



# Haverford Township Historical Society



## JOHN REED VALENTINE (1869-1921) AND FAMILY

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*[The following is excerpted from A History of Delaware County, Pennsylvania and Its People, John W. Jordan, editor, published by Lewis Historical Publishing Company, New York in 1914.]*

That the original signification of the word Valentine was strong, robust, powerful, healthy, there is little doubt, but whether its first use as a family name was on account of any peculiar superiority in this respect, in those bearing it, cannot be stated. At what time and locality it first came into use, it is also difficult to state, but that it was known among the ancient Romans is clearly shown in history.

Valentinus was a learned and eloquent Alexandrian, born A. D. 140. The good Saint Valentine, whose day, February 14, we still celebrate, suffered martyrdom at Rome in the year 270. Of the three Roman Emperors named Valentinian, the first ascended the throne in the year 364, the last in 425. Pope Valentine began his official career in 827. The name with slight variations in spelling is also found in the histories of France, Spain, Germany, Holland, England and Ireland, the branch herein traced descending from the Irish family.

(I) **THOMAS VALENTINE**, the American ancestor, was of Bally Brumhill, Ireland, where he married Mary, daughter of Thomas and Rebecca Parke. She was born September 18, 1693. They came to America bearing a certificate from Carlow to New Garden (Chester county) monthly Meeting of Friends, dated 2, 27, 1728, which no doubt represents the year of their emigration. They afterwards settled in New Providence township, now Montgomery county, Pennsylvania, where Thomas Valentine died in 1747. Children:

1. Robert Valentine, born at Bally Brumhill, Ireland, 7, 21, 1717, died 7, 21, 1786; married at Caln Meeting, 4, 4, 1747, to Rachel Edge, daughter of John Edge and Mary Edge, of Chester county; Robert Valentine was a recommended minister in 1764 and traveled considerably in that capacity, visiting Great Britain at the close of the revolutionary war; his wife Rachel was an elder in the Uwchlan Meeting, to which both belonged; they left a large family.
  2. Thomas Valentine, died in Charlestown township, Chester county, in 1762; he married, November 23, 1752, Rebecca Robinson, who survived him and married (second) May 19, 1768, Robert Dunbar.
  3. John Valentine, no record.
  4. Jonathan Valentine, of whom further.
- Perhaps others.

(II) **JONATHAN VALENTINE**, son of Thomas Valentine and Mary (Parke) Valentine, was born in Chester county, Pennsylvania, about 1730, died in East Caln township, Chester county, about 1811. He married, in 1755, Lydia Baldwin, daughter of John Baldwin and Lydia (Pusey) Baldwin. They settled on a farm in East Caln township, where their after Jives were spent. Children:

1. Absalom Valentine, of whom further;
2. Jehu Valentine;
3. John Valentine;

4. Jonathan Valentine;
5. Elizabeth Valentine;
6. Mary Valentine;
7. Lydia Valentine, married Jesse Evans;
8. Thomas Valentine.

(III) **ABSALOM VALENTINE**, son of Jonathan Valentine and Lydia (Baldwin) Valentine, was born in East Caln township, Chester county, Pennsylvania, about 1757. He married Mary, daughter of Thomas Temple and Mary Temple, of East Cain township. Children:

1. Abner Valentine;
2. William Valentine;
3. Lydia Valentine;
4. Thomas Valentine;
5. Benjamin Valentine;
6. John Valentine, of whom further;
7. Elizabeth Valentine;
8. Mary Valentine;
9. Samuel Valentine;
10. Absalom Valentine,
11. Temple Valentine,
12. Joseph Valentine.

(IV) **JOHN VALENTINE**, son of Absalom Valentine and Mary (Temple) Valentine, was born in Chester county, Pennsylvania, April 23, 1787. He became a wealthy farmer and business man, and gave his sons, Chalkley M. Valentine and John King Valentine, the best of educational advantages. He resided in Chester county, where he owned a large quantity of land. He was a member of the Society of Friends, and a man held in high esteem. He married and left issue including a son John King Valentine, of whom further.

