

Alderman Historical Association

First Reunion Held in 1928
Patricia Crosby Leonard - President

APRIL, 2017

[HTTP://ALDERMANHISTORICALASSOCIATION.ORG](http://ALDERMANHISTORICALASSOCIATION.ORG)

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 1

*****AHA Mission Statement*****

To honor our ancestral lineage and foster the continued efforts of John Thomas Alderman in compiling and recording the history of the Southern Branch of the Alderman family. We will do this by honoring Alderman descendants with an annual reunion to allow sharing of genealogical information, maintaining relationships with other Alderman family groups, the care and maintenance of the John Alderman, Sr. cemetery and other sites as may be deemed needed by the Association Board of Directors.

2017 REUNION SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 24

Reservation Form is Enclosed

GUEST SPEAKER – Mr. John Thornhill, organizer of the new SAR chapter near New Bern comprised of men descended from free blacks that fought for the revolutionary cause.

A LITTLE FAMILY HISTORY

BLACK RIVER CHURCH--Presbyterian.
Organized 1740. Present building constructed 1859. First regular pastor was the Rev. Colin Lindsay.

Essay:

A cradle of Presbyterianism in North Carolina, Black River Presbyterian Church traces its beginnings to 1740 at which time worship took place in a log meeting house. Members were primarily of Scottish lineage. The congregation witnessed a spurt of growth in the 1770 to 1774 period as more immigrants came to America. Prominent area families were the Corbetts, Devanes, Kerrs, Beattys, Hendrys, Murphys, Aldermans, Robinsons, Colvins, McMillans, and Bannermans.

Black River was formally organized as a church in 1790, the same year that the Reverend Colin Lindsay arrived as its first full-time pastor. Up to that time a number of itinerant ministers had served the congregation on a part-time basis. The church elders in 1790 were Samuel McAllister, Finley Murphy, John Anderson, William Robeson, and Thomas Devane. Lindsay left Black River in 1797 to join the congregation at Raft Swamp. He is buried at [Stewartsville Cemetery](#) near Laurinburg.



Several other prominent names are associated with the church. Edwin A. Alderman (1861-1931), president of the [University of North Carolina](#), Tulane University, and the University of Virginia, was raised in the area and attended the church. Joseph Wilson, father of [Woodrow Wilson](#), was the pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Wilmington from 1874 to 1882. He preached occasionally at Black River and the future president is said to have played in the yard of the church. The present building, constructed in 1859, is the fourth on the site. Described as “pristinely beautiful,” it is among the finest of the Greek Revival style, temple-form rural churches built for descendants of Scots pioneers.

Located on SR 1102 east of SR 1100 in [Ivanhoe](#), [Sampson County, North Carolina](#).

References:

William Henry Foote, *Sketches of North Carolina: Historical and Biographical* (1846)
J. Kyle Bannerman, “Black River Church,” *The Presbyterian News* (June 1959)
Black River Presbyterian Church Session Minutes, North Carolina State Archives
Robert Tate, *History of Black River Chapel* (1925), copy in marker files, North Carolina Office of Archives and History
Catherine W. Bishir and Michael T. Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina* (1996)

A TAD BIT MORE HISTORY -

We have all seen the Coat of Arms that is printed in the “Aldermans in America” book by William Alderman Parker and the narrative that was provided about its provenance. I sent copies of this to the Royal College of Arms in London to see what they might be able to discover. Their recent letter follows:

Christopher Vane M.A.,
Portcullis Pursuivant,
College of Arms,
130 Queen Victoria Street,
London
EC4V 4BT
Tel.020-7248-2762

Email. portcullis@college-of-arms.gov.uk
[10th April 2017](#)

Dear Mr Alderman,

I have now had an opportunity of following up your inquiry.

Coats of arms belong to lines of descent and not surnames.

Prior to the 15th century arms were generally just self-assumed.

As a general rule today, in order to be entitled to arms, one must either be the person to whom the arms were granted or a direct descendant in a legitimate male line of (i) such a man or (ii) someone whom the heralds had accepted was entitled to arms. The reference to “someone whom the heralds had accepted was entitled to arms” in practice is to someone who was recorded as entitled to arms at one of the heraldic visitations, which the heralds conducted of individual counties between about 1550 and 1700. The visitations were designed to sort out who was and who was not entitled to arms. At the visitations it was possible to establish that one was entitled to arms on the basis of long open user by one’s ancestors. This is no longer the case.

