

"Gaston. Chequy ar. on gu. three escallops in bend or.
Crest—An owl sa."

The same authority thus defines the above used terms: "Chequy," signifies checky; "escallop-shell," the pilgrims' badge in their expedition to holy shrines; "gu.," gules or red; "ar.," argent, or silver, or white; "or.," gold or yellow; and "sa.," sable, or black.

The motto for the Gaston coat of arms is, "*Fama semper vivit*, or, "*Fame lives forever*."

III

LINEAGE

There are numerous references occurring in the genealogical literature on the Gastons to the effect that they come of illustrious descent, including a long line of French royalty.

Lewin Dwinell McPherson, in a processed pamphlet on the Reid, Gaston, and Simonton families (Washington, Chicago, and Bremen, Ga., September 1939, page 15, copyrighted), gives the following account of the early lineage of the Gaston family:

The ancestry of the pioneer Gastons in America has been traced for nearly 1100 years to Foix, which is now the capital of the Department of Ariège, and during the middle ages was capital of the Counts of Foix. It is in Southwestern France, bordering the Pyrenees Mountains which separate France from Spain, and is situated between the Mediterranean Sea to the east and the Bay of Biscay and not far from either.

The first Gaston in direct line of ascent for whom dates and location are available was Jean (John) de (of) Foix. He was a direct descendant of Gaston de Foix de Nemours (b. 1489; d. 1512), a French general, son of Gion de Foix and Marie de Orleans, daughter of Charles of Orleans (d. 1461), son of Louis, Duke of Orleans, son of King John of France (1350-1364), son of Charles of Valois, son of Philip III (1285), son of Louis IX (1226-1270), son of Louis VIII (1223-1226), son of Louis VII (1137-1180), son of Louis VI (1108-1137), son of Philip I

(1060-1108), son of Henry I (1033-1060), son of Robert (996-1033), son of Hugh Capet and wife, Hedwig, who was daughter of Henry, King of Germany (b. 876; d. 973), son of Otto, Duke of Saxony.

The following data were secured by John Gordon Gaston of Woodruff, South Carolina, from materials supplied by Judge Arthur L. Gaston of Chester, South Carolina.

The Jean Gaston referred to below was the French Huguenot emigrant to Scotland from whom the Gaston family of the United States are derived. The following genealogical data are incomplete, but serve to show the royal lineage of Jean Gaston and his descendants.

THE ROYAL LINEAGE OF JEAN GASTON¹ OF FRANCE

Gaston I—Centule, Count of Bearn, 940-984.
b. 905; d. 984.

Issue:

Centule II Gaston, 984-1004.

Issue:

1—Gaston II, d. 1012.

Issue:

Centule III, Gaston—
Assas. 1058.

Mar. Angela of Gasconne
Issue:

Gaston III, d. 1060.
Mar. Adelaide, dau.
of Grand Duke of
Armagnac

Issue:

1. Centule IV.

¹Much interesting material on many of the individuals named in this lineage can be found in the French language in the following volumes, for example: *Biographie Universelle, Ancienne et Moderne*, chez L. G. Michaud, Imprimeur-Libraire, a Paris, 1818, Tome 16, pp. 544-545, provides an interesting account of Gaston, vicomte de Bearn, who was one of the most distinguished of the first crusaders, around 1097 A. D. Volume 16 of the same work, pages 131-132, gives a biographical sketch of Gaston III, comte de Foix, born in 1331; and Volume 32, pages 83-102, treats at length of Gaston Jean Baptiste de France, duc d'Orleans. Similarly in *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, Volume 18, pages 38-47, and Volume 19, pages 603-614, are to be found short sketches, in the French language, of Gaston (Centule I), Gaston (Centule II), Gaston (Centule III), and Gaston I, Gaston III, Gaston IV, Gaston V, Gaston VI, and Gaston VII.

Centule IV—d. 1088. Count of Bearn, 1060-1088.

