



## Orangeburgh Genealogical Society

### First Families of Orangeburgh District (SC)

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# KEITT

## (KEITH, KITTS, KITT)

### First Family Biography

#### FIRST GENERATION

1. George Keith was probably born before 1730.<sup>1</sup> The South Carolina Council records show that on Wednesday, 8 Jan 1752, the Council considered the 24 May 1751 petition of George Keate saying that he had arrived in Philadelphia with Captain Stedman, who took him to Philadelphia. He was then brought to South Carolina by Captain [James] Russell and traveled on to the Congarees to settle and work at his trade as a tanner. *[See Research Notes.]* He requested 50 acres of land near Saxe-Gotha Township and a town lot and the Bounty of Provision.<sup>2</sup> The request for land was approved, the bounty was not.

John George Kith then purchased, together with Christian Leitner, 100 acres in Saxe-Gotha Township on 19 and 20 Dec 1752 (Deed Book N-3, p. 431, 19 & 20 Dec. 1752.)<sup>3</sup> In 1759 George Keith and Michael Leitner transferred ownership of this property to Leitner alone.<sup>4</sup>

In 1759 George Keith married Elizabeth Gallman [Coleman]. This is documented in a 1762 deed from George Keith and his wife Elizabeth to Henry Gallman, Jr., planter, of Saxe-Gotha Township (Book Y-Y, p. 551-555, 19 Jan 1762, Release).<sup>5</sup> The deed notes that the land was conveyed to Keith in consideration of Keith's marriage to Gallman's daughter, Elizabeth, on 15 Jan 1759.

In 1761 George Keith, tanner, purchased 200 acres originally granted to John Jacob Riemensperger from John and Elizabeth Fraser (Deed Book C-3, p. 101, 4 & 5 Sep 1761, Lease and Release).<sup>6</sup> George Keith's father-in-law Henry Gallman witnessed the document with his mark <HG>.

On 7 Jan 1767 George Keith and Elizabeth Coleman administered the estate of Keziah Coleman of SaxeGotha Township as next of kin.<sup>7</sup> Among other things, this documents the use of the anglicized surname "Coleman" for the family of Henry Gallman, Jr. *[See Research Notes.]*

In 1768 George Keith was a founding Elder of the German Congregation of the Dissenting Protestants in Saxe-Gotha Township, a Reformed congregation. He is identified in a deed "*Gift in Trust. John Gallman, of Saxe-Gotha Township, Berkeley Co., for good & pious considerations, to Jacob Theyler, George Keith, John Gallman, & John Morf, elders of the German Congregation of the Dissenting Protestants in Saxe-Gotha Township, & their successors; 1 acre in said Township, part of 150 a. between Jacob Moach & John Morf; said a. bounding S on John Morf (Murpf); other sides on said 150 a.; with the Meeting House thereon; for the sole use of said German Protestants of the Helvetic or Wallone Confession. Witnesses: Christian Theus, Q.D.M., John Geiger, John (German script) Murpf. Before Fenwicke Bull, J.P. & P. Register. Recorded 26 Dec 1768.*"<sup>8</sup> [This John Gallman was the son of Capt. Henry Gallman (b. 1706) and had inherited the land from him in 1767. He was the first cousin of Elizabeth Gallman Keith. *See Research Notes.*]

The evidence indicates that after that time, George Keith and a son, also George, moved to Amelia Township. On 8 Oct 1772 George Keith filed a plat for 135 acres in Amelia Township.<sup>9</sup> The plat bounded NW on Henry Whetstone, NE on John Thompson and Nicholas Haynes, and SE on John Mitchell, SW on John Whetstone. The parcel was granted in 1773<sup>10</sup> and a memorial was filed in the same year.<sup>11</sup> The adjacent landowners place him on Lyons Creek below St. Matthews, as shown on the map of Amelia Township by Susan Smythe Bennett.<sup>12</sup>

On 24 Mar 1774 a memorial was filed by George Keith for two tracts in Amelia Township originally granted to Thomas Weekley and to John Thompson, adjacent William Mitchel, John Whetstone, and Henry Whetstone.<sup>13</sup> The original Weekley plat was adjacent "Lacy's Lands" and "lands laid out to Nicholas Haines."<sup>14</sup> Lacy's property was granted in 1735 and is shown adjacent Weekley's grant on the Susan Smythe Bennet map of Amelia Township. The Weekley property is in the same location as "Keitt's Mill" on the 1825 Mills Atlas of Orangeburg County,<sup>15</sup> clearly connecting the Amelia property acquired by George Keith of Saxe-Gotha with the later Keitt family of that area. On the same day that George Keith filed his memorial for this land, he filed a memorial for his brother-in-law John Gallman, unambiguously linking the Saxe-Gotha and Amelia families.<sup>16</sup>

Children of George Kitts and Elizabeth are:

- +2. a. George Keith, II, born about 1760 in Orangeburg District, South Carolina.<sup>17</sup>
- +3. b. Anne Keitt, born about 1770 Orangeburg District, South Carolina.<sup>18</sup>
- +4. c. Margaret Keitt, born 17 Sep 1773, Orangeburg District, South Carolina.<sup>19</sup>

## SECOND GENERATION

- 2. George Keith, II, was born in about 1760 in South Carolina to George Keith and his wife Elizabeth Gallman. In 1788 George Kith (at this date, it is uncertain whether this is the senior or junior of

that name) is mentioned in a plat on Lyons Creek.<sup>20</sup> Landowners mentioned are Henry Switzer, Melchior Smith, Robert Liviston, Thomas Coleman, and Francis Hadwin.

