

DECK HISTORY Research in America on the Deck family has been difficult because of the many variant spellings of the name in the records, (Dek, Dak, Dacke, Dick, Tack, etc.) However, the written history of the Decks has been traced back prior to the year 1390 to the Province of Wurttemberg, Germany. The Archives of Wurttemberg* include the following, as translated from German: "25 May 1390, Balingen, Burklin der Deck, citizen of Ebigen, and sister Agnes in der Klaus sold ...their portion of ..estate near Weilheim ..." Many years after that record the Lutheran families were being persecuted by the French Catholic King Louis XIV and many of them, including our Deck families, went to Saxony, Germany, where they were offered the opportunity of settling in the New World by the Protestant English King George II. Early ship records** show that the first Decks to arrive in America were Johan Nicholas and family, who came on the St. ANDREWS GALLEY on 12 September 1734. Matias, apparently a brother of Johan Nicholas, followed on the HARLE with his family, arriving on 1 September 1736, at age 37. Simon, who was also probably a brother, arrived on the WINTER GALLEY on 5 September 1738 at age 35. Johan Nicholas settled in Berks Co. Pennsylvania, where he evidently remained. When Matias arrived we can surmise that he visited Johan briefly but he soon went on to the coastal area of North Carolina where he fought as a Corporal with the King's troops in the Spanish Alarm of 1748 during the Colonial Wars. *** The Colonial records of that conflict list Adam and John Deck, but it appears that Matias was the Adam on the record (perhaps his middle name). Also it appears that the John Deck was the Simon on the ship list (again perhaps his second given name). This is a good example of the many confusing records of the era. Additional notes: Johan Heinrich Deck, a son of Johan Nicholas, left Berks County, Pennsylvania before 1759 and settled in present Rockingham County, Virginia. His son Michael was born there. This Michael, who fought in the Continental Line from Virginia in the Revolutionary War**** is often confused with another Michael who lived in Washington County, Virginia. Also, the family of a Johan Frederick Deck has been well researched by Schuyler Bossman, of Berks County, and he has published a book on Deck which is in the Library of Congress. ***** (1) The name Deck is of German Dutch origin and means, one who covers roofs with tile, straw, or slate: one who came from Deck or Decker, the names of places in Germany. ***** * Report from Wurttemberg State Archives to W.S. Grimes of Alpena, Michigan Strassburger and Hinke, 1-137, 1-156, 1-199 Records of Amos Best, Bessemer City, North Carolina DAR entry #114274 and Tennessee Roster of Soldiers, DAR Library of Congress #CS 71.D295 1972 929'.2'0973

THE DECK FAMILY HISTORY The beginning of the DECK history concerning the Coat of Arms, the German roots, and the arrival of the three brothers to the United States in the 1730's, and most of the information on ADAM, JACOB, and ISAAC DECK was given to me by Merrill Deck of Haysville, Kansas. He is a third cousin to HARRY and ROBERT DECK. Our lines split with the ABRAHAM and JOHN DECK buried in Eden Township Cemetery, Milton, Kansas. ABRAHAM and JOHN were brothers, sons of ISAAC. The lines continue as

follows. ABRAHAM & JOHN C. & EDGAR & MERRILL ISAAC & JOHN & MILLARDF. & JOHNF. & HARRY My research at the Kansas State Historical Society Research Library took me back as far as ISAAC and JACOB DECK, of Tennessee, but all I had were names. Merrill's information verified and added to what I had found. I thank him very much for all his help and information, and was delighted to get to meet him. In researching events and people back in the times when record keeping was somewhat inefficient, some questions always arise. Some events have written documents to validate them and can be done with relatively little research. However, many events take a long period of time to verify, if ever. In the case of the three brothers Johan Nicholas, Matias, and Simon, there is some evidence from information found in the Latter Days Saints Library that Matias is the father of ADAM DECK. If ADAM was born in 1737 as indicated, he can not be the Matias who arrived in 1736. In a book titled 1983 Passenger and Immigrant List Supplement, an Adam Deck arrived in North Carolina in the year 1738, and a John Deck arrived in North Carolina in the year 1748. The 1991 Passenger and Immigrant List Supplement lists an ADAM DECK arriving in North Carolina in 1760. From a report sent