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## [Cornfield Scotch-Irish]

January 20, 1939.

Mrs. William Craig (white)

R 1, University, N. C.

Orange Co., N. C.

Housewife

A. W. Long, writer. CORNFIELD SCOTCH-IRISH Original Name Changed Name

Mrs. William Craig Mary Barton C9- [?][?]

Dec.15, 1938.

Writer

A.W. Long

Brevard, N.C.

CORNFIELD SCOTCH-IRISH

A History of the Long Family of Orange, Co., N.C.

1755—1938

(The Writer is the oldest living representative of this family and probably knows more about its history than anybody else. The latter part of this story was told by Mrs. William Craig

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(born Long), R 1, University, N.C. Luther B.Long, Newton, N.C., also knows a good deal about the history of the family.).

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### INTRODUCTORY

The Writer believes this history of the Long family to be authentic, from the time it bought land in Orange Co., in 1755, down to the present day. The emphasis has been laid on the younger generation, and an attempt has been made to show, by statements of fact, what life has done to this younger generation and what it has done to life. In his statements, the Writer has relied upon what he has seen with his own eyes and on what the older generation told to him. As a boy, he often visited his grandparents at the old homestead, and had frequent talks with great uncles and great aunts, whose memories ran back to the War of 1812. The Writer has attempted to be as o objective as possible.

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From the time William Long bought a large tract of land, at fifty cents an [?] acre, from the estate of Lord Granville, on New Hope Creek, In Orange Co., in [?] 1755, down to the surrender of General LEE, very few things had ruffled the current of life on this farm. Births and deaths came—births more [?] frequently than deaths—and the land was sub-divided with each generation, but the pattern of life remained little changed. The tallow moulds that made candles in 1755 still made the same kind of candles in 1865. The spinning wheel hummed and the weaving shuttles shot back and forth for over a hundred years. The Revolution left no mark on the family, although Gates and Cornwallis and Greene all had their headquarters at one time or another at old Hillsboro, six miles away : and Tarleton and Light-Horse Harry Lee had chased one another over the red hills along the Eno. My

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grandmother's father, living three miles away, had been beaten up by Tories and left for dead, but nothing ever happened to the Longs.

Some of the old people remembered that General Jackson used cotton bales for breastworks at the battle of New Orleans, but New Orleans was a long way from New Hope Creek. The Mexican War came and went . but the The only trace left on the family was a copy of a campaign biography of Winfield Scott, which nobody ever read. The War of 1861 was somewhat more disturbing, but my father was the only member of the family that entered the Confederate army.

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When the grandsons of William Long inherited their shares of land, about 1830, the farms became smaller—about 200 acres each. One grandson carried on farming with the help of one or two slaves while he took up blacksmithing as a side line. My grandfather, George, the oldest grandson, fell heir to the old homestead—a a log cabin down by the spring. Not content with bwing with being a good farmer, he ran a string of covered wagons down to Fayetteville, the head of navigation on the Cape Fear, carrying down wheat and corn and pork and bringing back heavy groceries for the merchants at Hillsboro and Chapel Hill. He had 25 horses, and bred his own stock. As he prospered he built a new house; a large house of logs, weatherboarded. Story and a half; well built and still occupied by his descendants. The kitchen was a detached log house, with a chimney built of sticks daubed with mud. A smoke house stood near, and a small building housed a handsome carriage with blue broadcloth upholstery, bought during the reign of Andrew Jackson. In this carriage, behind a handsome bay mare, the family drove to New Hope Presbyterian church to hear a monthly sermon.

This church had been founded by a group of early settlers who came down and bought lands on New Hope Creek, a tributary of the Cape Fear. In New York to-day people speak of the “shanty Irish” and the “lace curtain Irish”. These early pioneers in N.C. might be

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called cornfield Scotch-Irish. But everybody knows that most of the early settlers in the interior slept in log cabins and dug their bread out of cornfields.

