

**The Search for the  
Ancestors and Descendants  
of Henry Brasater Drake of  
Coles County, Illinois**

**By  
Michael E. Drake**

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## Acknowledgements

Of course, I could not have written this book without the help and understanding of my wife Boge. (Her real name is Sandra. Boge rhymes with rogue.) She understood my obsession with the project from the beginning and never objected to the expense of time or money.

My search for Drakes would have ended prematurely without the invaluable guidance provided by my friend, Clyde Bunch of Nicholasville, Kentucky.

I must extend gratitude to Helen Drake who has kept records for family members for years recording births, marriages, and deaths. From the beginning, she shared everything with me.

I thank Eileen Drake Harlow of Brigham City, Utah for pulling it all together. Her mother and father began collecting information on our wing of the Drake family in the early 1920's. Eileen shared and collaborated in the true tradition of genealogists around the country. A more sharing bunch, you'll never run into.



## **Introduction**

The latest edition of the work is an update. Since the early 1990's there has been an explosion of available information. That and the ability to communicate with other people who are looking for their roots by e-mail has allowed me to correct some errors and add to my knowledge about this wing of the Drake family in America. The last section in this edition is my best guess as to who the progenitor of this wing was in New Kent County, Virginia. I could not have written this segment of the book as it was originally published. The computer just wasn't strong enough or available enough.

Originally, the book was designed as a guide to understanding my wing of the family confirming for readers who they were and who they were not. For many it can used as a quick reference as to where they fall into the picture of the Drake family in America.

It is a time ordered narrative. I tell the story of my search for ancestors as it unfolded. I hope others who have undertaken the search for roots can read it and empathize with the mistakes, the false assumptions, the nagging need to know about just one more generation, the disappointments, and finally the joy of learning some true things about ancestors.

Moreover, it is a detective story that gets partially solved. In that regard it is like all family histories. No matter how much research

is done, there is always another generation to be uncovered. The story will always have a beginning and a middle, but it will never have an end. That's genealogy.

## **About the Author**



Michael Drake was born in Charleston, Illinois on March 13, 1944. He was the third of five brothers, all of whom were raised in Charleston, a city that regularly makes the top 100 Best Places in America to Grow Up. He graduated from Charleston High School in

1962. He attended Eastern Illinois University, also located in Charleston, from 1962 through 1967 earning a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education. Married as a student at the university, Mr. Drake's first child Darren was born in 1964. Mr. Drake went to work at Lyons Township High School in LaGrange, Illinois in the fall of 1967 where he taught speech, drama and English for 34 years. In 1972, he earned a masters degree from Eastern. He retired from teaching in the spring of 2001. In 1984, he married Sandra Jo Robinson of Shelbyville, Illinois. The couple has two children, Meghan, 16 and Nate, 15. They both attend Lyons Township High School. Boge is the front office secretary at the local junior high school. Mr. Drake is an incurable journalist having kept a daily journal since 1974. He has written several plays which he produced as a high school drama coach. The one of which he is most proud is a musical play featuring country and western music. You guessed it, he loves to play and sing country music. In the short time since Mr. Drake retired from teaching, he has pursued his hobby of woodworking and writing. He is currently writing a novel which will serve as a model for a book explaining a method of how to write one's first novel, a sort of writing novels for dummies. Oh, yes, he still maintains contact with Drake genealogists around the country.

## One

Information is like minerals. The less of it there is, the more valuable. In Henry Brasater Drake's family Bible, I found a yellowed clipping from *The Plaindealer*, a now defunct newspaper that was once published in my home town of Charleston, Illinois.

### **\$3,000,000,000 Estate Charleston Heirs of Sir Francis Drake Interested & May Investigate**

*Plaindealer* readers will probably have noticed reports concerning a vast estate left by Sir Francis Drake in England and the probability of American heirs being benefited by it.

Charleston has a number of directly interested people. A number of children of Elijah Drake, who is said to be a direct descendant of the intrepid old navigator, live in the city.

The members of the family are: Madames Isaac Clark, Eugene Frisbe and Milt and Pete Drake of this city, Madames Martha McKee of Mattoon, and Fannie Johns of Brazil, Indiana, and Joe Drake of Newberg, Indiana. Mrs. Clark also has a niece in this city, Miss Cynthia Drake, and a nephew in Neoga, Harry Drake, who are interested.