to Merrill Deck from the Sullivan County Library in Blountville, Tennessee, the following is the best we know of our first known ancestor to the Colonies, ADAM DECK. There is some question whether ADAM arrived in the colonies as an infant or as a young man ADAM DECK was either born in Saxony, Germany in 1736/7 and arrived in the colonies as an infant with his parents MATHIAS AND MARY who arrived on the Harle on September 1, 1736, or was married in Saxony in 1760 prior to coming to America as a young man. If he arrived as an infant, it is possible that he is the ADAM that was baptised in Pennsylvania in 1737. It has not been confirmed as yet whether MATHIAS and MARY are indeed his parents. MA TRIAS was born in Germany in 1699/1700 and after coming to America fought with the king's troops in the Spanish uprising of 1748. Whichever the case, ADAM and his wife, SUSANNAH who was born in Saxony in 1739, did arrive in North Carolina sometime prior to the year 1767. This can be verified as ADAM, on April 25, 1767, received 100 acres of land in Mecklenburgh on the east side of the Catawba River and on November 14, 1771, ADAM took 282 acres in Tryon on the branch of the Middle Fork of the Killians Creek. The children of ADAM and SUSANNAH were born in Lincoln County, North Carolina. (1) ADAM and his family must have left North Carolina sometime in 1781. It's possible that ADAM DECK was a Tory who aided Cornwallis when he passed through Lincoln County. Jacob Forney, a prominent citizen of the area, and a firm and zealous Whig, forced ADAM to leave the area or risk being killed. (2) Some of the records at the LDS Library also indicate that the Deck family had Tory leanings. ADAM and SUSANNAH DECK were next verified as being in Washington County, Virginia as they had 41 acres of land surveyed on the waters of Cove Creek and Walker's Mountain in the year 1791. Then on October 1, 1795, ADAM bought 126 acres of land from a Joseph Hensley. (3) ADAM DECK died in 1816 and SUSANNAH DECK died in 1817. They are both buried in the Deck Cemetery in Washington County, Virginia. (4) One of the descendants, Doug Miller was the last reported resident

of the Deck Farm. (I) The Decks of this time and the lands where they lived lie in three different states: North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee. However, these same three states border each other so it appears that their residences in Lincoln County, North Carolina; Washington County, Virginia; and Sullivan County, Tennessee are within 100 miles of each other. Trying to pin them down on the various state census records is quite difficult as they were moving around in these areas. This area was also in much turmoil at this time. (5) The Decks were German Lutherans as were many of the settlers in Washington County in the 1800's. They remained together, family ties were strong. They were plain people, honest, conscientious and religious. They often formed their own churches. The paternal dwelling almost invariably passed to one child, and the other children erected homes near by. (6) JACOB DECK was the eldest son of ADAM and SUSANNAH DECK. He was born in Lincoln County, North Carolina on March 28, 1762. JACOB would have been about 19 years of age when his father left North Carolina, but he may at some time have been a resident of Pennsylvania, and served from that state in the Revolutionary War. (7) ADAM's will, dated July 3, 1806 named both JACOB and his brother, Michael as executors of his estate, but he bequeathed his plantation to Michael. (8) JACOB had established his own farm in Sullivan County, Tennessee sometime following the War and before the time his father's will was written. This is evidenced by the birthdates of his children who were all born in Sullivan County, Tennessee. Records indicate that ELIZABETH is the mother of his ten children. There is no information as to ELIZABETH's birth or death, or when and where they were married. After her death, JACOB married Christine Booher, and then Mary Booher. JACOB DECK died in Sullivan County, Tennessee on May 18, 1838 and is buried on his farm there. (1) ISAAC DECK and his twin brother Abraham were born to JACOB and ELIZABETH on January 1, 1800 in Sullivan County, Tennessee. On December 6, 1818, ISAAC married HANNAH ISLEY in Sullivan County. She, too, had been born in Sullivan County on May 8, 1798. Records show that JACOB DECK purchased land from HANNAH ISLEY on May 20, 1816. (9) ISAAC left Tennessee in the fall of 1821 and after stopping one year on a farm not far from Lexington, Kentucky, went to Illinois at the end of the