

The Long Gray Line on the Long Grey Trail

A Family Journey Through American History

The Long Gray Line on the Long Grey Trail follows one branch of the Hensler family across nearly 300 years of American history. Beginning with Isaiah Harrison, born in Chester, England in 1666, the story traces a remarkable migration from England to Long Island, then Delaware, the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, eastern Tennessee, Atlanta, Georgia, and finally Cincinnati, Ohio. Isaiah Harrison arrived in New York in 1687 aboard the ship *Spotted Calf*. A skilled blacksmith, he became one of the early settlers of Oyster Bay and later moved his family to Delaware. In the 1730s the family joined the migration into the Shenandoah Valley, helping open the American frontier. His son Daniel Harrison became one of the first settlers of present-day Dayton, Virginia. In 1749 he built the stone home now known as Fort Harrison. During the dangerous frontier years preceding the French and Indian War, the house served as a refuge for settlers and remains a symbol of pioneer resilience. Daniel's daughter Abigail Harrison married Jeremiah Reagan. During the Revolutionary War, Jeremiah supplied provisions to the Continental Army and supported the cause of American independence. Their descendants continued down the historic Long Grey Trail into eastern Tennessee. The next generations carried the family into Tennessee and then Atlanta. Mary Ann Reagin and Easter Hicks connected the Harrison-Reagan line to the Gray family. William H. Gray participated in Atlanta's post-Civil War growth and is buried in historic Oakland Cemetery. Their son Samuel S. Gray worked as a printer in Atlanta before moving north to Cincinnati. His son Clarence Ward Gray followed the same trade, linking the family's southern roots with its future in Ohio. Clarence and Genevieve Wright became the parents of Dorothy Anna Gray, who married George Hensler. Through Dorothy, the Gray family story joined the Hensler family story and passed its legacy to future generations. More than a genealogy, this story is a journey through the settlement of America. It spans immigration, frontier life, the Revolutionary War, westward migration, industrial growth, and family perseverance. The recurring theme is resilience: generation after generation adapting to new places, overcoming hardship, and creating opportunities for those who followed. The Long Grey Trail is ultimately a story of endurance, courage, and gratitude for the ordinary people whose lives helped shape both a family and a nation.