The Orris Family.

1895

18 and 20 Rose St., New York, July, 1895.

My father, Edward Everett Orvis, took great pleasure in collecting data relating to the history of the Orvis family, but was unfortunate in losing his manuscript once or twice. The following is all I have been able to find relating to the subject, among his effects.

With the idea in view of printing a more extended history, at some future time, I will be pleased to receive any information concerning the family history that its members and friends may send me.

Francis W. Orvis.

History of the Orvis Family.

For many years I have been endeavoring to collect materials for a history of the ORVIS FAMILY in America. A vast number of letters, and a vast amount of interesting information has accumulated upon my hands. But I am not prepared to give anything like a connected history. The following brief synopsis is now published for three purposes: 1st. As a convenient mode of communicating to my numerous relatives the leading facts which I have already obtained. 2d. To indicate wherein my information is defective, so that those who are able to do so may supply those deficiencies. 3d. So that if my information in any respect is incorrect, it may be corrected by those who have the means of doing so.

MEANING OF THE NAME ORVIS.

It is well known that most family names are significant of something noteworthy in the early progenitors of the family. It is often very difficult to ascertain the precise circumstance which has given rise to some of these names; and such is the case in regard to our name. But it is probably derived from the Latin OR, a contract of *vir*, a man, and is of frequent occurrence as a termination to Latin nouns, and VIS, force or power. If this is the correct derivation of the name, it was probably first applied to some one of our early ancestors who was distinguished for great physical strength; and hence came to be the family name of his descendants.

ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY.

It is universally conceded that the Orvis Family is of Welsh descent; and that our ancestors emigrated to this country, either directly from Wales, or from Wales to England, and from England to this country. There are many persons of the name of Orvis still in Wales, some in England, and some on the Island of Guernsey. But from the probable

origin of the name, and from other circumstances which need not now be mentioned, it is probable that the family might be traced to Italy, and to a point not very far from the city of Rome.

Some time between the years 1675 and 1700 three brothers, to wit: Geerge, William and Samuel Orvis, emigrated to what was then the British Colony of Massachusetts Bay, and settled on the Connecticut River, in what is now the town of Hadley, opposite to Northampton. Of these brothers, Samuel was never married; but George and William both married and raised families.

1. I once had much information concerning the descendants of William Orvis—furnished by W. B. Orvis, a Presbyterian preacher of Ohio, and J. U. Orvis, now President of the Ninth National Bank of New York City—both descendants of William Orvis; but by a misfortune which occurred to me a few years ago this has been nearly all lost. But this family, like that of George Orvis, removed from Hadley to Farmington, Conn. From this place some of them went to Brattleboro, Vt., one to Charleston, S. C., and one to

Troy, N. Y., from which points they have emigrated to many other parts of the United States. The line of descent from William Orvis to W. B Orvis is as follows: 1. William, 2. Gad, 3. Gad, Jr., 4. William, 5. Waitstell, 6. Malachi, 7. W. B.

2. Of the family of George Orvis—my own ancestor—my information, though by no means very full, is much more so than in regard to the other branch of the family. George Orvis married a lady by the name of Gailord, by whom he had one son, named Roger Orvis. Whether or not he had other sons, or any daughters, is not known.

Roger Orvis—Son of George Orvis—distinguished himself for his bravery and skill in the various Indian wars, in the early settlement of New England. For these services he was presented with a sword and cane by direction of the King of England. R. S. Orvis, now living at Prattsburg, Steuben Co., N. Y., says that he has seen both the sword and the cane. The latter is still in existence, and in the possession of Silas Orvis, Whitby, Province of Ontario,(formerly Canada West.) Of this cane Dr. Abram Orvis, of Roches-

ter, N. Y., says: "The cane body was bamboo, or reed-cane, mounted with an ivory head, and a heavy silver chain, which was fastened to the cane by a silver eye; but the ornaments have disappeared many years since." Samuel Orvis, of Champion, Jefferson Co., says: "It was rather a plain looking affair. The head was of ivory; and it had three silver bands upon it, with names, dates, and so on."

Roger Orvis married a scotch lady by the name of Handison, and removed to Farmington, Ct. He had three sons. One of these, whose name was not known, settled high up Connecticut River, at a place called Coos. The other son, David Orvis, lived and died at Farmington.

David Orvis—son of Roger, and grandson of George—was twice married; first to Ruth Hungerford, and secondly to a Miss Hawley, (a sister of Elisha Hawley's father.) By his first marriage, David Orvis had four children, to wit:

1st. A son (whose name is not known.) This son of David Orvis was married and had a son named Ebenezer Orvis, who was a lieutenant in the Colonial army, in the old

French war of 1756. He married a Miss Root, and had one son whose name was Zadoc Orvis, who was very wealthy, owning several farms in Farmington. Zadoc Orvis had no sons; but he had several daughters. One of these daughters married a man by the name of Alvord, who served in the Revolutionary army in the New York line. They had four sons, to wit: Thomas, Elisha, Diocletian, and another whose name is not known. Diocletian Alvord married a daughter of John J. Mang, a learned and talented German, and classmate of Schiller, the distinguished German tragic writer. He had several sons; the name of one of them was Jacob Alvord. Elisha Alvord married a sister of Diric C. Lansing. Thomas J. Alvord, a son of Elisha, has been twice Speaker of the New York House of Assembly, and twice Lieutenant Governor of the State.

