

MARGARET CRAWFORD RODGERS OF IRELAND
AND SOME OF HER ADGER, RODGERS, HERRON AND HANNA
DESCENDANTS

By B.J. Kennedy, Mary Barnitz and Iris Kelso

Margaret Crawford (Adger) Rodgers in 1794 faced a personal dilemma. She had been the wife of James Adger, a prosperous linen manufacturer in Dunear, County Antrim, Ireland. But he had died in 1783 at the age of 41. She married his mill foreman, Rober Rodgers.

Rodgers, as an Adger descendant has written, was not the husband Margaret had hoped he would be. "He soon ran through her property, being too fond of whiskey," a family historian has written.

Margaret now had a family of seven children at home - her two sons and a daughter by James Adger James, Robert and Betsey - and four little girls by Rodgers - Esther, Margaret, Mary and Isabella. How would they survive?

The couple decided to come to America. Perhaps they would join her oldest son, William Adger, who had emigrated earlier and was now living in South Carolina. He wrote enthusiastic letters about his land and his hopes for success there.

The family sailed from Ireland, arriving in New York in January, 1794. Tragedy struck three days later. The Rodgers' infant daughter, Isabella, wh had been sick aboard ship, died three days after their arrival.

Sometime after their arrival, the Adger book reports, Robert Rodgers "reformed". The couple ran a grocery store in New York. The two Adger boys, who were teen-agers, got jobs. The family soon had enough money to move to Fairfield County, South Carolina, and join William there. Some of the Rodgers daughters later lived with relatives in

Kinderhook, NY.

Several of Margaret's children had all the success she could have dreamed of. One, James Adger II, settled in Charleston, established several businesses, organized a railroad and, at one time, was ranked the fourth richest man in the United States. Several family members or in-laws were distinguished clergymen and scholars.

The Adger family story and Margaret Crawford's story are told by the Rev. John B. Adger in his book, "My Life And Times," published in 1899.

This brochure will tell the story of some of Margaret Crawford Rodgers' descendants. It is largely a listing of the descendants in the line of Margaret's daughter, Esther, who married William Herron in Fairfield County, SC, about 1810.

The story of Margaret and her early descendants is based on the Adger book. Other information is based on research by the authors and other descendants of Margaret Crawford Rodgers.

Most of the lines covered in this brochure were part of the Irish Protestant migration from North and South Carolina to the frontier states of Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas in the 1800s. Esther Rodgers' descendants found new homes in the last four states.

Allied families include Adgers, Ellisons, Smyths Laws, Herrons, Browns, Hannas, Turners, Thompsons, Gladneys, Cabeens, Lammeys, Weldons and Kerrs.

I.A - FAMILY OF MARGARET CRAWFORD AND JAMES ADGER I.

Margaret Crawford was born in 1744 in County Antrim, Ireland, and died in 1827 in Charleston, SC. She is buried in the Second Presbyterian churchyard in Charleston. She married James Adger I about 1770 in Ireland. After his death, Margaret married his mill foreman, Robert Rodgers. After a

few years in New York and probably after Rodgers' death, Margaret lived in Fairfield Co., SC, with her son, William, and later in Charleston with her son, James Adger II. She died at the age of 78.

James Adger I (1731-1783), also spelled Adgar and Edger. He died in Ireland on March 28, 1783, at the age of 41. He had operated a linen manufacturing mill and bleaching green in Dunear, County Antrim, Ireland. He is buried in the Episcopal churchyard in the village of Dunear, County Antrim, Ireland. Children of this couple, all born in Ireland, included:

I.A.1. William Adger (1772-1836) -Married Susan McCrorey (1770-1862) of County Antrim. They migrated to Fairfield County, SC, about 1790. Their home was about five miles north of Winnsboro at what later became Adger Station. The family owned substantial amounts of land and was quite prosperous. Children of this couple included:

I.A.1.1. William Adger Jr. (Ca. 1800 -ca. 1836?) married Isabella Ellison (1804 -?). After his death, Isabella married the distinguished Presbyterian minister, the Rev. W. E. Boggs. William and Isabella Ellison Adger had a son, Joseph Ellison Adger (B. 1823, Fairfield Co., SC - D. 1881 in Bossier Parish, LA). Joseph Ellison Adger married Eliza Gray MacMahon (1825-1897). Their children included: (a) Joseph Ellison Adger Jr. (1847 -1903), who married Mattie Caldwell (1856-1924); (b) William Law Adger (Mar. 2, 1855 -D. Dec. 14, 1895) who married Molly Frances Herron; (c) Robert Adger (1859-1903), who married (1) Mary Cabeen and (2) Elizabeth Thompson; and (d) Margaret Adger, who married Alexander Rogers Thompson.

