

Chapter 1. Before Henry

History of Arringtons

We have traced the Arrington surname, as others before us, to the Atlantic shores of Virginia, but no further. Currently, the country of origin remains a mystery. Various respected Arrington researcher each have their own theories concerning the origin, some with promising circumstantial support.

In Richard Lee Arrington's book, *Bound By Blood*, he states facts in his later genealogical charts that we do not agree with, but overall he has done the most extensive amount of published research into the early Arrington family genealogy that we have found. His theory of the surname origin leads to England, but with a different spelling of the name, Ermington, possibly after a major road called Ermine Street, near the present day town of Arrington, Cambridgeshire, England (2).

The *Arrington Family In America*, is a paper and genealogical chart by John Milton Arrington, a Texas cousin. John is very busy searching, collecting, and comparing research notes and charts, in an attempt to weed out the facts that are available to date, as well as find clues to further the research for us all. He has become a great source of reference and strongly debates the Arrington surname originating from Arrington, England (1).

A paper written by Lawson B. Arrington, *I Want To Know*, is based on years of research of the history of the Arringtons and their surname. He too, found no recorded ancestral ties to the town of Arrington, England, and is still searching for the Arrington roots (3).

The latest theory from Uel Harrington, *The Early Harrington Family*, gives a good debate that the Arrington surname was actually Harrington, with Norse (Vikings) origins. The Viking regions, along with many others throughout history, became English territories (10).

The loss of the Arrington trail across the ocean seems to stem from the phonetic spelling of the surname upon arrival to America. Since words and names were spelled the way they sounded to the writer, there are many spellings of the name, sometimes within a single document. Some of these variations include Arrenton, Ardington, Arlington, Harrington (with a silent 'H'), and many more.

In other words, the presently accepted spelling of Arrington cannot be found documented in other countries before the 1600s, despite our early ancestors' birth records stating their place of birth as England. So, it is widely assumed England to be the actual origin, just no proof to substantiate the claim just yet. The assumption that Arringtons naturally came from the town of Arrington, England, proved to be false based on the findings of the afore mentioned researchers. The Town records show no one with the Arrington surname ever living there until recent times.

Our Arrington lineage, as far back as we have been able to trace, starts with William Arrington at the Isle of Wight, Virginia. We believe him to be the first of our line here in America, but are still verifying dates and relationships. See Appendix A: Maps for additional information.

The following is an summary of the generations leading from William to Henry Wise Arrington.

Generation 1:

William (1662 - 1725) from the Isle of Wight, Virginia, was a large property owner and a man of some prominence. In 1683, he married Elizabeth Pedin (b. 1665), and had eight children.

Generation 2:

Benjamin (b. 1709), son of William and Elizabeth, married Fanny Hunt and had at least one child, and named him William.

Generation 3:

William (1730 - 1790) was the son of Benjamin and Fanny, married Catherine Stone in 1754, and had at least three children. They made their home in Halifax County, Virginia.

Generation 4:

John R. (1757 - 1837) was the son of William and Catherine and lived in Luenberg and Halifax Counties of Virginia. He had five children with his unknown first wife, and later had nine children with his second wife Susannah Vaughan (1778 - 1872), whom he married in 1790, also of Halifax County.

Generation 5:

Thomas (b. 1770), son of John and Susannah, married Emaline "Millie" Coleman of Halifax County, Virginia, in 1791. They resided in Franklin County, with their four children.

Generation 6:

Charles (1801 - 1878), son of Thomas and Millie, married Nancy A. Brooks (1816 - 1857) and had nine children. After Nancy's death, Charles married Sara Jenkins (1831 - 1911) later that year and had three children before he died. They also, raised their family in Franklin County.

Generation 7:

Henry "Wise" (1860 - 1949) was Charles and Sara's only son together. He married Elizabeth Craft (1858 - 1899) in 1881, and had nine children. After Elizabeth's death, he married Alva May Thomas (1880 - 19) of Bland County, Virginia, in 1900, and they had nine children as well.

