

Introduction to:

# Herndon and Caldwell Families of North Carolina and Virginia, 1649-1998

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## About the Author

This genealogy of 4,050 families represents more than half a century of tireless research, correspondence, and organizational work by C. Nash Herndon Jr., M.D., 1916-1998 (Her-DL-2). Dr. Herndon grew up in Greensboro, NC, and spent most of his adult life in Winston-Salem, NC, where he was a professor of genetics and associate dean for research at Wake Forest University School of Medicine (formerly named Bowman Gray School of Medicine).

The university's genetics department, organized in the 1940s, was the first academic unit established strictly for genetics at a U.S. medical school. Dr. Herndon was the junior member of the department's inaugural staff of two physicians. In those early years of his medical career, the field of genetics was quite new (it would be another decade before Watson, Crick, and Franklin would discover the double-helix structure for DNA that today's school children easily recognize, and decades more before science would map the human genome). Early work in human genetics during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century was largely genealogical in nature, seeking clues into hereditary links for diseases and birth defects through careful analysis of family medical histories. Dr. Herndon's earliest medical research took him and his colleagues into remote communities of Appalachia, where the role of heredity within relatively small and isolated populations might be more easily detected. This research typically involved building detailed family trees.



C. Nash Herndon, M.D.

Wake Forest University  
Medical School file  
photograph of the  
author, probably taken in  
the mid-1980s.

It was probably during that time, during the 1940s, that he initiated genealogical research into his own family lines, a vocation that would eventually dominate most of his free time. He joined genealogical societies, corresponded with family members and genealogists, explored cemeteries and courthouse archives, and read nearly anything he could find that might provide relevant information. For more than half a century, he continually updated his records — adding new families as they were identified, and revising existing family summaries to reflect emerging details or to add key events as they occurred among the living.

After his death in 1998, his children (my sister and I) decided that these meticulously maintained records needed to be preserved — in part to make an impressive family record accessible to any relatives who may wish to have a copy, but primarily to honor and respect a life-long project that we know was very close to our father’s heart. The materials that he collected during his decades of research filled an entire room at his home, including an elaborate card catalog for cross-referencing every individual and stacks of secondary sources (genealogical books, journals, newspaper clippings, and copies of courthouse records among them). This CD-ROM contains the distillation of his research, with the more than 4,000 family summaries or “sibships” that he compiled. These summaries alone filled an entire bookcase within his office, representing several dozen loose-leaf notebooks that typically held 200 pages each.

## **About the Title and Chapter Organization**

The title and chapter organization of this genealogy is provided by Dr. Herndon’s son, Nash Herndon, Her-DL-1, who also transferred Dr. Herndon’s typed documents onto this CD-ROM, and is the author of this introduction. Since this genealogy essentially begins with my parents (Nash and Margaret Caldwell Herndon), I have named it for the two principal family lines — the Herndon and Caldwell families. The 350-year span indicated in the title refers to the birth year for the earliest direct line ancestor within the two families to have lived in the New World (William Herndon, Her-DL-10, 1649-1722). His arrival in Virginia, around 1673, predates the first generation of Caldwells to live in this country (led by John Caldwell, Cal-DL-11, of County Donegal, Ireland, the leader of a group of Scottish-Irish Presbyterians who settled first in Pennsylvania in 1727, then moved to Virginia in 1738). The genealogy ends with Dr. Herndon’s passing in 1998, since that is the year that his work on this genealogy concluded. The title also reflects the fact that most families in this genealogy lived in Virginia or North Carolina, or are descended from people who lived in those states.

That said, there are many families documented within this work whose essential characteristics fall outside the above boundaries. Many of them predate 1649. Reliable genealogies for The St. Leger family, for example, trace this English line back more than 2,000 years, to the time of Hadwick, the first Saxon king. And as explained below, there are many more family surnames within this genealogy than the chapter headings indicate (35 surnames within the direct ancestry lines alone).

I have maintained Dr. Herndon's organizational structure for listing families, but have arranged them on this CD-ROM to reflect how each family group or surname is interlinked within Dr. Herndon's family (i.e., Herndons and Caldwells, in chapters 1 and 2, begin with the author's generation; the Mann and Forester families appear as chapters 3 and 4 because they are linked with the author's family tree in the very next generation back, the author's parents' generation; and so forth).

