paths south, they chose west through Pennsylvania. Moving from Maryland to settle in Pennsylvania, before traveling on to what is now West Virginia.

⁵ For more details about Fall Line Road (Beverly Whitaker)
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/%7Egentutor/FallLine.pdf>

⁶ For more details about Upper Road (Beverly Whitaker)
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/%7Egentutor/UpperRd.pdf>

Pennsylvania Road⁷



The start of the Pennsylvania Road was in Philadelphia. It then travelled west across Pennsylvania through: Lancaster, PA., Harrisburg, PA., Chambersburg, PA., Ft. Loudon, PA., Ft. Bedford, PA., Ft. Ligonier, PA., and to Ft. Duquesne (Pittsburgh) PA. Beginning about 1725, this roadway progressed west to Pittsburgh in the 1790's.

I have thrown in here info about the Great Valley Road (Shenandoah Valley) and the Wilderness Trail (Cumberland Gap Trail) only because many, many folks migrating to Kentucky and Tennessee used this path. We do not know who of our families may have used these roads.

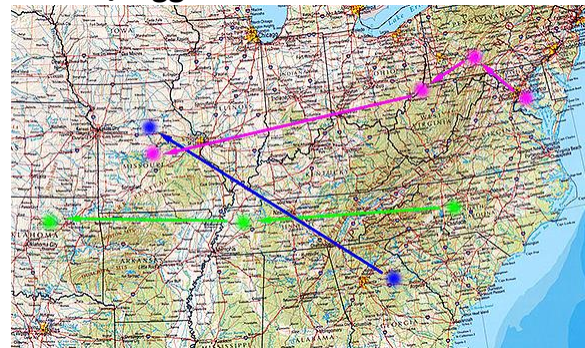
⁷ For more details about Pennsylvania Road (Beverly Whitaker)
http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/%7Egentutor/Pa_Rd.pdf

Shenandoah Valley & Cumberland Gap⁸



We know the general timeframes that the families traveled west, though not the specific paths used for those travels.

Varner/Riggs East to West



⁸ For more details about Shenandoah Valley & Cumberland Gap Roads (Beverly Whitaker)
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/%7Egentutor/Valley.pdf>
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/%7Egentutor/Wild.pdf>

Studying the paths likely traveled by our ancestors can shed light on details that ultimately help us piece together the puzzle of family ancestors. It just requires legwork (And some luck) to fill in the blanks!

Let's make it a wonderful year !!!.....

Bruce Varner