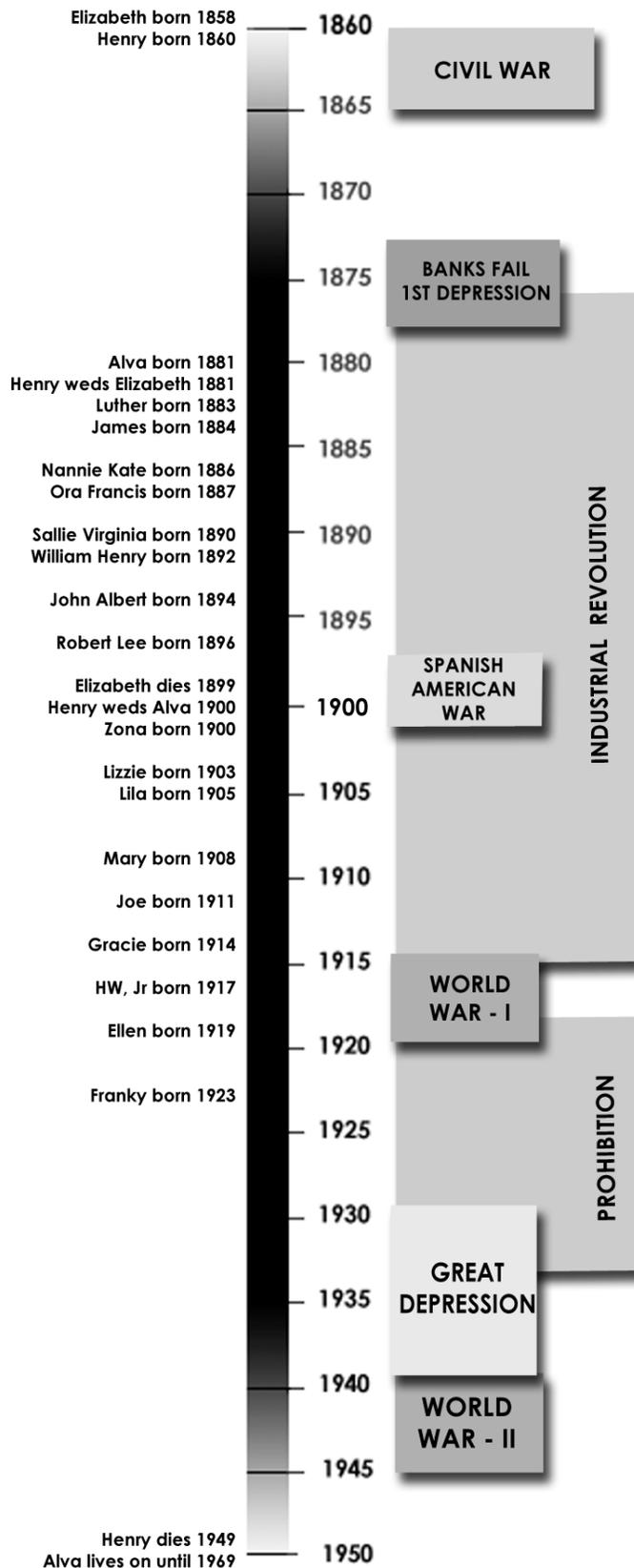
The following pages concern the life of Henry, his two wives, and his large family of children.

See Appendix A: Reference Maps.

See Appendix B: Document (for Pedigree & Descendants Charts).

Chapter 2. Henry's Time...

In America



To understand the culture affecting the day-to-day lives of our ancestors at the turn of the century, we need to take a brief look at history in America.

In 1900 the United States was in the midst of the Industrial Revolution and the largest agricultural and steel producers in the world markets.

Homes were being wired for the use of electricity, the paperclip was a new invention, the gasoline engine was well established, the Wright Brothers were trying their wings and motion pictures were just beginning. William McKinley was President and the nation was a leading world power.

The U.S. population was 76 million, a man's life expectancy was just over 47 years, and the average yearly income was \$1, 011. A new house cost around \$3,400, and a new car just under \$1,000. A loaf of bread was 3¢, gasoline was 5¢ per gallon, and milk was more than a 25¢ per gallon (13).

The promise of work, land and opportunity prompted migrations to the West. Travel was still primarily by horseback, wagon and railroad, so moving a family a great distance was a huge undertaking. Some moved short distance to live with or near family members already established in 'boom towns'.

The 'boom towns' were created by the access and convenience of new railroad lines by opening up new markets for raw materials from mining, timbering and the steel industry, as well as personal travel.

In the Virginias

Southern Virginia was agricultural and after the Civil War many families lost their properties and fortunes. Some moved away, some started over again and some just survived one day to the next. The southwestern area of Virginia had maintained the pig-iron sources for the Civil War era and were now “worked out” or replaced by northern iron-ore which was cheaper to ship to the steel mills.