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The older generation of Longs were Whigs, and later were opposed to Secession, but they / cared little for politics and didn't always bother to vote. Heated political campaigns might rage, but they ploughed their acres, raised sheep and horses, and tranquilly watched suns rise and set. They made liquor on their farms, but the record shows only one drunkard. They took religion in their stride, but never got excited over it. They rarely attended public gatherings of any sort; not because they felt proud or superior, but because they liked quiet, simplicity, and dignity. They weren't neighborly in a folksy way, but people respected them. They liked their work, and they liked to be at home, and to be let alone. They never borrowed and they did not like to lend.

The pattern of life changed after 1865. My grandfather's four sons and one daughter had grown up. His oldest son, Robert, the one with the weak heart, worked for a while in a store in Chapel Hill and then bought a small farm in the neighborhood of the old homestead. He married and in due time became the father of two sons and four daughters. The father died in middle life. The family scrambled along as best they could on the farm, the girls working in the fields with the boys, and all going to school in a log house two or three months in winter. Finally the two boys, growing restless, went away to seek their fortunes, one becoming a salesman in Tenn. and the other a policeman in Danville, Va. The mother and daughters removed to Haw River, a cotton factory town, after having lost the farm through foreclosure of a mortgage. News from them after this was scant. The mother died and the oldest daughter, a cripple, made a home for her younger sisters, who worked in the cotton mill. One of these bore an illegitimate child. This was the last news from them.

My Grandfather's second son, Thomas, my father, had been captured by Kirk's Union guerillas at Morganton, N.C., in 1864, and taken to prison at Johnson Island in [Lale?] Erie.

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He returned undamaged. He took off his gray clothes, now much the worse for wear, and put on a civilian suit he had left behind him when he went off to war, and promptly took his place behind the counter of his store. Shortly before the war he had obtained a clerkship in the largest general store in Chapel Hill. The owner shortly retired from business and my father and another young clerk bought out the business. My grandmother loaned my father \$1,000 to help him pay for his share. He returned the money with full interest. She had saved this money by twisting and turning through many years—by knitting socks, selling eggs, and raising colts. She spoke of her labors as “scuffling.” She also sent her two younger sons off to boarding school for one term.

My grandmother was a remarkable woman. I remember her, passed [10,?] sitting by the fire in a lace cap, endlessly knitting. She was of medium height, slender, straight, with very blue eyes, a nose slightly curved, and a chin rounded and firm, but not hard. She was the financial brains of the family. Not of the matriarchal type, but everyone respected her judgment. Her voice was gentle and considerate, but quietly positive. She always knew her own mind. 6 6

My grandfather was, of course, an outdoor man. I suppose he could read and write, but I never caught him at it. When I knew him he was an old man, crippled by exposure to wind and rain and snow, sitting in a [cirner?] corner by the fire, dreaming perhaps of the day when he ran a string of covered wagons down to Fayetteville.

My father married, in Chapel Hill, a daughter of John White, Massachusetts born, who came South [?] long before [?] 1661 and married in Wake Co. My father and mother were the parents of six children, five sons and one daughter. All went to college, three of them / winning honors in writing and speaking, but not in scholarship. They were the first of the Long family ever to darken the doors of a college. The oldest son became a college professor and taught at Princeton University for many years. He married in N.J. and has two sons and a daughter. His oldest son attended a good military school, but declined a college education. He was a broker's clerk in Wall St. before the Panic, and since then

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has had difficulty in finding steady employment. He married early and impulsively, has one child, and family connections have been obliged to give them some financial help. He has worked at filling stations and on the docks of a shipping concern in New York. The other son attended Blair Academy in N.J. and was a first year law student at New York University when the Depression cut his legal training short. He now has a steady office job in a factory in Conn. Married; no children. The only daughter, who was graduated from the art department of Cooper Union, N.Y. City, is married to a well educated man who works 7 for a large shipbuilding concern at City Island, N.Y. They have one child.

My father died at forty-five, leaving my mother six children to bring up, the oldest being 16. He also left her a 600-acre farm and a good house and lot in town. She took in student boarders to help educate her children. Her boys worked during vacations in stores, libraries, and on newspapers—at whatever they could get to do. [?]