It is expected that these heirs will have a meeting here in the near future to discuss the advisability of a thorough investigation claims (illegible) report has it that the estate is valued at three billion dollars.

I had heard the story from my grandfather, along with many other stories. Until a few years ago, I assumed that most of the family history had passed on with my Grandfather Drake, who died in 1972. I did not know how much of what he told me about everything was myth. One day I got curious.

I asked my Dad, "Who was your Great Grandfather?"

"I don't know," he said. Sitting in his favorite armchair in front of a Chicago Cubs broadcast, he thought about it for a time. Then he said, "My Dad always said it was Ervin Drake." He cocked his head slightly and squinted his eyes. "Yeah, I do remember that much," he concluded. With a quick nod of his head, he went back to his ball game. Dad just was not that interested in his roots.

My name is Michael Eugene Drake. I was born in Charleston, Illinois on March 13, 1944. Donald Franklin Drake, my Dad, was in the Marine Corps at the time. He was born in Paradise Township of Coles County on July 11, 1916.

I had gotten about all the information out of my father as I was ever going to get, so that afternoon I went to the Coles County Courthouse located in the middle of Charleston's town square. I found some information. The next stop was Mound Cemetery, the biggest burial ground in the town. It was overcast and drizzling rain. Thunder rolled in the distance. My shoes got soaked as I made my way from one head stone to the next looking for a name. I was hoping I could find the grave stone of my Great Great Grandmother's

second husband. I found it. It was not very exciting, and I walked back toward my car. That was when I found a cluster of family graves that neither my Dad nor Mom knew existed.

By this time I was hooked and beginning to crave more information, so, on Dad's advice, I called Dad's cousin, Cynthia Sherman. Cynthia had, by default, become the unofficial family historian. She gave me what information she had, but I was still not satisfied.

It was the summer of 1978, and I wanted to find a library with some real information. I left Charleston with my mother. I would drop her off at Anderson, Indiana where she would visit a distant cousin, and then drive to Fort Wayne where one of the ten best genealogical libraries in the country is located. It is a great library, but I was very inexperienced and had not budgeted enough time. I did find some information, but it just confirmed what I already had. No one else in the family seemed very interested, so I put the whole question aside for years until I got a phone call from a distant cousin who lives in Charleston. I had not lived there since the fall of 1967. His name is Bob Schwartz, and Bob wanted me to send him any information on the Drake family that I had. I rummaged around in the attic, found the papers I had kept, copied them and sent the copies to him. Going over the old information, meager as it was, piqued my interest once again.

I live in LaGrange, Illinois. The village has a good library so I resumed my search for ancestors in the local library. There was actually a good section on genealogy there. Finding more information than I thought I would, I was at it again. I found I loved it.

I scanned census records from Virginia and Kentucky knew that I was looking at names of ancestors. But I could not determine the relationships. I looked, contemplated and studied for hours and hours, but know that I could only guess at relationships. I made a trip to the Chicago Public Library. Not much help there. Then, early in April, 1993, Boge, my wife, and I drove with our two young children to Fort Wayne, Indiana. By this time Boge (Her real name is Sandra Jo, but she has carried the nickname of Boge since she was a small girl growing up in Shelbyville, Illinois.) had developed an interest in her own genealogy and was anxious to track her ancestors. Her maiden name was Robinson, and that was the name in which she was developing an interest.

We checked into the Holiday Inn. The kids wanted to go swimming, so we opened a bottle of wine, changed into our bathing suits and walked to the pool area. There we sat watching the children splash and talking about what we might find at the Allen County Library the following day.

The next morning I left Boge and the kids at the motel and found the library. I had no idea where to start. After asking a few dumb questions of the library staff, I determined a course of action. I would look for family histories that had already been published. Maybe someone had already done this work, I thought. Looking in the card catalog, I found family histories of the Drake family. I was encouraged because there were more volumes in the library than there had been 15 years earlier when I had made the first trip to Fort Wayne.