(V) **JOHN KING VALENTINE**, son of John Valentine, was born near Marlboro, Chester county, Pennsylvania, in 1818, died January 16, 1898. The son of wealthy parents he was given a liberal education. Preparing at Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, he entered Dartmouth College, where he completed his classical education. He then entered the law department of the University of Pennsylvania, whence he was graduated LL. B., class of 1855. He was admitted to the Philadelphia bar the same year and attained high rank in his profession. He served as assistant United States district attorney for the eastern Pennsylvania district under District Attorney Charles Gilpin, and was appointed district attorney by President Grant, serving until the first administration of President Cleveland. He earned lasting reputation by his successful handling of the "Molly Maguire" cases and was the only prosecutor to obtain convictions in the Squire Root trials during the Star Route Mail scandals that led to the Belmont resignations. Under President Cleveland's administration he was appointed, under the new federal elections law, chief of the United States election bureau. Later he was appointed United States commissioner of elections. In addition to his legal practice and official duties, Mr. Valentine had extensive business interests in Philadelphia. He was president of the Spring Garden Insurance Company and held directorship in other corporations. He maintained a country estate at Bryn Mawr and a town house at 1805 Spruce street, both being the scenes of gracious hospitality and social enjoyment.

With the exception of one other man, Charles J. Ingersol, Mr. Valentine was the longest in office of the previous long line of United States district attorneys, and may be said to have literally been apprenticed

to the office, as immediately after his admission to the bar, he became associated with ex-Mayor Charles Gilpin as his law assistant, and when the latter was appointed United States district attorney, Mr. Valentine as his chief deputy began the study of the intricacies and requirements of the office with which he was destined to be identified through several administrations. When Mr. Gilpin left the office, Mr. Valentine was retained as chief assistant, under Aubrey H. Smith, John P. O'Neill and Colonel William McMichael. In the early part of General Grant's term, when Colonel McMichael resigned, Mr. Valentine was appointed to the office this resignation left vacant. He entered upon his duties, after such a preparation as no other incumbent ever had, his clear understanding of the requirements of the office and the long years of training, acquired under ex-Mayor Gilpin and his successors, making him a most valuable official. He was also a most able lawyer and made a public record unrivalled in the history of the eastern district. After his retirement from public life, he resumed private practice, forming a partnership with his son, John Reed Valentine, and Henry P. Brown, so continuing with offices on Seventh near Walnut street, Philadelphia, until his sudden death at his Spruce street home, January 16, 1898. He was ever interested in his Alma Mater, the University of Pennsylvania, was president of the Alumni Association at the time of his death. His college fraternity was Psi Upsilon, while in religious belief he adhered to the faith of his fathers, worshiping with the Hicksite Society of Friends. He was a man of high mental and legal attainments, lovable in disposition and highly regarded by all who knew him.

John King Valentine married Virginia Penelope Reed, who survives him. She was born on her father's estate near New Orleans. Louisiana, daughter of James Reed and Adele La Tell (De La Tour) Reed. The De La Tours were of royal French blood, driven out of France during the revolution, taking refuge in San Domingo. When the blacks rose and proclaimed the republic of Hayti, the family came to the United States, locating in New Orleans. James Reed, president of the Bank of New Orleans, was one of the financial and social leaders of that city. He owned many cotton plantations and a line of ships trading between New Orleans and Liverpool. He was the leading cotton factor of New Orleans and kept his ships in commission largely on his own shipments of cotton. After his marriage to Miss De La Tour, James Reed established a magnificent mansion and estate near New Orleans, where his children were born. He had two sons and two daughters:

1. Henry Reed, died aged nineteen years, unmarried.
2. John Reed, a lieutenant commander in the United States navy under Farragut during the civil war; his health was seriously impaired by the exposure incident to his naval service, compelling a California ranch residence for several years; he finally returned east and died in 1880: he married, but left no issue.
3. Elizabeth Louisiana Reed, died in 1878, unmarried.
4. Virginia Penelope Reed, now widow of John King Valentine. Their only child, John Reed Valentine, of whom further.