Mar. 1st. 1070, Gesele

Issue:

1. Gaston IV. d. 1130. Count of Bearn, 1088-1130.

Mar. Talese

Issue:

1. Centule V, d. 1134 without posterity.
2. Pierre, d. 1154. Count of Bearn, 1134-1153.

Issue:

Gaston V. d. 1170

Mar. Saucie, dau. of
Garcia Baminez of Na-
varre. WP.

Marie—d. 1186. Countess of Bearn, 1176-1186.

Mar. 1170, Guillaume 1 Moncade, son of Guillaume
Raymond of Navarre

Issue:

1. Gaston VI, d. 1215. Count of Bearn, 1186-1215.

2. Guillaume Raymond

Gaston VI. Mar. 1196, Petronville,
Countess of Bigorre, d. 1251. WP

Guillaume Raymond, d. 1223. Countess
of Bigorre, 1215-1223

Issue:

Guillaume II, d. 1229.

Guillaume II, Count of Bigorre, 1223-1229.

Mar. Gerseude, Countess of Forcalquier

Issue:

Gaston VII, d. 1290, Count of Bi-
gorre, 1229-1290.

Mar. 1st—Mathe of Bigorre.

2nd Beatriz of Savoy

Issue:

Marquisite. Mar. Roger
Bernard, 1211, Count of
Foix

Issue:

Gaston 1—Count of
Foix, 1302-1315

Mar. Jeanner of
Artois

Issue: Gaston II
(1306 - 1343)

Count of Foix
Mar. Eleanore
of Comminges

Issue:

(Phoebus)

1. Gaston
III, b. 1331;
d. 1391.

Gaston III, b. 1331; d. 1391.

Mar. Agnes of Navarre in 1348, dau. of Phillip III.

Issue:

Matthieu, Count of Foix, 1391-1398.

Mar. Jeanne, dau. Juan I of Aragon. WP

Isabelle, Countess of Foix, 1398.

Mar. Archambaud de Grailli, d. 1412.

Count of Foix, 1398-1412.

Issue:

Gaston, Count of Canaples.

Mar. Catherine, dau. of Elean-
ore, Queen of Navarre

Issue:

Jean, Count of Foix.

Mar. Anna of Navarre, d. 1532.

Issue:

Gaston IV, b. 1423; d. 1472.

Gaston IV, Count of Foix, b. 1423; d. July 1472,
Mar. Eleanore, Queen of Navarre, 1434, daughter of
Jean, King of Aragon; d. 1479.

Issue:

Gaston I, Count of Foix, and Prince of Vienna,
b. 1442; d. 1486.

Mar. 1469 Magdalene, dau. of Charles VII,
King of France in 1493

Issue:

Gaston II, Count of Narbonne, 1489;
Duke of Nemours, 1507

Mar. Anna of Navarre. . .

Data incomplete

Jean Gaston, born 1600

William

John

Alexander

IV

JEAN GASTON

OF FRANCE AND SCOTLAND

Jean (John) Gaston was born in France in 1600. He was a Huguenot, and, for this reason he was banished from France, his property was confiscated, and he sought refuge in Scotland.

It was early in the 16th century that Protestantism arose in France, and the movement was given a great impetus by the ideas of Martin Luther (1483-1546), leader of the Protestant Reformation. France had long been a leading Catholic stronghold, so immediately upon the emergence of Protestantism, it was persecuted, in spite of the comparative tolerance exhibited by Francis I (1494-1547), King of France, whose sister, Margaret of Navarre, was a leading protector of the Protestants.

The Protestants in France were called Huguenots, and as they grew in numbers, their persecution was increased. Nevertheless, they grew more and more numerous, and by 1559 there were enough of them to convene a national synod. This body "set up a church with Calvinistic doctrine and Presbyterian government, and its unity was one of the principal causes for the success of the Huguenots in fighting against overwhelming odds."¹ The leaders of the Protestants at this time were the princes de Condé, and Antoine de Bourbon, whose wife was the daughter of Margaret of Navarre.

