

The Allee Family and Their Landholdings in Delaware

Nicholas d'Ailly

Nicholas d'Ailly, grandfather of Abraham Allee, was born about 1640, probably in Dunois, France. His name was later anglicized to d'Allee. About 1665, he married a widow with the last name of Tybout. Her first name is unknown. She was a member of the French nobility and a member of the Roman Catholic Church until she married Nicholas who was a Huguenot or French Protestant, and she also became a Huguenot. They had a son, Jan, later anglicized to John, born about 1665. They may have had other children, including a daughter, Rachel, born about 1670, although only Jan came with them when they came to America.

In 1680, to escape the persecutions of the Huguenots in France, Nicholas fled to Holland. There he joined a group of other Huguenot refugees, and in 1682, he, along with his wife and son, immigrated to America on a ship call the *Faith*. He landed first in New Amsterdam (New York), but then settled in a Dutch colony in Hackensack, New Jersey. There he joined a congregation of the French Reformed Church (Huguenot) that was established in 1682 at New Bridge located across the Hackensack River from Kindermaack. In 1696, the church burned and apparently all the church records were lost. Like many other Huguenots, Nicholas then became a member of the Dutch Reformed Church at Hackensack, which like the French Reformed Church (Huguenot) followed the teachings of John Calvin. Nicholas died in Hackensack in about 1700.

John Allee

John Allee (also known as Jan d'Ailly), the son of Nicholas d'Ailly, was born about 1665 in Artois, France. In 1682 he immigrated with his parents to Hackensack and lived for the next fifteen years in the Dutch settlements in Essex and Bergen Counties of New Jersey.

In 1706, he purchased six hundred acres called *Woodstock Bower* on Dutch Neck in Kent County from John Alverson and John Manford, both of New York. Woodstock Bower was located between Dawson's and Iron's Branches of Duck Creek.

(the Allee House is on this tract). John Allee and his family moved to Kent County in 1710, and in 1711, he purchased an additional three hundred-sixty acres known as *Islington Plantation*, adjacent to *Woodstock Bower*. *Islington Plantation* originally was granted to Tompass Batha in 1681. It passed through the hands of Francis Whitwell, William Berry and Francis Richardson before being purchased by John Allee. Later John Allee bought another plantation called *Pasture Point*, as well as a tract at Beaver Dam Point. John's holdings were mostly tobacco plantations, although he also planted large apple and peach orchards. His land holdings totaled about two thousand acres in Delaware.

John Allee's first marriage was in 1684 in Hackensack to Susannah LaRoe Helling, a widow. She was born in Manheim, Germany. They had a total of ten children, including Abraham Allee. Their youngest daughter, Rachel (Abraham's sister), born in 1708, married Nicholas Van Dyke in 1734, and her great granddaughter married Charles du Pont in 1824. Marquis de la Fayette attended the wedding in New Castle.

After his first wife's death in 1708, John married a widow, Maritie de Grave Terhuyne, in 1709. John Allee died in 1718.

Abraham Allee

Abraham Allee was born about 1696, probably at Hackensack although the records of the Dutch Reformed Church there do not list his birth. There also is no date of his marriage, but his wife was Mary Raymond and they had five children. He died in 1770, and she died in 1776. Prior to her death in 1776, three of their five children also died—Abraham sometime before 1770, John in 1773, and Jonathan in 1775.

Following his father's death in 1718, Abraham and his older brother, Peter, inherited the land between Dawson's and Iron's Branches. Peter was given the western half, the *Islington Plantation* tract, consisting of uplands, while Abraham got the eastern half, the *Woodstock Bower* tract, bordering on Duck Creek and consisting of both upland and marsh. A condition of John Allee's will required that Peter had to live on his inherited property, *Islington Plantation*. When he failed to do so, *Islington Plantation* reverted to his brother, Abraham. Therefore Abraham came to own both *Woodstock Bower* and *Islington Plantation*. Abraham also received from his sisters, Hannah and Mary, marshlands known as *Pasture Point* that they inherited from their father, John. He purchased *Barren Hope*, a tract of marsh and woodland along Duck Creek. Later he purchased a six hundred acre plantation known as *Hillyard's Adventure*, located on the north side of Iron's Branch and another plantation called *Calway*.

So, Abraham's landholdings, like his father's, totaled approximately two thousand acres. Although tobacco was the main crop on his father's plantations, Abraham's primary cash crops were corn, wheat, and other grains. Abraham (and probably his father as well) was a slave owner who at one time held at least nine slaves. He built several houses for himself and his children, including a two-story brick house built about 1740 on Dutch Neck, before building the Allee House in 1753.

Abraham was elected to the Assembly of the Lower Three Counties on the Delaware in 1726. Although it remained under the proprietorship of William Penn and his sons, Richard and Thomas Penn, in 1704 the three counties, New Castle, Kent, and Sussex, established their own assembly separate from that of Pennsylvania. How long he served in this Assembly is not known, but in 1738, Abraham was appointed Justice of the Peace. This was followed in 1749 by his appointment as Chief Ranger for Kent County.

Jonathan Allee

Jonathan Allee, born in 1730, inherited the Allee House and the tract on which it stands from his father, Abraham, in 1770. Five years later, in 1775, Jonathan died intestate, leaving a widow, four daughters, and a son, Abraham, who was born in 1772. The Orphans Court finally distributed Jonathan's estate among his heirs in 1790, fifteen years after his death, and his son, Abraham, was granted the Allee House and land surrounding it, a total of more than three hundred acres. The inventory of Jonathan's estate made by the Orphans Court in 1790 provided the first documented records of the Allee House, its furnishings, and its outbuildings.

Final Owners of the Allee House

In 1828, Abraham was sued by Alexander Paterson. The issue is not known, but it may have had to do with property boundaries since that had been an issue with some of his grandfather's properties and may have involved the Allee House property that had been inherited by this father and passed on to him by the Orphans Court. He lost the case, and the court ordered the sale of four parcels, including the site of the Allee House. Alexander Paterson, who had brought the suit against Abraham, bought all four parcels at a public sale ordered by the court. With this action, the Allee House was passed from the Allee family.

Sarah Peterson inherited the *Islington Farm* and the Allee House from her father in 1870, and in 1935 she transferred the property to her nephew, Daniel Corbit. In 1949 Wilmington Trust Company, acting as trustees of Daniel Corbit's estate,

sold the property to Joseph McClements. The final sale occurred in 1962 when McClements sold the property to the United States Government.

Robert W. Mayer