My next brother, Thomas, became an indifferent lawyer and died unmarried. The only lawyer in the history of the family.

Another brother, Vernon, bought the Winston SENTINEL with borrowed money and edited it for a few years, a weekly paper of four pages, but later sold it to advantage and entered the lumber business in Florida. He made money in flush times, but later lost it all and died a broken man. But he had sent his five children to college. Three of his sons were officers in the field artillery in the World War. One of these sons died, leaving a wife and four young daughters with not much to go on. Two of his other sons are living in Atlanta, one a successful, [?] insurance man and the other a reporter on a daily newspaper. The only daughter married a New York man and died in childbirth in London.

My next younger brother, Noyes, travelled a few years for Spalding's athletic goods, but, falling a prey to melancholia, jumped off a boat in Chesapeake Bay and was drowned. When [?] his body was washed up, I buried it on a headland overlooking the Bay. 8 8 No # Since then / this headland has been washed away by storms.

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My youngest brother, Geoge George was a successful lumber man in Florida, where he died of the flu in middle life, leaving a wife and three children, but money enough for their support and for the education of the children. The only daughter is married to W.W.Neal, Jr., a manufacturer of Marion, N.C. They have one son. The two sons of my brother are employed by a Du Pont company in Tenn. They declined a college education, married early, and have two children each.

My only sister, Lillian, was married to Judge W.F. Harding of Charlotte and lived only a few years. She left one son, William K., who was graduated from the University of N.C. and has since been connected with the Duke Power Co., near Charlotte, as an electrical engineer. He is married and has two children.

My grandfather's third son, John, was a diligent student in school and later taught a country school. Then he bought a farm in Alamance Co., married an intelligent and energetic wife, and they successfully raised eight children, all now living except one. Mostly boys. Later my uncle sold his farm and removed to Iredell Co. and engaged in the mercantile business in a small town. The children attended the local public school, which bore marks of the improvement in public education which set in about 1900, but none ever went to college.

The oldest son started life for himself by working as a clerk in the ticket office of a railroad. Becoming restless, he rode the rods to the middle west, becoming a street car conductor in St. Louis, and later a minor executive in the offices of the Standard Oil Co. in Chicago. He has recently been retired on a pension, and he and 9 his wife drive their flivver to Florida every winter. No children.

Uncle John's second son, Charles, a quiet bachelor, was a [?] [?] commercial salesman for a time, and later settled down in the insurance business in Newton, N.C. his business and his dog and gun give him all the excitement he craves.

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The third son, Luther, also started in a railway ticket office, and later became a station agent in a small town. Unsatisfied, he organized an insurance business at Newton, and, by tireless energy, personality, and intelligence, has built up a large business and is now enabled to retire from active affairs. A go-getter. He says he received his education in the College of Hard Knocks. Generous in his instincts, he likes to have his family connections under his roof. He married an attractive woman, a Catholic, and has become a member of her church. Their only child was struck by lightning and instantly killed while playing baseball a few years ago. Luther's younger brothers have had minor successes as country merchants.

On my recent return to my native state, after an absence of many years, I felt a strong desire to go out to the old homestead and look up some of my cousins and find out what had happened during all these years this time. Many, many years had passed since I had seen the place. I recalled with pleasure my last visits. My youngest uncle, Jimmie, a bachelor, and his unmarried sister, Aunt Betty, had never left the roof-tree and were taking care of the old couple. I remembered it as an unusually happy household. Plenty of the good things to eat that a growing boy loves—things cooked over the coals or a wood fire in the big fireplace. A bit of sly teasing trickled across the table. Talk about everything was free; they treated me as an adult and an equal. I was amused at my grandmother's unconventional and sub-acid comments on people and things thereabouts.