When I found something I wanted to look at, I had to fill out a yellow slip of paper, place it in a tray and wait until library staff could

go into the stacks and bring the volume back to me at one of the work stations.

What was I looking for? I had one name that could connect me with ancestors who had lived prior to 1830. I was looking for any kind of reference to Greenberry Drake. Thank God, I thought, it is an unusual name, a name unlikely to be duplicated.

But why Greenberry Drake? Fifteen years before, I had reasoned that Greenberry Drake was the most likely candidate to be my Great Great Great Great Grandfather. Family records provided by my Great Grandfather and recorded by the wife of a second cousin were clear in naming Elijah Drake, whose birthdate was October 22, 1814, as my Great Great Great Grandfather. Elijah Drake had lived in Clay County, Indiana in 1840 and 1850 as evidenced by the Census Records. In fact, he was a resident of Jackson Township of that county. Elijah Drake's birthplace, according to the Census, was Kentucky. The only other Drake living in Jackson Township of Clay County, Indiana in 1840, was Greenberry Drake. Census records indicated that Greenberry Drake was between 40 and 50 years old in 1840. Elijah Drake would have been 25 or 26 years old when the Census records were made. The age difference was right. Greenberry was old enough to be Elijah's father. Further, I knew that a Greenberry Drake had lived in Meade County, Kentucky in 1830. The Greenberry Drake of Meade County, Kentucky in 1830 was between 30 and 40 years old. It had to be the same guy. He had to come from Kentucky. There was no doubt in my mind that Greenberry was Elijah's father.

So where had Greenberry been prior to 1830? I checked the existing Drake family histories trying to find reference to Greenberry

Drake but had no luck. So I sat in the library thrumming my fingers at the work station wondering what to try next.

Finally, I wandered rather aimlessly into the large room where the Census files were kept and picked up the index for the state of Kentucky for the year 1820. Quickly paging to the Drake section, I looked up and saw Boge viewing microfilm from Shelby County, Illinois. It was afternoon by this time and Boge and the children had joined me in the library. I found the name Berry Drake in Barren County. It was not Greenberry, but it was all I had. I found the microfilm and took it to the viewer. Our children, Meghan, the seven year old, and Nate, the six year old, were already beginning to complain. They wanted to get back to Don Halls's Guest House and the swimming pool. We had decided not to spend a second night at the Holiday Inn. I brushed the kids aside and inserted the microfilm.

Berry Drake was the right age and he had the right number of children. Maybe he had reported himself as Berry Drake in 1820. If my name were Greenberry, I might want to shorten it myself, I thought. Berry Drake was all I had so I had to go with it.

So I had a place with which to work. Back in the large room containing the card catalogs, I found the section containing regional histories and began looking for everything from Barren County, Kentucky I could find.

The children occupied the only couch in the large room. It sat in a nook near a wall divider. Nate fell asleep. Meghan sat with a dull look in her eye. At regular five minute intervals, she approached either me or her mother asking, "Can we go back to the motel? Please?" She was dying of boredom.

"Sit down and wait until we're ready," Boge snapped each time. "We do things for you all the time, every day." Meghan would slump and moan. "Go sit down!"

"Okay," our daughter would moan. With shoulders slumped she would paddle back to the couch. Mercifully, Nate was still asleep.

Information was slow in coming. Boge and I were filling out yellow slips and waiting for books to be brought by a harried looking coed. Every so often the girl would drop a plainly bound book in front of us. One would be for me. The next, for Boge. Each time I got a volume from Barren County, Kentucky, I flipped to the back pages looking for the index. Would I find the name Drake? Greenberry Drake? It was discouraging. After waiting up to twenty minutes for the book, in twenty seconds I would discover nothing about Greenberry Drake. I would then brusquely set the volume aside and wait for the next one. Boge's luck was no better than mine.

Meghan was near death from boredom. I wondered how much longer we could stay without a little girl tragedy.

Nothing from the church records in Barren County. So Greenberry was not reiligious. Maybe he didn't even exist, I thought, feeling very discouraged. Looking to my left, I saw that Boge had struck out again too. It looked like it wasn't our day. "I'm ready to go if you are," I said.