## How Family Records are Organized

This genealogical family tree is a record of 4,050 sibships (or immediate families) that are related, and are cataloged by their relationship to Nash and Margaret Herndon's two children (the starting point on the overall family tree, sibship Her-DL-1). Sibships are arranged according to a numbering system:

- ✦ Each begins with three letters to indicate the family surname branch involved — “Her” for the Herndon branch, “Cal” for Caldwells, etc.
- ✦ All the “direct line” ancestors from this Her-DL-1 starting point (i.e., any sibships that included a parent, grandparent, great-parent, etc.) are designated with “DL” for “direct line.” Dr. Herndon's own sibship, Her-DL-2, and that of his wife, Margaret Caldwell Herndon (Cal-DL-2), indicate that they were in the second direct line generation back from his starting point, his children's sibship (Her-DL-1). And William Herndon, Her-DL-10 (1649-1722) is 10 generations back from Dr. Herndon's children's generation, while John Caldwell, Cal-DL-11, is 11 generations back.
- ✦ For families not on this direct line, the numbering system in each family chapter begins at 11. Consequently, the three children in the family of Dr. Herndon's brother, Burke Herndon (Her-DL-2), are designated here as the Her-11 sibship. Note that the mother of Her-11 (Dorothy Cato Herndon) is not given a sibship number in this genealogy, since the Cato family ancestry is by marriage only to Dr. Herndon's children. (However, because this family was so closely related, Dr. Herndon did include a “Cato Excursus” found within the Herndon chapter, listing Dorothy Cato Herndon's sibship and their parents.)

Be aware that the initial three family letters in this numbering system will not necessarily indicate the surnames of the sibship involved. Her-12, for example, represents the children of Nina Alice Herndon (Her-DL-3), the sister of Dr. Herndon's father, who married Herbert Winston. Consequently, their six children were born with Winston surnames (and a daughter, Thelma Sudie Winston, married Hugh Bell and raised three children with the Bell surname, sibship Her-13 — designated with the “Her” sibship within this genealogical record because they are within the Herndon family tree, being second cousins of Dr. Herndon's children).

Within his notebooks, each sibship (or family) was kept on its own pages, apparently to facilitate updating the records (important in the decades before home computers were common, since new information about any sibship could be entered by simply replacing a single page about that one family). This CD-ROM maintains Dr. Herndon's system of starting a sibship on its own, new page. In a few chapters, his records were reformatted for appearance purposes (i.e., a different font was used, page numbers were added, etc.). Other chapters are presented simply as scans of his notebook pages, essentially being photographic records of his work, including his hand-written notes in margins. Most photographs, newspaper clippings, and similar illustrations in these chapters are those that were maintained within his notebooks, and I have included all written information that accompanied them (any writing on the back of a photograph, for example, is noted within its caption). In editing this work, any new information that I have added (including photograph captions) is identified as an "editor's note."

## **Explanation of Relationships**

For most families (sibships) in this genealogy, Dr. Herndon included a final notation indicating that sibship's relationship to his own immediate family (sometimes giving this relationship to himself or his wife, but often indicating the relationship to his children or parents, his wife's parents, or other close family member). For those readers with family ties to this genealogy, a brief explanation of this terminology may be helpful:

- ✠ The term "cousin" refers to people who share grandparents or are directly descended from an earlier generation. First cousins, for example, share a set of grandparents (i.e., either their father's parents or their mother's). Second cousins share a set of the same great-grandparents, third cousins share great-great-grandparents, and so on.
  
- ✠ The word "removed" is used to describe a relationship between two people of different generations. For example, your father's first cousin (who is in your father's generation), is one generation "removed" from your own generation. His first cousin is also your own first cousin, but "once removed." And your grandfather's first cousin is your first cousin twice removed, etc.

## **Copyright Statement and Recommended Citation**

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permission to reproduce any part of this work. The recommended citation for this CD-ROM is:

Herndon, C. N. (2006) *Herndon and Caldwell Families of North Carolina and Virginia, 1649-1998*. [CD-ROM]. Winston-Salem, NC: Margaret C. Herndon.

## **Bibliography**

At the end of each sibship (each individual family summary), Dr. Herndon recorded all of his sources, both primary and secondary, and typically indicated which specific details each source supported. Consequently, all of his sources (including interviews, correspondence, family Bible records, names of individuals who provided information, etc.) are recorded throughout this work.

In addition, I have added a bibliography to this CD-ROM that lists significant secondary resources, to acknowledge the excellent work of other genealogists and to help family members locate other family histories of interest. This list is limited to family genealogies, both published and unpublished, but does not include numerous articles from serial publications or scholarly journals that focused on specific families.

Nash Herndon  
Cary, NC  
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