

Chapter I

EARLY EUROPEAN HISTORY

The first American Nance was Richard, who came from England prior to 1639, The writer has checked all available early passenger lists, but could not find this name listed.

In "Emigrants to Virginia" we find Alice Nance, emigrant to Virginia in 1639, consigned to her now husband, Richard Nance, Virginia colony,

The generally accepted tradition is that we are French Heugenots and fled France to England during the Heugenot persecutions. The Nance Memorial by George Nance elaborated on this subject by publishing several letters written by Nances living in England during the 19th century. If the information is correct, then the Nance family existed in England some 500 years prior to the Heugenot exodus from France.

It is possible we could be Normans, and of Scandinavian origin. At this writing, there are many European, as well as American, mysteries yet unsolved regarding the Nance family, It is my sincere hope that future Nance generations will continue the search and successfully trace our lineage to our European ancestors.

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"Exhibit A"

Quotations from a letter written by Elijah Nance, Podstow, Cornwall, England, in 1866, to W. E. Nance, Cardiff, Wales, as presented in NM,

Dear Cousin (I presume):

In reply to your inquiry respecting the origin of the Nance family, I doubt that I shall give you that perfect pedigree that you so anticipate, but brief as it may be it will give you a little knowledge from whence my family sprung.

My brief account only includes seven hundred and ninety years.

In the year 1066, William the Bastard, well known by the name William the Conqueror, being prompted by the Pope of Rome, William soon collected an army and landed them in safety at the place called Hastings, in the county of Sussex. King Harold, the then King of England, managed in haste to give battle, and encamped about seven hundred miles from the Norman army wherein was one of my forefathers as general, and on the seventeenth day of October, 1066, a bloody battle begun at seven o'clock in the morning and lasted until night was closing in, and the Normans were much worsted, when a Norman archer sent an arrow which went through Harold's skull and killed him at once. His army seeing their king and commander dead took to flight in all directions, and the Normans made great slaughter of the retreating army, so from this battle the Normans became masters of all England in due time.

After that battle detachments of the army were sent into all parts of England to take and confiscate what property they thought fit, and General Prideaux came to Podstow, in Cornwall, and my forefather established himself of the Barton of Quandradu, so that the name of Nance and Prideaux have been residents at Podstow for about seven hundred and ninety years past,,,,,,,,,,,,,

Nearly forty years since I was at the stewards house of the Esquire