West Virginia succeeded from Virginia just before the end of the Civil War, becoming a state in 1863. The Southern part of West Virginia was busy furnishing coal for the growing steel industry. There were many support businesses surrounding the coal mines that also needed workers. Many Virginians made the journey with their families through the rough terrain of the Appalachian Mountains with the hope of finding work and owning land to farm and timber.



The Mercer County portion of an 1895 West Virginia map, from the Rand McNally & Company, US Atlas.



The Bland County portion of an 1895 Virginia map, from the Rand McNally & Company, US Atlas.

The maps show Mercer County, West Virginia and Bland County, Virginia areas during 1895. Not much difference between then and now, but a short time before Mercer and Bland were both part of Wythe County, Virginia (14).

The maps also show the major towns of interest at the time. These towns were considered ‘boom towns’ because of mining, lumber, commerce and travel routes. Some of these towns today are only remnants of their past activity and population.



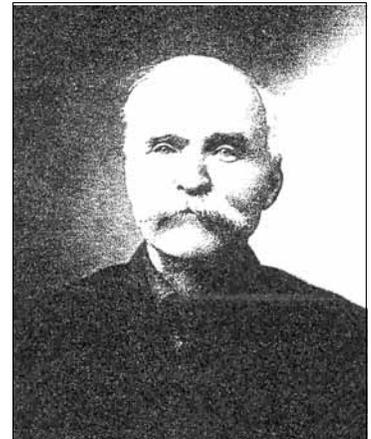
The Franklin County portion of an 1895 Virginia map, from the Rand McNally & Company, US Atlas

See Appendix A: Maps (for more information).

Henry's Siblings

Henry's father Charles (1801 - 1878) was first married to Nancy A. Brooks (1816 - 1857) on March 30, 1830, in Franklin County, Virginia. It is believed that Charles was 29 years old, and Nancy as 14 when they married, based on the 1850 US Census listing Charles as 49 and Nancy as 34. There is some confusion about when Nancy died, so our best estimate is in early 1857, at age 41. Charles and Nancy had nine children during their marriage:

	CHILD	BIRTH - DEATH	SPOUSE
1	Martha Jane	1831 - 1868	1) William Mosley 2) Billy Perdue
2	Nathaniel	1833 - ????	Sarah Blankenship
3	Lemuel L.	1834 - ????	-
4	John L.	1837 - ????	Lucinda Overfelt
5	Robert A.	1839 - 1893	Susie Ashworth
6	Charles C.	1843 - 1935	Sara E. Bell
7	William Jessie	1845 - 1920	1) Christina A. Debolt 2) Alieann M. Wigginton
8	Daniel J.	1849 - 1908	Susan J. Williams
9	Nancy A.	1854 - ????	1) John W. Brooks 2) Nathan Altice



William Jessie Arrington,
Henry's half brother.

Charles married Sara E. Jenkins December 30, 1857, in Franklin County. Charles died sometime in May of 1878, at age 77. They had the following three children:

	CHILD	BIRTH - DEATH	SPOUSE
1	Susan E.	1859 - ????	-
2	Henry Wise	1860 - 1949	1) Elizabeth G. Craft 2) Alva May Thomas
3	Sarah Frances	1873 - 1941	Lemuel T. Harmon



Henry and sister Sarah "Sis"

Chapter 3. First Family

Henry & Elizabeth

Henry Wise Arrington was born February 9, 1860, to Charles and Sara E. (Jenkins) Arrington, in Glade Hill, Franklin County, Virginia. Henry was one of three children from his father's second marriage, and Sarah's only son. Henry was also married twice and had a total of eighteen children, nine from each marriage. He died April 18, 1949, in Duhring, Mercer County, West Virginia, and was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in Bluewell, West Virginia.

Henry's first wife Elizabeth G. Craft was born June 5, 1858 to James D. and Mary Jane (Harmon) Craft, in Franklin County, Virginia. She had a twin sister named Victoria, two more sisters, and two brothers.

Henry and Elizabeth were married at her home near Glade Hill, December 1, 1881, by Reverend T. C. Goggins.



Henry, Elizabeth and their nine children moved from Franklin County to live in this little log cabin around 1897.

The cabin is located on the Bane property on the north side of Big Walker Mountain, a few miles south of the community of Crandon, in Bland County, Virginia.

It is uncertain when these photos were taken. Only a few logs of the cabin remain today.

It is thought that Elizabeth may have had a 10th child that died just prior to her death from a stroke in March of 1899.

She was buried somewhere near the log home, the area now called Arrington's Nob.

After Elizabeth died Henry stayed on at the cabin until he remarried in 1900. He then moved his family and new wife to West Virginia.