2d. David Orvis' second child was a daughter, who married a man by the name of Smith, whose son, Captain Samuel Smith, lived and died at Glastonbury, Ct.

3d. David Orvis' third child was Eleazer Orvis, my

great-grandfather, whose family will be more particularly described hereafter.

4th. His fourth and last child by his first wife, was a son, named David, after his father, snd who died at about the age of thirteen.

By his second wife he had—

5th. A son, who was not born until shortly after the death of David, and he also named him David. The last David—half brother of Eleazer—was born in the year 1745. He settled in New Windsor, Vt. He had three sons, to wit: Uriel H. Orvis, Gad Orvis, and Frederick Orvis. A son of Uriel H. Orvis, Joseph Orvis, lives at Massena, St. Lawrence Co., N. Y., where his father lived and died. David A. Orvis, son of Frederick Orvis, lives in New York City. Gad had a large family of daughters, who married in the vicinity of Boston, Mass.

FAMILY OF ELEAZER ORVIS.

Eleazer Orvis—son of David, grandson of Roger, and great-grandson of George Orvis—was born in Farmington,

Ct., February, 1805. When a boy he went to live with a Dr. Porter, with whom he lived until he was seventeen years of age, when he was apprenticed to learn the trade of a carpenter. He was married to Hannah North, about the month of June, 1742, by whom he had seven sons and seven daughters, besides one son that died in infancy. He was a man of more than ordinary intelligence, for the time in which he lived; and was particularly noted for his wit, and quickness of repartee. He was a pious and consistent member of the Presbyterian church. His children were as follows:

1. Reuben, born March 20, 1743. He was twice married; first to Ruth Picket, and after her death to Thankful Bowles; but he never had any children. He lived and died in Hartford, Ct.

2. Roger, born January 24, 1745, and died in 1829. He married Ruth How. Their family was numerous; but I am not able to give it in detail. Samuel Orvis, the only living son of Roger, lives at Champion, Jefferson Co., N. Y. His grandchildren and great grandchildren are scattered

through the Eastern, Northern and Western States, and in Canada West.

3. David Orvis, born January, 1747, married Molly Turner. I have no accurate information of his descendants.

4. Eleazer Orvis, Jr., born March, 1749, married Phebe Knapp. He was a soldier in the Revolutionary war, and died of disease contracted in the service, leaving his wife and children.

5. Hannah Orvis, born April 15, 1750, married Nathan Fellows, died April 9, 1813.

6. Phebe Orvis, born March 21, 1753, married Russell Rose.

7. Samuel Orvis, born March 6, 1755, married September 16, 1783, to Caroline Seward. R. S. Orvis and other descendants live at Prattsburg, N. Y. He was a Revolutionary soldier, and died November 4, 1852.

8. Margaret Orvis, born February 7, 1757, married Elisha Hawley.

9. Joseph Orvis, born February 7, 1759, married Susan Turner, and after her death he married Mabel, or Mehitabel Butler for his second wife. Two of his sons, Timothy B. Orvis and James R. Orvis, were recently living at Batavia, Kane Co., Ill. Others of the descendants reside in Western Pennsylvania, in Ohio, and in other Western States.

10. Ruth Orvis, born January, 1761, died April 16, 1846, was never married.

11. Lydia Orvis, born March 20, 1764, married to Russell Rose, died June 3, 1857. Descendants reside in Tioga Co., Pa.

12. Huldah Orvis, born January 1766, married Jonathan Webster. Her descendants reside in Tioga Co., Pa.

13. Eunice Orvis, born October 13, 1770, married William Turner.

14. Jessie Orvis, born June 11, 1772, married Susan Holden, died May 28, 1858. His children were Alvah, Prudence, Lavina, Jesse, Eleazer and Almond, all of whom were married and raised families, except Alvah, who died

young; the rest are living, except Eleazer. Prudence married to Amaziah Warner, lives in Chemung Co, N. Y. Lavina, married to Eathan Ashley, lives in Sullivan, Tioga Co., Pa. Jessie (my father) and Almond, live in Wisconsin.

Of these fourteen children of Eleazer Orvis I have been personally acquainted with but four, Samuel, Jesse, Lydia, and Ruth. I have some acquaintance with nearly all the children of Samuel, with all the children, and most of the grandchildren of Jessie (my grandfather;) and with many of the descendants of Roger, David, Joseph, Hannah, Lydia, and Huldah.

In conclusion of this brief and imperfect sketch, I have only to repeat the request that any person who can, will correct any error which may be discovered in the foregoing, and supply me with any additional information which they may possess in regard to the history of the family.

E. E. ORVIS.

WILLIAMSPORT, PA.

FRANCIS W. ORVIS
PRINTER,
20 ROSE ST., NEW YORK.