In the course of time my grandparents slept with their fathers at New Hope Church, honored by all branches of the family. My Aunt Betty married a prosperous gentleman farmer, a widower in an adjoining county, and died childless. Her husband used to say [?] laughingly that as soon as he learned that Tom Long (my father) had an unmarried sister, he headed his horse in that direction.

Uncle Jimmie, left alone, took unto himself a wife, and in course of time six daughters and one son were born to them. I remember hearing that the oldest, Mary, had married William

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Craig, a widower, who lived on his farm three miles away; that she had died within a few years.

Uncle Jimmie lived to be 70 and then he too was taken to the churchyard at New Hope, leaving a large family barely grown. The third daughter, Mattie, became head of the family by force of character and intelligence. I'll let her tell the rest of this story because she was an important part of it. But a few words of explanation must be said first.

After the other children had made a start in life, with Mattie's help and guidance, she, middle aged, was left alone at the old homestead. Her brother-in-law, William Craig, was living alone with his only son. He proposed marriage to Mattie more than once. After due consideration she decided to take the step. After all, the Craig boy was her own nephew, and William was her distant cousin. The Longs and the Craigs had intermarried sometimes in earlier days. This marriage seemed fitting. And so it proved.

All my life I have been subject to attacks of nostalgia. Often, when far away, there has come into my ears the sound of horses' hoofs splashing through New Hope Creek; my grandfather's good horses. So one day I drove out from Chapel Hill, going north over the Hillsboro road, and then turning aside for a mile or so over a country road, I drew up at [?] Mattie's house. I had not seen her since she was the slip of a girl. Nor had I ever seen her house. It was about what I expected; the kind of house the second generation of pioneers built a hundred years ago. A large log house, weatherboarded, with porch in front and shed in the rear. Log stables and barn. Water from a well. No running water in the house. Kerosene lamps instead of tallow candles. Everything in the house clean and neat and comfortable. No cheap pictures or gewgaws.

Mattie gave me a sedate but cordial welcome. She had a good deal of our grandmother's poise and simple dignity. By way of breaking the ice, I asked a little flippantly,

“How did you ever happen to get married?” She laughed:

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"There's no law against it. It has been done before. Even you have done it."

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"Yes, I have been lucky."

"So have I. We are happy here. You know I am William's [?] third wife. He's the ancient marrier. He has been well broken in. We go along very comfortably. We raise enough to eat and a little to sell. We have a garden and chickens and pigs. But It's a scramble to get ready money for taxes and doctors' bills. Taxes, taxes, taxes. When I had to go to the hospital in Durham, it took most of our savings to pay the bill. If mother could have gone to a hospital, her life might have been prolonged for many years; but there was no hospital nearer than Raleigh, and father didn't have the money. He had 7 children to feed and clothe. If we had seven children in this house, we couldn't afford a hospital either."

"Do you get away from home ofte often " I asked.

"Not very. We have no auto, but jog about with the old horse and buggy. We go to preaching once a month in good weather, and sometimes we go to town to do a little shopping."

"And to go to the movies," I suggested

"Not at all. I've never seen a moving picture, but I intend to go sometime. The boy and some of his young friends get together once in a while and bunch up in a truck—boys and girls—and go into Hillsboro Saturday nights to see the pictures. Some of the boys around here have bought second-hand flivvers and they take their girls into the shows. When I was growing up, father would never let us go anywhere at night. The only 13 time we ever had a chance to see boys was at preaching on Sundays. Not a very exciting life, you'll say, but we had a lot of fun at home among ourselves. You know there were enough of us to keep one another company. What the rising generatio generation will amount to, I do not

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know; but I reckon it will turn out about as well as ours did, which is nothing to brag about. “Tell me about your father,” I said. “I remember him as very vigorous.”

“Yes, he was a strong man, but he worked himself to death and grew old before his time. He tried to do everything. We girls worked in the cornfield during the very busy season, and when my only brother, Tom, grew up, he was a help for a time; but he married early and built a house on one corner of the farm. Soon there were four or five children. He was drafted during the World War, but died of flu before he received his uniform. His wife and children scuffled along as best they could for a few years, helped a little here and there by the kin, but finally removed to a town where the older children could get work.”