I.A.1.2. John Adger (1808-1866) married Margaret Grey Ellison (1817-1866). John Adger was a wealthy man whose estate in 1860 was valued at \$164,000. Before he died, he moved to Louisiana, joining relatives there. The couple had a son, William Ellison Adger (1837-

1877) who in 1860 married Mary Moultrie Gamble (1839-1885). Children of this couple included: (a) John Adger, who had a daughter, Mary Jane Adger; (b) Jane Richmond Adger (1865-1945), who married W.E. Glassell; and (c) Ellison Moultrie Adger (1875-1945), who married Elizabeth Hayden in 1905.

I.A.1.3. Margaret Adger - Married Joseph Ellison of Columbia, SC.

I.A.1.4. Agnes Adger - Married William Law of Columbia, SC.

I.A.1.5. Mary Adger - Married (1) Mr. Quigly of Columbia, SC, and (2) Mr. Player.

William Adger Sr. and his wife are buried in the old Mt. Olivet churchyard in Fairfield County. They are buried in a plot with McDroreys, Richmond and Thornes.

I.A.2. James Adger II - (1778-1858). Adger was born in Moneynick, Ireland, north of Belfast. As a teen-ager, he came to New York with his mother, stepfather and brothers and sisters in January, 1794. Around 1805, he came to Fairfield Co., SC, to visit his brother and widowed mother. There he met and married Sarah Elizabeth Ellison, daughter of Capt. Robert Ellison of Fairfield.

→ James Adger was an American success story. He was the immigrant boy who carried out the dream of all immigrants. He came to America and made a fortune.

In 1806, he went into business in Charleston, SC, as a cotton buyer in the firm of Bones and Adger. He established a hardware business called James Adger and Company on Magwood Wharf. He helped organize a railroad and represented a banking company with a branch in England. He later purchased the wharf now known as Adger's Wharf and established a line of steamers between Charleston and New York. At a time when Charleston was one of

the most prosperous ports in the nation, Adger was ranked as the fourth wealthiest man in the United States.

One of Adger's steamships, the "James Adger", was featured in a novel, "Peter Ashley" by Dubose Heyward. During the Civil War, the steamship was seized by the United States and became a naval cruiser.

James Adger and Sarah Ellison had five sons and four daughters. They included:

I.A.2.1. - Margaræt Milligan Adger (1807-1884). Married The Rev. Thomas Smyth, D.D. of Charleston. Their children included: (a) Augustine Smyth, a lawyer; (b) James Adger Smyth, a broker and a mayor of Charleston; and (c) Ellison Adger Smyth, a textile magnate of the Piedmont. He lived into his nineties and was in the textile business for over 60 years. He was the father of Mrs. Foster McKissick of Greenville, SC. Rev. Thomas Smyth was pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Charleston.

I.A.2.2. - The Rev. John Bailey Adger (1810-1899). A Presbyterian missionary, pastor, educator and translator. He was born in Charleston, SC, Dec. 13, 1810. He graduated from Union College in Schenectady, New York, in 1828 and from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1833. On June 19, 1834, he married Elizabeth Keith Shrewsbury of Charleston. He was a missionary at Constantinople and Smyrna from 1834 to 1847; pastor of Zion Church in Charleston from 1847 to 1851; professor of ecclesiastical history and church policy at Columbia Theological Seminary from 1857 to 1874; and pastor of various churches in South Carolina from 1874 to 1894. He translated various church documents into Armenian and Turko-Armenian. He was the author of "My Life And Times", the book from which this brochure's information on the Adger family and Margaret Crawford is drawn. His wife died October 11, 1890, and he died January 3, 1899. They are buried in Pendleton, SC.

Sarah Ellison Adger died Oct. 18, 1856. James Adger II died in September, 1858, while on a

business trip to New York City. They are buried at the Second Presbyterian churchyard in Charleston.

I.A.2.3. - William Adger (1816-1853) married Margaret Hall Moffett (1820-1915). A daughter, Anna Elizabeth Adger (1843-1927) married the Rev. Thomas Hart Law, D.D., on March 16, 1864. Their children included: (a) William Adger Law, (b) Mary Hart Law, (c) John Adger Law, (d) Margaret A. Moffett Law, (e) Thomas Hart Law Jr., (f) Andrew Moffett Law, (g) Robert Adger Law, and (h) Agnes Dubose Law.

I.A.2.4. - James Adger III .

I.A.2.5. Jane Anne Adger.

I.A.3. - Jane Adger - Married Charles Kidd.

I.A.4 - Elizabeth (Betsy) Adger - Came with the family to New York in 1794. She married Dr. Charles Whitlaw, a celebrated physician and naturalist. They lived in Charleston, SC. She died early and is buried in the old Scotch-Irish Cemetery (First Presbyterian) in Charleston.