"Okay, " she said snapping her book closed. "I'm getting nowhere fast." She glanced at our children who were still on the couch. Nate was asleep but Meghan's head was lolling and her eyes were rolled back. She was in an agonized coma. "Let's go," Boge said.

Plunk!

The volume in front of me was orange-brown. The plain white print on the binding proclaimed that it contained survey records from Barren County, Kentucky, and it was edited by Sandra K. Gorin of Glasgow, Kentucky. This won't take long, I thought. I turned to the index.

"Granberry (?) Drake," it said. Also listed were an Ephraim Drake and an S. Drake. I couldn't believe it. I had found him! The kids could go swimming at the hotel, and I could walk away feeling some satisfaction at having found that Greenberry Drake lived in Barren County, Kentucky in 1823.

## Two

According to the family Bible, Rosco Edward Drake, my grandfather, was born May 26, 1890. When his wife died in 1953, he widowed for a while and then decided to get married for a second time to May Adkins. He and May ran a small rest home for old men in Strasburg, Illinois for a time. Then May left him. I never knew why. Grandpa tried to run the place on his own for a while, but old age caught up to him. He had to give it up. Grandpa moved in with us around 1960.

The old man loved horses, mules, Western television programs like *Rawhide* and Red Man chewing tobacco. I loved his stories.

"Got mad at the foreman once--down in the Casey oil fields," he told me. He stood in the kitchen of my mother and father's house leaning against the sink. His hand trembled slightly from the Parkinson's disease, as it had since his bout with encephalitis back in 1916, and he wore green kaki pants and shirt. "I hit him with a pipe wrench. Thought I had murdered him." Grandpa smiled and swallowed. He never spat, being a real man in that way. His jaw was crammed with Red Man. "I galloped my horse for two days trying to make a clean get-away. Honestly thought I'd killed the man."

"Had you killed him?" I asked.

"No, just knocked him cold."

Ross Drake could explain why mules were better pulling animals than regular work horses. He could find water with a peach branch and had made a living doing it for several years back in the Twenties. He could plow a straight furrow behind a single mule. The truth is, my grandfather fascinated me because he had one foot planted firmly in the Nineteenth Century while his other foot had trod most of the Twentieth Century. He was a walking history lesson and I was very interested in history.

One day as we stood in the kitchen sipping coffee, he held an unusual looking dish in his palsied hand. It was a serving dish made of cast iron and covered with an off white porcelain. "That dish," he said came over with the family."

"Where did the family come from?" I asked.

"England," he said. "They came to Virginia and then went to Kentucky. Then they came here." I noted what he had said, put it away for future reference. I should have gotten paper and pencil and begun writing. But, like most teenagers, I did not think ahead. Anyway, I have the dish and the regret of not asking more of the old man. I never knew if was telling the truth, even though he often prefaced remarks with, "This is the God's honest truth." He once told me how his grandmother and grandfather were involved in a riot in my home town of Charleston, Illinois during the Civil War. According to him, his grandmother had struck a copperhead (The common name for Southern sympathizers during the Civil War) and had given a very patriotic retort to the copperhead's treasonable utterances being made in a local barroom. Ross made his grandmother the heroine of his story. The riot is described in the history books, but I could find no mention of James Ervin Drake or his wife Evaline (McKee) Drake.

Stamped in black on the back of the dish Grandpa showed me that day was a coat of arms featuring a lion and unicorn flanking a shield. The shield had Latin words printed on it:

*HOMI SOIT QUI MALIPENSE.*

Over the coat of arms is written,

"IRONSTONE CHINA"

Below the shield,

"J&G MEAKIN, EASTWOOD WORKS  
MANLEY, ENGLAN".



## Three

My grandfather had told me that we came from England to Virginia. From there we had come to Kentucky. I had found Greenberry Drake in Barren County, Kentucky. If I were to discover more, it seemed to me, I had to learn more about Kentucky history.

The story of Kentucky begins with Daniel Boone. Boone is Kentucky. His life and contributions to the settlement of the state are the best documented and most often told. His life is representative of the typical hunter, adventurer, explorer and settlers to whom Kentucky meant so many things. Abbreviated versions of some of Boone's experiences are worthwhile for this narrative because he is, in many ways, so typical.