year 1822. ISAAC and his brother, John, went to join their brother, Jacob, who was the first permanent settler in the small community of Fosterburg, Illinois. The first graveyard in Fosterburg Township was located on the Jacob Deck farm. ISAAC bought a farm and settled on a place on Wood River, 3 miles northeast of Upper Alton, Madison Co. He lived there until 1853. He and his wife were connected with the Christian Church and his house near Alton was listed as being a stop on the church circuit. (1,7) ISAAC and HANNAH had eleven children. On July 24, 1840, HANNAH died and was buried in the Deck cemetery on the Jacob Deck farm at Fosterburg. After HANNAH's death, ISAAC married Sarah Senecker. She died September 11, 1843. He then married Leodicy D. Cawood March 8, 1846, and they had six children, making ISAAC the father of 17 children. In 1853 he moved to Gillespie Township in Macoupin County, Illinois, just north of Madison County. Following Leodicy's death on September 5, 1859, it is believed that ISAAC married Catherine Smith sometime in the 1860's. (1) ISAAC died

in Macoupin County March 3, 1873. ISAAC DECK was an industrious and energetic man, attended closely to his business affairs, and led the quiet and respected life of a farmer, without any wish to engage in public affairs. (7) JOHN E. DECK, son of ISAAC and HANNAH, was born in Alton on May 1, 1832 while the family resided on WoodRiver. (1) At the time his father located there the Wood River settlements marked the frontier, all the region to the north being uninhabited except by the Indians, with perhaps now and then in this wild waste a solitary pioneer, who had ventured to establish himself remote from civilization. His father gave him and the others every opportunity in his power of going to school, but the schools were of so inferior a character, and compared so poorly with the facilities of the present day, that he had but little chance to obtain a thorough education. (7) JOHN DECK's obituary indicates that he was married three times. The marriage of JOHN DECK to ISABELLA HALL on February 21, 1855 is recorded in Macoupin County, Illinois. (10) To this union six children were born. MILLARD FILLMORE, James M., Cordelia C., Mary E., Florence, and Lewis. (12,13) ISABELL died on April 17, 1868. JOHN next married Susie Droke, March 4, 1869. Three children were born to them but only Clara B. survived past childhood. Susie died on August 29, 1873. JOHN married his third wife, Mary F. Compton, on April 25, 1875. JOHN and Mary came to SumnerCounty in the spring of 1884 after his son MILLARD F. had moved his family here in 1883. (13) He and MILLARD FILLMORE DECK are listed in the 1886 SumnerCounty directory. JOHN's brother Abraham brought his family to the area in 1888. (15) JOHN died March 31, 1902, and is buried in EdenCemetery, Sumner County, Kansas, next to his brother and sister-in-law, Abraham and Mary Deck. (16) The EdenTownshipCemetery records lists his name as JOHN E. DECK. (17) JOHN and Mary Deck are found on the 1900 Kansas State Census of Sumner County, ConwayTownship and JOHN's obituary states that they were still married at the time of his death. Nothing more is known about his wife, Mary, or when and where she may have died. MILLARD FILLMORE DECK was born February 12, 1856, in Clyde, Macoupin County, Illinois, a year after JOHN and ISABELL were married. He was probably the first born of JOHN DECK's children. He was married to SARAH ELLEN BERRY (BERRIE) on January 15, 1879, in Montgomery County, Illinois. SARAH was born December 18, 1854 at Litchfield, Illinois, the daughter of WILLIAM and MARY JANE (MITTS) BERRY. (14) To this union were born eight children. Two of them died as infants. The tombstone at EdenCemetery reads: Children of M.F. and S.B. Deck Jessie - Estella. (This was a joint stone and the dates were too weathered to read, however, information from the Deck family bible given to me by Eva Rankin tells us more about these two children.) (16) His six surviving children were: William H., and Elsie, both born in Montgomery County, Ill; JOHN FILLMORE, Mary, Errett, and Alford, all born after they moved to Kansas. (11) MILLARD and SARAH came to Kansas in 1883 and purchased the farm in EdenTownship, SumnerCounty. They raised their family here and lived on the farm until they moved to 319 S. Dodge Ave, Wichita in 1908. They helped organize the Christian Church at Conway Springs and were also charter members of the Norwich Christian Church. MILLARD died January 13, 1926 and SARAH