I.A.5. - Robert Adger - Came with the family to New York in 1794. He died as a young man, but did marry and had two daughters who were reared by his brother, James II. One of them married William Ellison.

Margaret Crawford Adger's first husband, James Adger I, died March 25, 1783, at the age of 41. He is buried at the Episcopal churchyard in Dunear, County Antrim, Ireland.

I.B. FAMILY OF MARGARET CRAWFORD (ADGER) AND ROBERT RODGERS

After the death of her first husband, Margaret Crawford Adger married Robert Rodgers, foreman of the Dunear linen mill, which apparently was owned by the Adger family of her first husband. They had four daughters, all born in County Antrim, Ireland. All four came to New York with the family in 1794.

I.B.1. - Esther Rodgers (May 1, 1785 -January 3, 1872) apparently spent most of the years before she married in the home of her half-brother, William Adger, in Fairfield County, SC. Her descendants will be covered in detail later.

I.B.2. - Margaret Rodgers (B. late 1780s) grew up in the home of a wealthy uncle named Rodgers in Kinderhook, Columbia County, New York. She married Charles Whiting, a merchant. They had one daughter, who married an Albany, NY, attorney named Reynolds. The Reynolds had a large family. Margaret Rodgers Whiting lived to be more than 70 years old.

I.B.3. - Mary Rodgers (B. ca 1790) grew up in the same home in Kinderhook, NY, as her sister, Margaret Rodgers. She married James Clark, a business partner of her sister's husband, Charles Whiting. The Clarks had two daughters: (a) one who married a Shaw and lived in New York City in 1896, and (b) one who married a Bain and lived in Kinderhook in 1896. Mary Rodgers Clark, like her sister, lived to be more than 70 years old.

I.B.4. - Isabella Rodgers (B. 1793) died three days after reaching New York City in January, 1794. She was buried in the cemetery of "The old Brick Church" where the New York post office later was built.

II- DESCENDANTS OF ESTHER RODGERS

As noted earlier, Esther Rodgers apparently spent most of her girlhood in the home of her half-brother, William Adger, in Fairfield County, SC. He was at least 13 years older than she. Her marriage to William Herron, described as "a respectable planter" in the Adger book, is well documented. The authors believe, however, that Herron was her second husband. There is evidence to indicate she was first married around 1804 to John Weldon (B. June 25, 1773 - D. Before 1810). He was the son of Samuel Weldon (1752 - April 2, 1829) and his wife, Nancy (Agnes) Arnette Weldon (1751 - 1830). The Weldons are buried at the old Moore Cemetery in Fairfield. A tornado broke up tombstones in the cemetery several years ago.

John Weldon and his wife had at least one daughter, Elizabeth Weldon, who married William Brown, an immigrant from Ireland. This is noted in the estate file of Samuel Weldon in 1829.

The will of William A. Herron, eldest son of William Herron, lists Elizabeth (Betsy) Brown as William A. Herron's half sister, indicating one of his parents had been married before. It is unlikely that William Herron had been married previously since he was only about 19 years old when he and Esther Rodgers married around 1810. He was born Feb. 11, 1791, according to his tombstone at the "Old Stone Church" (also known as the Lebanon Presbyterian Church) on Jackson's Creek in Fairfield County, SC. Since Esther Rodgers was about six years older than he, it is more likely that she had been married before. The Elizabeth (Betsy) Brown mentioned in William A. Herron's will probably was the daughter of Esther Rodgers and John Weldon. Thus, the children of William Brown and Esther Weldon Brown are listed among Esther Rodgers' descendants.

III.1. CHILDREN OF WILLIAM BROWN AND ELIZABETH WELDON BROWN

William Brown (B. ca. 1800 - D. past 1860) married Elizabeth Weldon (B. ca. 1805 - D. in the 1850s) about 1827. They had the following children:

III.1.1. Elizabeth Brown - B. ca. 1828. Married James W. Bell, B. ca. 1821 in South Carolina.

III.1.2. John W. (Weldon?) Brown - B. Oct. 19, 1835 - D. Mar. 22, 1888. Married Elizabeth J. Hanna, B. 1840 in Alabama, eldest daughter of Samuel Hanna Jr. (B. July 12, 1809 - D. Aug. 6, 1853) and Margaret Crawford Herron Hanna (B. May 23, 1823 - D. Oct. 14, 1902). Margaret Crawford Herron was the third daughter of William Herron and Esther Rodgers Herron.

Children of this couple included: (a) Mary Margaret Brown, B. ca. 1860; (b) William, B. 1862; (c) John, B. 1867; (d) Albert, B. 1869; (e) Hugh; (f) Katie Mae; (g) Essie; (h) Homer; (i)