Late in 1768, John Findley visited Daniel Boone's home in the Yadkin Valley of North Carolina. Findley has been to Kentucky, and he told Boone of the promise of this new land that lay just west of the mountains. He paints an irresistible picture of rich soil and plentiful game. Findley explains to Daniel Boone how the Indians' highway called the Warrior's Path can be followed to Kentucky.

On May 1, 1769, Findley and Boone leave for Kentucky. With them are Joe Stuart--Boone's brother-in-law--James Holden, James Mooney and William Cooley. The four extra men go with Findley and Boone as camp keepers. On June 7, Daniel Boone gets his first glimpse of the new territory.

The hunting is good. All goes well until the group meets the Shawnee Indian Chief, Captain Will. Captain Will and the braves with whom he travels take the party's furs and weapons. The Indians release the white men telling them that they are hunting in the Shawnee's hunting ground. Sternly, the Shawnee tell Boone and the others to leave Kentucky and never come back.

Boone then displays the character that played such an important role in the taming of the new territory. He ignores Captain Will's threats and, along with Joe Stuart, trails the Indians. When the opportunity presented itself, Daniel Boone and Joe Stuart steal four of the Indian's ponies and head south thinking they had evened the score somewhat.

Two days later, however, Captain Will overtook Boone and Stuart. The Indians took their horses back and hold the two men hostage for seven days while they head north toward the Ohio River. They were headed for the Shawnee stronghold north of the river. But before they got there, they released Boone and Stuart a second time.

Feeling exhausted but unbeaten, Boone and Stuart return to their permanent hunting camp where they find the rest of their group. With them was Boone's brother, Squire. Most of the original hunting party had had enough of Kentucky and began the return journey to North Carolina. Squire Boone, who had made the trip to bring fresh supplies to the hunting party, agreed to stay with his brother to go on with the hunting. Daniel Boone was not easily dissuaded. He had come to the new country to make money from furs. He had been in the wilderness for nearly six months. The Indians had taken everything. Boone would not return to the civilized settlements with nothing to sell. He had been a hunter most of his life. Probably, he

liked the exploring, the sense of uncertainty and the solitude as much as the hunting.

On the return trip, Joe Stuart was lost. His body would be found five years later when the first settlers were cutting a road through the country from Virginia to Kentucky. They found that Stuart had been shot through the arm. The arm was broken, and Stuart fired off all his ammunition in the vain hope of getting the attention of someone in the rest of the party. The trail to Kentucky was inviting and unforgiving.

By May of 1770, Squire Boone returned to North Carolina with a load of pelts leaving his brother in the forest. Alone, Daniel Boone explores as far north as the Ohio River Falls located near present day Louisville. He takes a look at both Upper and Lower Blue Licks as well as Big Bone Lick, so named because of the bones of ancient mammoths that were there. He later tells his family that he had seen an Indian fishing from a log. "While I was looking at the fellow," said Daniel, "he tumbled into the river and I saw him no more." Most speculated that Daniel Boone had been "looking" at the doomed Indian down the sights of his favorite rifle, Old Tick Licker. Mr. Boone carved his initials in caves and on the trunks of beech trees all over northeastern Kentucky. Once, he jumped from a sixty foot high cliff into the branches of the trees below to escape Indians.

July 27, 1770, Squire Boone returns from the settlements with fresh supplies. The two brothers continued to hunt, avoid Indians and explore.

In March 1771, they join forces with other Long Hunters from Virginia. The larger force of white men continue their exploration of

the new country in the Green River Valley in what is now Central Kentucky.

The Long Hunters were a part of about forty men who had entered Kentucky territory as early as 1768. They had explored and hunted as far south as present day Nashville, Tennessee. Leaders of the hunting party were Henry Skaggs and Joseph Drake. Typically, the Long Hunters left the settlements in Virginia and North Carolina with each man in the possession of three pack horses. On the pack animals they carried rifles, ammunition, blankets, traps and salt for curing the hides they intended to take.

By February of 1771, only fourteen of the original party of Long Hunters were left. The others had gone home. The camp of the remaining hunters was raided by Indians. The raid was led by Will Emery, a half breed Cherokee. The Indians made off with all the skins the party had collected. Before departing, the hunters carved on a beech tree, "FIFTEEN HUNDRED SKINS GONE TO RUINATION."