died May 25, 1931. Both are buried at EdenCemetery, Sumner County, Kansas, close to the family farm where they lived for twenty-five years. (13,16) JOHN FILLMORE DECK was the third child of MILLARD and SARAH DECK. He was born on the family farm in EdenTownship, SumnerCounty on September 2, 1885. He grew up helping on the family farm. Because the boys were needed to help run the farm, he received little formal schooling. He was able to attend school only three months out of a year and was able to eventually complete school through the third grade. (11) After his parents moved to Wichita, JOHN and his brother, Errett, shared the responsibility of the family farm. He lived there with Errett and his wife, Mabel. In 1911, JOHN F. is listed as living with M.F. and SARAH at their home in Wichita. His occupation is listed as a helper. This may be about the time that he was working on the construction of the Wichita Forum. A short time later, he was a partner with his brother, Will, at the blacksmith shop in Milton. Will also did threshing throughout the area. JOHN met TRESSA SPORE at the last band concert of the season in Conway Springs on September 21, 1916. On December 23, he gave her a ring, but did not ask her to marry him until March 29, 1917. The ring must have been a Christmas/Birthday present. JOHN and TRESSA were married on Saturday afternoon June 2, 1917 in Wichita, Sedgwick Co., Kansas. (18) They first resided on the farm near Anness but soon moved to Milton. To them were born two sons: John Robert, and HARRY MILLARD. In November, 1917, JOHN joined his brother Will Deck at the blacksmith shop in Milton. It was at this time that JOHN became the Oakland Distributor and started the auto mechanic shop and garage. (19) He built the Milton house between the time Robert was born in 1918 and when HARRY was born in 1920. In 1923, JOHN became the soleowner of the J. F. Deck Garage and Blacksmith Shop. JOHN served many years as a deputy sheriff of EdenTownship. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge of Norwich, Kansas, and the Midian Shrine. After his retirement he and his wife moved to Prairie Homestead, 1605 May Street in Wichita. JOHN DECK died of cancer, July 16, 1969 in Wichita after a lengthy illness. He is buried in EdenCemetery, Milton, Sumner County, Kansas next to his wife, TRESSA, who died July 20, 1976. HARRY MILLARD DECK, younger son of JOHN FILLMORE and TRESSA SPORE DECK was born December 24, 1920, in the house at Milton, Sumner County, Kansas. He grew up in Milton, going to school and helping his father at his blacksmith shop. He and his brother played football and basketball on the school teams. After his graduation from MiltonHigh School in 1938, he attended WichitaUniversity in Wichita, Kansas. He graduated with a B.A. in Business Economics and as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Army (ROTC) on June 2, 1942. He met FREEMA GRACE LYON, of Wichita, while attending the university and they were married on Sunday afternoon, April 11, 1943. HARRY and FREEMA made their first home in Gainesville, Texas while he was stationed at CampHowze. He was promoted to 1st Lieutenant February 20, 1943, and to Captain November 27, 1943. HARRY DECK served in World War II, with the 334th Infantry, 84th Division in the Battle of Germany. He served as an Anti-Tank Company Commander during the Battle of the Bulge, and was awarded the Bronze Star Medal. He returned in 1946 following the war and was

appointed to the rank of Major in September 1947 while continuing to serve in the Army Reserves. He was Honorably Discharged from the Army on April 1, 1953. When he returned, he worked for his father at the blacksmith shop in Milton until he took a job as salesman for Riggs Plumbing Co. in Wichita where he worked until his retirement. HARRY and FREEMA bought the house at 2421 Wilma, Wichita on January 28, 1950. They have resided there since that time. They have four daughters: Deborah Ann, Janet Sue, Tressa Jane, and Freema Yvonne. (20) HARRY was an active member of the Masonic Lodge of Norwich, Kansas, the Midian Shrine, Sertoma Club, and Hillside Christian Church in Wichita. He was always ready, willing, and able to help others when his help was needed. He, like his DECK ancestors before him, was an intelligent, industrious, and energetic man. He inherited their pioneer spirit and talents. He built his own canoe and enjoyed camping in the great outdoors whenever able. He was a gentle, quiet man with a strong faith, who was loved and respected by his family and friends. HARRY M. DECK died quietly, after a long illness with cancer on August 19, 1981 at WesleyHospital, Wichita, Kansas. His wife, FREEMA, was at his side. He is buried at OldMissionCemetery, Wichita, SedgwickCounty, KansasReferences and Writings for the DECK FAMILY History (1) Information provided by Merrill Deck, Haysville, Kansas, third cousin to Harry and Robert Deck. (2) Biographical Sketch of Jacob Forney, Historical Sketches of North Carolina, Wheeler, p. 243. (975.6/W56)* (3) Deeds from Washington County, Virginia, from information provided by Merrill Deck, Haysville, Kansas. (4) Deck-Cemetery, High on a Windy Hill, McConnell, p. 417-418. (929.3/V81/W27ce)* (5) State ofFrankiin, World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. 