Two people with the same surname may have quite different arms while others with the same surname may not be entitled to arms at all.

Although it occasionally happens, no two families should have the same coat of arms or crest.

At all times significant numbers of people have just assumed “arms” irregularly and without lawful authority. This may be a matter of regret to the heralds but it is a fact of life. The heralds have always had difficulty controlling the irregular use of arms. Such irregular use of arms is often of considerable historical interest. In practice where “arms” are just assumed it is not uncommon for a family to assume “arms” which are similar or even identical to the arms of another family with the same or a similar surname.

Prior to the 18th century the spelling of names and places had not become standardised.

I have not found any record of a grant of arms to anyone with the surname Alderman other than a grant of honorary arms made in 1985 to Louis Cleveland Alderman of Middle Georgia College, Cochran, Georgia, USA (Grants 149/82). He was granted the following coat of arms *Gyronny of eight Murrey and Azure within an Annulet its outer rim A Sun in Splendour Gold*. While that design involves a sun in splendour it is considerably more complicated than that of which you have sent me an illustration.

I have found evidence of a family from Suffolk called Alderman using “arms” in the early 19th century, although I have not seen any evidence that they were entitled to the “arms” which they were using. I will attach to the email to which this report is to be attached a printed pedigree for this family from a journal called *Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica* (5th series) vol.IX page 70. The coat of arms described underneath the pedigree is quite different from that of which you have sent me an illustration. It has six lions, but no sun in splendour.

From where then does the sun in splendour come?

The best known dictionary of arms is almost certainly Burke's General Armory. This is a not particularly accurate 19th century printed book, in which coats of arms are listed in the alphabetical order of the surnames of the families associated with them. It does not seek to distinguish between arms which have been lawfully granted and those which have just been assumed irregularly. In Burke the surnames Aldam, Adernam and Aldham are all credited with *Azure a Sun in Splendour Or*. There is no entry for Alderman, but it might be said that Aldernam was probably a misprint for Alderman. Yet the reference is to Aldernam in two earlier 19th century dictionaries of arms, Robson's British Herald and Berry's Heraldry.

There is a 4 volume modern work entitled the Dictionary of British Arms which seeks to list all coats of arms for which there is documentary evidence before 1530. I am also attaching a copy of page 430 of volume 4 of this work where examples are given of the coats of arms, *Azure a Sun Or* and *Azure a Sun in Splendour Or*. As you can see they are associated with a number of surnames including Aldam, Aldham, Albam and Auldham.

It rather looks to me as though these medieval coats of arms were just irregularly adopted at a later date by persons who had rather similar surnames: see the seventh paragraph of this letter. The Oxford Dictionary of Family Names in Britain and Ireland suggests that Aldam and Aldham are really the same name, but that Alderman has quite a different origin. It suggests that the former are locational names while the latter is occupational.

I am sorry not to be of more help.

Yours sincerely,

Christopher Vane,
Portcullis.

I know it might be a little difficult to comprehend all the terms but if you want to understand some of the Coat of Arms “lingo” a little better, I suggest going to the following website. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coat_of_arms

By the way, we will have a test on the definition of Portcullis Pursuivant.

******Association Elections will be held during this annual meeting. Our current President has asked to step down after many supportive years.******

ALDERMAN FAMILY ARTICLES WANTED

If any of you have articles you feel would be of interest to our group, please send them to James Alderman at alde711@aol.com for possible use in our semi-annual newsletters. You may have something that a member would love to know about.

Please send me items!!!

ALDERMAN BOOKS ARE STILL AVAILABLE

- Original “Aldermans in America” – contact Susan Bland - susan@intrstar.net
- New AIA Volumes 1&2 building on the original “Aldermans in America” – contact Susan Bland - susan@intrstar.net

Association Contact Information -

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SEE YOU IN DELWAY, NC ON JUNE 24, 2017 !!!!!

Get your reservations in early and bring items to share with other family members.