In the year 1560, bloodshed began in the religious struggle which was to continue until 1593. It was during this period and the reign of Charles IX that the terrible Massacre of St. Bartholomew occurred, which began in Paris on August 24, 1572 and was characterized by widespread slaughter of Protestants all over France, one authority estimating the number of victims as high as seventy thousand.

After Henry of Navarre became Henry IV (1553-1610),

¹The Columbia Encyclopedia, Columbia University Press, New York, 1935, page 858.

king of France (1589-1610), he issued in 1598 the famous Edict of Nantes which established Protestantism in as many as 200 towns and authorized freedom of worship everywhere. The Huguenots became in succeeding years an important element in French life; and they were especially strong among the bourgeois and skilled artisan classes. Cardinal Richelieu (1585-1642), powerful Catholic prelate and highly influential chief minister of Louis XIII (1601-1643), broke the civil power of the Huguenots, but continued to allow them freedom of worship, a policy continued by Cardinal Mazarin (1602-1661), who succeeded Richelieu as chief minister to the king.

Louis XIV (1638-1715), however, wished to suppress Protestantism in France, and after years of brutalities toward them, he revoked in 1685 the Edict of Nantes, forcing the alternatives of either Catholicism or exile upon the Huguenots. Some 500,000 of them chose exile and momentary financial ruin.

As a rule, the refugees were not illiterate peasants; the poor labourer had not the means to travel far; they perforce had to stay, and some of them became the *Camisards*. Most refugees, on the contrary, belonged to the best classes; some of them were practically masters of the supply of certain articles, so that their loss was severely felt by the nation soon after their departure: in the first place, essential industries had disappeared or had been greatly weakened; in the second place, rival countries had gained as much as we had lost.¹

They fled to England, to the Low Countries, and to the colonies of these nations. Large numbers came to America, settling especially in the Carolinas, Pennsylvania, and New York, where they constituted one of the most substantial elements in the economic and social life of these colonies. Their descendants today continue to exhibit the same indomitable love of freedom, strength of religious conviction, and zeal for civic righteousness.

It was in these days of religious stress and persecution for the Huguenots in France that Jean Gaston took refuge in Scotland, the stronghold of Presbyterianism, and estab-

¹E. Saillens, *Facts About France*, Hachette et Cie., Paris, 1918, pages 103-104.

lished the beginnings of a new, stronger, and more democratic type of dynasty that was to long outlast the insecurity of the succession to the throne of his royal relatives in France. This Jean Gaston had, among others, three sons: John, William, and Alexander, who all emigrated from Scotland to county Antrim in northeastern Ireland, about 1660-1668. It was just about this time, the middle of the 17th century, that the Presbyterian Church was being strongly established in this part of Ireland, known as Ulster. The English were imposing Episcopalianism upon the Scotch with a great deal of religious strife and persecution as a result. Such compulsion was evidently as distasteful to the sons in Scotland as it had been to the father before them in France, so they moved to county Antrim, Ireland, where they could worship according to the dictates of their conscience. Of the three sons of Jean Gaston, probably John (whose name appears on the hearth-money rate list for Ireland in 1669, as of Magheragall, county Antrim) had issue, among others, several sons, some of whom remained in Ireland, some emigrating to America, as did also the sons of other brothers.

V

WILLIAM GASTON¹

OF CARANLEAGH, CLOUGHWATER,
COUNTY ANTRIM, IRELAND

One of the Gastons, grandson of Jean Gaston of France, who remained in Ireland, was known as the "first Irish William," and lived at Caranleagh, Cloughwater, near Ballymena, county Antrim, Ireland. Although this William Gaston remained in Ireland, his children all emigrated to America and eventually settled in South Carolina.

The first Irish William Gaston was born at Caranleagh, Cloughwater, County Antrim, Ireland, about 1680-90; died about 1770; married Olivet Lemon; had issue: 1. John,²

¹See *Ohio Valley Genealogies*, pages 40-43.