“What happened after your father died,” I asked.

“Well, it seemed up to me to take hold and do the best I could. Two of my older sisters had married steady going farmers and seemed to be getting along fairly well. Tom was married and gone. Four of us girls were therefore left alone at the old homestead. We put in an improved breed of chickens, enlarging our flock as time went on, and did pretty well at it. We made a garden, 14 kept a cow, but most of the land we rented out. Two of my sisters grew restless. I managed to help one of them go to a business school in Raleigh — and some of the cousins also helped her — and she got a position as a secretary. Another sister took a hospital training and became a nurse. She was employed in and around New York for several years, and died [?] up there recently. My youngest sister married a farmer boy and they live at the old homestead now in much the same way our grandparents lived —except that they do not spin and weave and they ride around in a small truck. They still have the labor of bringing water from the big spring down under the hill, but rural electrification is coming our way now and soon a little pump will bring us water. That will be a mighty big help.”

“Tell me, Mattie, did your father ever regret remaining on the farm?”

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“No, I think not. I have heard him wonder at times—especially when ready money was hard to get—if he would have been better off in town behind a counter, but he always wound up by saying he was happier on the farm. But he felt his poverty in several ways. For one thing, he couldn't give us children as good clothes as some other children had. Sometimes there was only one pair of good shoes for three of us older girls; each one took her turn in wearing them to church. He was also a little jealous of Charley Johnston who had inherited a 700-acre farm and lived in a large white house and had time to ride around and attend to church and county affairs. He was of the same pioneer stock as ours, 15 but his family had not been so prolific and the sub-divisions of land had been larger. Squire Johnston, as he was called, was made an elder in the church at New Hope. Father was not; and he felt it. He also suspected that what the politicians called Wall Street gamblers were responsible for the low prices of commodities; but I never could see much in that.”

“How about you, Mattie? Would you like to move into town, Ic [Where?] you could swap gossip with the neighbors over the back fence and go to the movies every night?”

“Me? Not for me. I like the open country and I like to be let alone. I like to see crops growing. You know we are cornfield Scotch-Irish. If I had half a dozen children to educate—and I am glad I haven't—I might be tempted to move to town to give the children better opportunities for schooling and work, but the country schools now are nearly as good as the town schools. Buses pick the children up and give them a free ride to school. In my day we slopped to school through the mud, and our shoes were sometimes thin. Yet people talk about the good old days. It's my opinion the good old days are overpraised.” And she laughed [?] tolerantly.

“Do you get any time for reading ?” [?] I asked.

“Yes, a / cousin—you know him—sends me the READERS' DIGEST and another cousin in Hillsboro sometimes brings me a bundle of Durham newspapers. Yes, we know pretty well

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what is going on in the world. I sometimes think we'd be better off if we didn't know quite so much.”

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“Do you ever vote?”

“Not often. When some good county man is running— a man like Sandy Graham, say— we go to the polls and vote; but I don't like crowds, and I don't know what it is all about anyhow.”

When Mattie was married, my wife and I sent her a clock as a wedding present. She wrote back:

“The little clock stands on the mantelpiece and ticks the happy hours away.”

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### SUMMARY

The older generations were farmers. The younger generation has taken to business— merchandising, insurance, or lumbering. Families have had fewer children and several have been graduated from colleges. None has ever stood in a bright spot in the sun, or accumulated a large fortune, and none has ever been accused of crime, or been the inmate of a county home. No lunatics (so far as the asylum records show). No politicians or doctors or preachers. One college professor. One lawyer (unsuccessful). In church matters, the Longs have been Presbyterians, Episcopalians, or Methodists. The root stock is Presbyterian. No reformers or crusaders. No Holyrollers. Most have been members of a church in more or less good and regular standing, but few have died in the odor of sanctity. An average N.C. family. They have been industrious, as a rule, have reproduced

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their kind, and have had a talent for attending to their own business. They have helped to carry on the work of the world.