(VI) **JOHN REED VALENTINE**, only son of John King Valentine and Virginia Penelope (Reed) Valentine, was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, July 22, 1869. His preparatory education was obtained at Haverford College grammar school, he being a member of the first class graduated from that institution. He then entered Haverford College, but was compelled to discontinue his studies there for a time. He then took special courses at the University of Pennsylvania for two years, later entering the law department of the University, whence he was graduated LL. B., class of 1895. His university career was one of fine achievement as witnessed by his membership in the Sharswood Law Club, a requisite for admission there being perfect scholarship in both collegiate and law courses. Although fully equipped for the profession of law, Mr. Valentine chose the life of a country gentleman, a career he has followed with great usefulness to his community and not from the standpoint of an "idle rich man." Shortly after

his graduation he inherited a sum of money that he invested in "Highland Farm," his present home. This farm, located in the northern part of Haverford township, Delaware county, originally consisted of sixty-three acres, adjoining his father's estate of one hundred and forty-six acres. After inheriting the latter, Mr. Valentine consolidated the two farms and purchased an additional one hundred acres, which now gives Highland Farm an area of nearly three hundred acres of exceedingly valuable land. The original house was built in 1704, but has been remodelled and enlarged until it stands as a splendid example of a country gentleman's home. The farm was the original Lewis tract, descending by inheritance to the Sheafs, by them sold to the Epwrights, from whom it was purchased by Mr. Valentine, the two transfers being the only ones by sale during the two and one-half centuries, since it was first patented to a Lewis.

Interesting as is the past history, "Highland Farm" has a modern fame all its own. Mr. Valentine has made it the Mecca of Ayrshire cattle breeders of the United States. His herd of two hundred pure blooded Ayrshire is the largest and most noted in the eastern United States, including as it does champions in milk and butter production and a sire of unsurpassed performance. For twenty years Mr. Valentine has been developing this herd of prize dairy cows, and by importation and breeding he has become the leading and best known owner of Ayrshires in the United States. A few names of champions in the herd will be familiar to those interested in Ayrshire: "Polly Puss" from 1903 to 1905 the American champion in the production of milk and butter; "Rena Ross" from 1905 until 1910 American Ayrshire champion in milk and butter production. Thus for seven years, 1903-10, Mr. Valentine's herd furnished the American champion milk and butter producer. In 1913, his three year old heifer "Abbess of Torr," which he imported from Scotland, after personal inspection, won the "three year old championship" for imported Ayrshires. Mr. Valentine is also owner of a famous Ayrshire sire whose daughters, in proportion to their number, rank as the greatest producers of milk and butter over any similar number of cows in the whole world.

The surroundings in which these cattle are kept give evidence of the deep thought and interest bestowed upon them by their owner, being roomy, modern and sanitary. To dispose of the product of his large herd, Mr. Valentine maintains a model dairy, operated under the most perfect sanitary conditions, employing the most modern approved dairy machinery and methods. But the herd is not maintained for dairy, but for breeding purposes, the young Ayrshires being eagerly sought for by dairymen and breeders. Mr. Valentine is president of the Ayrshire Breeders Association of America and a recognized authority on that most noted of all dairy cattle. He is devotedly attached to his beautiful country home with all its varied interests, but is not unmindful of his civic and social obligations. He has taken a lively interest in the club life of Delaware county and Philadelphia, being a member of the Racquet Club of Philadelphia, the Merion Cricket Club, the Radnor Hunt, Rose Tree Hunt, Pickering Valley Hunt, Green Spring Valley Hunt, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and various others. From 1901 to 1907 he was master of hounds for the Radnor Hunt, the pack of hounds now owned by the club having been bred, trained and presented by Mr. Valentine. To further gratify his love for the chase, he maintains a stable of ten high class thoroughbred hunters.

In politics a Republican, he has always taken interest in local affairs. He is a member of the county committee for the northern precinct of Haverford township, served for three years on the township board of education; was chairman of the board of supervisors four years and the first chairman of the board of township commissioners under the act of 1910. While not formally connected with any religious denomination, he has a birthright membership in the Society of Friends, and has a special friendliness for the faith of his fathers.

Mr. Valentine married, June 8, 1898, Elizabeth Edith Simpson, born in Philadelphia, but at the time of her marriage residing at "Centre Crest," the Montgomery county home of the Simpsons. She is the only

child of Thomas Simpson and Elizabeth Potter (Moulton) Simpson, her father the long time honored head of the Eddystone Steel Works at Chester, Pennsylvania. Mr. and Mrs. Valentine have no children.

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