²This is the emigrant ancestor of the family of Judge Arthur L. Gaston of Chester County, South Carolina.

died 1782; married Esther Waugh, died 1789; emigrated to Pennsylvania, and thence removed about 1751-52 to Chester District, South Carolina, settling on Fishing Creek. 2. Elizabeth, married John Knox; settled in South Carolina. 3. Hugh, a minister, who emigrated to America and died on October 20, 1766 at the house of his brother, John, shortly after landing. 4. Mary, married James McClure; emigrated to America, and settled in South Carolina. 5. Robert, emigrated to America, and settled on Lynch's Creek, Lancaster County, South Carolina (see following section for this line). 6. Janet, married Charles Strong, emigrated to America, and settled in South Carolina. 7. William, drowned at Kell's Ford, Chester County, South Carolina; married after his fortieth year — Harbison, sister of James Harbison. 8. Martha, married Alexander Rosborough; emigrated to America and settled in South Carolina. 9. Alexander,¹ a physician, emigrated to America, and settled at Newberne, North Carolina, where he was killed by the British and Tories, August 20, 1781.

In view of the fact that frequent inquiries have been made with regard to the relationship of the members of the Amzi Williford Gaston line to the distinguished North Carolina jurist, Hon. William Gaston, for whom Gaston County and its county seat, Gastonia, are named, it is perhaps well, without prejudice to other Gastons of distinction, to give a brief sketch of his achievements, as adapted from the account by Professor R. D. W. Connor of the University of North Carolina in the *Dictionary of American Biography*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1931, Volume VIII, pp. 180-181:

GASTON, WILLIAM (Sept. 19, 1778-Jan. 23, 1844), jurist, was born in New Bern, N. C. His father, Alexander Gaston, a native of Ireland and a descendant of the French Huguenot, Jean Gaston, had been a surgeon in the British Navy before settling in New Bern in 1765. There in 1775 he married Margaret Sharpe, an English woman of Catholic parentage. In 1781, Dr. Gaston, who was an ardent Whig, was

¹This Dr. Alexander Gaston was the father of Judge William Gaston, Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court, for whom Gaston County, North Carolina, was named.

murdered by a band of Tories, in the presence of his wife and two children, Jane and William. Thereafter the great object of Margaret Gaston's life was the education of her son. Her deep piety and rare intellectual and moral qualities made an indelible impression upon his mind and character. . . . in 1794 entered the College of New Jersey from which he was graduated in 1796, with the highest honors of his class . . . Admitted to the bar in 1798. . . .

In politics Gaston was a Federalist. Between 1800 and 1832 he served four terms in the state Senate and seven in the House of Commons . . . He had also a brief but brilliant career in national politics. In 1808 he was a presidential elector, and from 1813 to 1817 served in Congress . . . In 1817, he voluntarily retired from Congress and never again entered national politics, declining in 1840 the offer of the United States senatorship and in 1841 the offer of a seat as attorney-general in Harrison's cabinet. . . .

Gaston served on the supreme court from 1833 to 1844. His opinions, published in Volumes XV to XXXVIII, inclusive, of the *North Carolina Reports*, display profound learning, clarity of reasoning, and vigor of expression; they are also distinguished for their broad humanitarian spirit. . . .

Gaston's reputation was national. His services as a speaker were in constant demand throughout the country. . . He was a trustee of the University of North Carolina for forty-two years. He was married three times. By his first wife, Susan Hay, who died within a year of her marriage, he had no children. To his second wife, Hannah McClure, were born two daughters and a son, Alexander. His third wife was Eliza Worthington, by whom he had two daughters. He died suddenly in Raleigh, and was buried in New Bern.

From the foregoing data, it will be observed that Dr. Alexander Gaston, father of Hon. William Gaston, a sketch of whose career has just been given, was a brother of Robert Gaston, an account of whom is given in the immediately following section.