George II or his father was head of household in the 1790 census of Orangeburg that lists two males over the age of 16, three males under 16, three females and 15 enslaved persons.<sup>21</sup> His household is listed between those of Joseph Smith, William Liviston, and Moses Liviston on one side and Melchor Holman, Stephen Stifflemire, and Joseph Holman on the other.

The children of the family were identified by Ellison S. Keitt.<sup>22</sup> The wife of George Kitts II was Dorothy Whetstone and the children were William, Adam, George [third of that name and father of Ellison S. Keitt], Mary Anne and Margaret. The sons are documented in the cemetery records of Calhoun County, having been buried at Tabernacle Methodist Church Cemetery in St. Matthews, SC.<sup>23</sup> William Keitt, Sr., died aged 72 yrs and 9 mos on 6 Oct 1854, was born 1 Feb 1782. The Rev. Adam Keitt died aged about 40 years on 30 Jun 1824, having been born in about 1786. George Keitt, MD, was born 17 Feb 1794 and died 19 Apr 1861.

3. Anne Keitt married Thomas Kennerly. Rev. Franklow of St. Matthews Lutheran Church recorded her burial on 20 Jul 1800.<sup>24</sup> She was listed as Anne Kennerly, age about 30, placing her birth at about 1770. Although she is often listed as a daughter of George Keith II and his wife Dorothy Whetstone, her birth date is too early for that and it is believed that she is a daughter of George Keith I and his wife Elizabeth Gallman. She was the mother of Christianna Kennerly (b. about 1795) and Mildred Elizabeth Kennerly (b. ca 1796). Rev. Franklow recorded Thomas Kennerly's remarriage to Rebecca Whetstone (daughter of Henry Whetstone, Jr.) on 29 Dec 1801.<sup>25</sup>
4. Margaret Keitt b. 17 Sep 1773, married John T. C. Kennerly, and died at the age of 90 on 3 Jul 1863. She was buried at the Tabernacle Methodist Church Cemetery.<sup>26</sup>

## RESEARCH NOTES

Incorrect information on this family is found in many sources. The George Keith who established the Keitt family of Amelia Township was a German-speaking immigrant who originally settled in Saxe Gotha Township, married Elizabeth Gallman, and several years later moved to Amelia Township.

This George Keith of Saxe-Gotha and Amelia Townships should not be confused with George Keith of Bull Swamp, another German-speaking immigrant.<sup>27</sup> There is no known connection between the two.

The petition of George Keith of Saxe Gotha referred to his having come immediately to Carolina.<sup>28</sup> This language may have been intended to meet the requirement of direct migration needed to claim the bounty offered by the colonial government, but it was denied by the Council.

They probably rejected his claim on grounds that he had been resident in Pennsylvania for several years before moving on to South Carolina. A Georg Keith was listed on the captain's list of the ship *Mary* that arrived in Pennsylvania on 7 Sep 1748.<sup>29</sup> The individual called Georg Keith by the captain identified himself as Johann Görg Köth and Johann Georg Köth. It is very likely that this was the Georg Keith who later moved on to South Carolina.

Many accounts of the Keitt family of Amelia Township erroneously identify the immigrant generation as George Kitts, born in about 1748, who immigrated from Bermuda and married Dorothea Whetstone, an immigrant from Zurich, Switzerland, who was born in about 1731 to Hans and Anna Wetzstein or Whetstone of Zurich Canton. None of this is correct. The records of Rev. John Giessendanner show that the individual named Dorothy Wetzstein or Whetstone [daughter of Hans and Anna Wetzstein of Zurich] married Peter Murer on 3 Apr 1749.<sup>30</sup> Her subsequent burial was recorded less than a year later, on 25 Feb 1750.<sup>31</sup>

The name of the Gallman family of Saxe Gotha was often anglicized as Coleman. Elizabeth Gallman Keith's grandparents were Hans Jacob Gallman and Verena Staheli. The family left Zürich for Carolina in the fall of 1734, and settled in Saxe Gotha in 1734/5.<sup>32</sup> Their life there is documented in letters written to family in Switzerland by Jakob and by one of his sons, Hans Heinrich (Heiri/Harry) Gallman (b. 1706).<sup>33</sup> This older son, Hans Heinrich (Heiri/Harry),<sup>34</sup> was born in 1706 and became an officer in the Saxe-Gotha militia. He acquired a great deal of property, paying quit rents on up to 950 acres.<sup>35</sup> Heinrich (Heini/Henry) Gallman, father of Elizabeth Gallman Keitt, was a younger son who was born in Mettmensstetten, Zurich, and christened on 24 Nov 1709.<sup>36</sup>