7, 1978, p. 417. (6) The German Settlers in Lincoln County and Western North Carolina, The James Sprunt Historical Publications, Vol. 11, No.2, p. 29-32. (975.6/N81u/V.9-12)* (7) Biographical Sketch of Abraham Deck, HistolY ofMacoupin County, Illinois, Brink, McDonough Co., Philadelphia, 1974, p. 202, (977.311-M238h)* (8) Will of Adam Deck from Washington County, Virginia, from information provided by Merrill Deck. (9) FirstLand Owners of Sullivan County, Tennessee, Mrs. John Vineyard, 1974, p.25. (929.3/T256/Su54L)* (10) Marriage Record, Macoupin County, Illinois, John Deck and Issabella Hall (11) 1900 Census, State of Kansas, SumnerCounty, ConwayTownship and EdenTownship. (12) Information provided by Lucy Deck, wife of Darrell Deck, grandson of William Howard Deck. (13) Obituaries of Millard Fillmore and Sarah Ellen Deck, and John [E.] Deck (14) Millard Fillmore Deck, Sarah Berrie Deck, State of Kansas Death Certificates (15) Obituaries of Abraham and Mary Deck (16) All dates from Eden Township Cemetery, Milton, Sumner County, Kansas were copied from the family tombstones by Freema Deck, Janet Lewis, and Debby and Jenny Butts in July 1992. (17) Eden Township Cemetery, Sumner County, Kansas Compiled by Carl Simpson, 1985 Wichita Public Library, R978.187SIM (18) Information taken from Diary of Tressa Spore Deck. (19) They remember WHEN ..., Continental Oil Company "Red Triangle" Magazine, Summer, 1952. (20) Information provided by Freema L. Deck, Wichita. * Call numbers of reference books located at the KansasStateHistoricalSocietyResearchCenter and Library. From The Annals of Lincoln County, North Carolina, by Sherrill, I found this

short description of what life was probably like for our ancestors. "The pioneer settlers of this Section were hardy and brave. Those who crossed the Catawba found no shelter but a wintry sky and the cold stars looked down pitilessly upon them as the howling wolves serenaded them through the lonely nights. We can never know the sacrifices those men made nor the suffering they endured, but the soil was watered by the tears and enriched by the graves of their women. "The primitive life of the pioneers in the wilderness and the privations and perils they were forced to endure developed in them the spirit of manly independence and self-reliance, which gave them a vision of human equality devoid of the caste spirit. The original settlers were in the main plain people, honest, conscientious and religious. In the old country they had been oppressed by the government and persecuted by the church, so that they braved the perils of the sea to find freedom in the western wilds. They were strong-minded and untrained but here they found opportunity for the development of their latent powers. There were no principal citizens, for every citizen was one. They were men of iron, with faith and fortitude. It is such as these that history should magnify, They hewed down the forests, developed the plains, fought our battles and taught their children to fear God, and to tell the truth. We can never pay these men and women the debt we owe for their love and sacrifice. "These pioneers, as Bancroft says: 'came from civilized life and scattered among forests; hermits with wives and children, resting upon the bosom of nature in perfect harmony with the wilderness and the gentle climate; careless of religious sects and unmolested by oppressive laws, they enjoyed liberty of conscience and personal independence, freedom of the forest and the river. The children of nature listened of the inspirations of nature. They desired no greater happiness than they enjoyed.' "In the solitude of the wilderness they were self-dependent. When their rights were imperiled they resisted taxation without representation in the days which tried men's souls. They faced perils, endured suffering and conquered difficulties. They were apt scholars in the school of self-denial. They accepted a hard situation with the spirit that