The two Heinrich Gallmans are frequently confused, partly because they lived only one creek apart on the Congaree River and each had an oldest son named John and an only daughter named Elizabeth. They were closely associated with the same families, especially the Keith and Geiger families. Elizabeth Keith's father Henry (b. 1709, used a mark) died intestate in late 1766, while her uncle Henry (b. 1706, signed his name) left a will when he died in late 1767.<sup>37</sup>

The close association between brothers Capt. Henry Gallman b. 1706 and Henry Gallman b. 1709 is shown in the family grouping of quit rent payments listed together and apparently paid together in 1761.<sup>38</sup> Henry Galman paid for his own 800 acres and as the executor of John Galman paid for 400 acres and as the executor of Herman Geiger paid for 900 acres. The next listing is Henny Galman who paid for 550 acres. The ties in this family are also apparent in that George Keith was a witness to the will of the older Henry Gallman, his wife's uncle.<sup>39</sup>

George Keith and Elizabeth Gallman Keith had at least three children, a son George (II)<sup>40</sup> and daughters, Anne<sup>41</sup> and Margaret.<sup>42</sup> Anne Keitt who married Thomas Kennerly is estimated to have been born around 1770, and she gave birth to a daughter, Christianna, in 1795. She could not have been a daughter of the younger George Keitt, presumed born after his parent's 1759 marriage

and thus too young to be her father. Margaret Keith who married Thomas Kennerly's brother, John, was born 17 Sep 1773 and would have been a sister of Anne and George, a daughter of George Keith and Elizabeth Gallman Keith.

Dorothy Whetstone, wife of George Keith II, b. ca 1760, was probably a granddaughter of the Wetzstein/Whetstone immigrants Hans and Anna Wetzstein. Rev. John Giessendanner recorded that he married Henry Whetstine to Barbara Morff (widow) on 24 Dec 1750.<sup>43</sup> Thus Henry is the first known male Whetstone of that generation to marry and is a possible father for Dorothy Whetstone.<sup>44</sup> His land adjacent to that of George Keith lends credibility to this speculation.<sup>45</sup>

Mary Ann Keitt, born in about 1796, is sometimes conflated with Anne Keitt who married Thomas Kennerly, Jr. Instead, she was a daughter of George Keitt and Dorothy Whetstone. She married Adam Marion Dantzler. She was therefore a niece of the Anne Keitt who had married Thomas Kennerly, Jr.

References to this surname are found in OGS&S Newsletters: Vol. 3, p. 7; 32; Vol. 4, p. 71; Vol. 5, p. 63; Vol. 6, pp. 13 (2), 53, 126, 28, 38, 93 (2); Vol. 8, p. 12; Vol. 13, p. 21; Vol. 16, pp. 50, 52; Vol. 17, p. 51.

**Information provided by Lynn S. Teague and Harriet Imrey 12/30/2020 and 4/15/2026.**

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<sup>3</sup> Clara B. Langley, *South Carolina Deeds Abstracts, 1719-1772*, Vol. IV. Greenville: Southern Historical Press, p. 82.

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<sup>5</sup> Clara B. Langley, *South Carolina Deed Abstracts, 1719-1772*, Vol. 3, Greenville: Southern Historical Press, 1983, p. 174.

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- <sup>17</sup> Birth year estimated from the date of his parents' marriage and from the birthdates of his own children.
- <sup>18</sup> Anne M. Haigler, *The Church Records of Saint Matthews Lutheran Church, Orangeburg County, S.C. and "The Red Church,"* Greenville: Southern Historical Press, 1985, p. 42.
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## **Family Migration**

During the early and mid-Nineteenth century many descendants of the early Orangeburgh area families migrated to Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Arkansas, Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana and other points west. The information we have provided about a family's migration to another state is an attempt to document those migrations in order to assist family researchers in connecting their ancestors back to Orangeburgh or account for missing branches of their families.

At this time, we have no record of descendants with this surname having migrated to other states. If you have updated information, please share your documents with the Orangeburgh Genealogical Society.

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**Please help maintain, correct and expand these pages. Send comments, corrections, updates and additions to: [migrations@ogsgs.org](mailto:migrations@ogsgs.org)**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** An initial implementation of these pages (and most of the information for them) was created by Gene Jeffries and published on this web site about 2002. The pages were removed from the web site when maintaining and updating the many files proved too onerous. With Gene's consent, we are republishing these files as an aid to Orangeburgh researchers and are working on streamlining the maintenance and update process.

**DISCLAIMER:** The family information included in Orangeburgh Family Migrations was compiled from a variety of sources, many of which are not documented. These pages have not been checked for accuracy and should not be treated as authoritative documentation on these families. They are provided as a hopefully helpful source of leads to further research into these families.