would put to shame the 'tenderfoot' of the twentieth century, who, living in a period of extravagance and self-indulgence, knows nothing of sacrificial devotion to duty as the fathers did. When the hardy pioneers first crossed the Catawba, most probably in winter, they faced the pitiless elements with faith and courage, built rude cabins and lacked every comfort which their children have today. The furnishings were scant, and generally the cabin had but one room in which they cooked, ate, slept and entertained, and they lived on such food as the wilderness supplied. They had burned every bridge behind them. They were here to stay and fight back the savages, the wild beasts and the unkindly elements which were to be conquered before they could find peace and security. "On the journey from the far north they brought meager supplies for they had only pack horses to carry the burdensome loads, and when they settled west of the Catawba, the cabins were built without nails, the cracks were daubed with mud, split slabs were used for roofing with stones to weight them down lest the roof be torn away by storm and wind, the doors were secured by wooden hinges and there was no glass for the windows. The houses were built in valleys close to the spring. They hewed down the forests, built rail fences to protect crops

from cattle and hogs, worked through the long days and kept watch by night, lest prowling savages might do them violence. "The women endured hardships even greater than the men, for they helped to clear the forests and work the crops, and besides performed all the household duties. They not only cooked the food, made the meagre garments, patched them often until they were as many colored as Joseph's coat, but they worked the garden, milked the cows, washed the clothes, worked the cotton patch and then with their fingers separated the cotton from the seed, spun the cotton and wool into thread and wove the thread into cloth for garments and blankets. Indeed the women worked at all tasks and never complained. It must have been one of like experience who wrote the old couplet: A man's work is from sun to sun, But a woman's work is never done. "These pioneer women were strangers to the modern beauty parlor and had no need for one for the sign of health was written upon their faces. They lived so close to nature that their ruddy cheeks bespoke their health and vigor. They exercised the body, lived in the great out of doors, breathed invigorating air, basked in the life giving sunshine and had poor reason to use lip sticks or other superficial methods of converting ugliness into beauty. There were no stores, and fashion plates were never seen outside the seaport towns. The pioneers left the comforts of life to seek finally a better life. "On the frontier neighbors learned the meaning of neighborliness. They had log rollings, house raisings, cornshuckings and quilting parties, and those who refused to help in neighborly deeds lost caste. They were industrious and possessed varied gifts which served them well in their new environment. They had learned to work with their hands, There were blacksmiths, carpenters, cabinet makers, millwrights, tanners, shoemakers, saddlers, tailors, hatters, skilled workers in iron. These all worked their farms and also worked at their trades when needed. So the people were not only farmers but manufacturers from the start, and supplied their neighbors with such as they could produce by hand. Necessity being the mother of invention, it was wonderful how they found substitutes for many things. They used honey or sorghum for sugar, parched rye for coffee, ashes and waste grease combined were converted into soap. Corn and wheat were ground by hand and the people never heard of appendicitis. "Back of all their splendid traits there shone a radiant faith, for they brought the Church with them and never lost the habit of congregational worship. The Lutheran, German Reformed, Presbyterian and Baptist Churches were the first to be established, and later on the Episcopal and Methodist Churches all combined to preserve righteousness among the people. They had the Bible and worshipped God in the wilderness, 'where the groves were God's first temples.' "These first settlers were not ignorant people, even if, for lack of schools many of their children could not read. Many of the pioneers could write legibly and spell fairly well, but the children were busy at the task of keeping the wolf from the door, and had no teachers to instruct so that many really well to do, even as late as 1860, could not write their names. "