The Long Hunters were once startled by a strange noise coming from deep in the woods. Always wary of Indians, one of the hunters, Casper Mankser, grabbed his rifle and told the others to keep quiet while he went to investigate. Mankser did not think he was looking for a strange animal because the direction of the noise never varied. He worried that it was an Indian trap. He approached the strange sound cautiously as only an experienced woodsman could. From behind a tree, he finally discovered the source of the mystifying sound. Lying flat on his back was a man staring straight into the heavens singing a hymn at the top of his lungs. It was Daniel Boone. Boone admitted to a penchant for singing when he was alone in the

wilderness. Out of loneliness perhaps. Maybe he did it because he was feeling the need to hear a human voice, even if it were his own. Anyway, it is better, perhaps, that he sang in solitude. The Long Hunters did not recognize the sounds of the great pioneer as those of a fellow human being.

The Long Hunters, including Daniel and Squire Boone, spent time together exploring the Cumberland and Green Rivers. In that year only a handful of white men were in that part of the world matching with scores, perhaps hundreds, of Indians who maintained a fierce stewardship over the fish and game.

They maintained a permanent camp near the Barren River close to where the present day city of Bowling Green is located. One tributary to the Barren River is still called Drake's Creek, named for Joseph Drake, who, along with Henry Skaggs, had led the group into the area. Nearby is another creek named for Henry Skaggs.

It was the spring of 1993. I had found a man named Drake who is credited with having helped in opening up the new territory of Western Virginia. I could only wonder if, somehow, he was related to my branch of the family. It was an exciting prospect, and I wanted very much to claim this man as a direct ancestor. So I began reading all I could about Long Hunters. The books I found in the local library were very vague. Long Hunters were given only a passing comment and were sometimes touched on in footnotes only. Most of the sources I found were vague about where the hunters had come from. I have seen maps with the supposed routes of the hunters drawn showing that they made their way to what is now Nashville. From that point, the dotted line ran west to the Mississippi River. The line then turns north following the great river to the Ohio where it turns back to

the east and returns to a point that is now West Virginia. I suspect that the hunters went through The Cumberland Gap when they headed west. I know that is the way they returned. After their great hunting trips they returned to what is now Western Virginia and the counties of Wyth and Montgomery. At the time it was called Fincastle County. Fincastle County was huge. It included much of what is now Western Virginia and all of the state of Kentucky.

They had gone to Kentucky to exploit the land. They were not boy scouts looking for fun and environmental experiences in the woods. They had come for the game, which was worth good money. They had tried to get hundreds of deer skins back to their homes to sell. Each of the skins was worth a dollar. Hence, the slang of a buck which meant a dollar then as it does now. The Long Hunters came to Kentucky territory for another reason. Once they had taken the game, they intended to come back one day bringing their families with them. Many of them would make the new territory their home.

How do we know they went back to Virginia? According to the *Fincastle & Kentucky Count, Virginia-Kentucky Records and History, Volume I*, Joseph Drake and Henry Skaggs were in the county court early in January, 1773. Abstracts of the court record of January 5, 1773, state, "Henry Skaggs and Jacob Lorton to view the nearest way from Sinking Spring to Peak Creek, and make a report." The very next entry from the same source has, "William Edmiston, George Adams, John Beaty, Joseph Drake, David Snodgrass and James Kincannon or any three of them, to view the nearest and best way from the Town House to the Eighteen Mile Creek, and make report." Both leaders of the Long Hunter's expedition in 1770, are vested with the task of establishing trails in the primitive area of the

westernmost county in the Colony of Virginia. They were good woodsmen, and they lived in Virginia.

My grandfather had told me that our people had come from Virginia into Kentucky. Was Joseph Drake, the Long Hunter, one of us? I hoped he was. There was one thing I knew for sure that spring of 1993. I needed to know more about Joseph Drake.



## Four

So I read. I read everything the public library had. I ordered books. I wanted to know all there was to know about the early settlers of Kentucky. The story line continued to follow Daniel Boone.

Contrary to the popular image, he never wore a coonskin cap. He wore the regulation head gear of the period, but he did, as legend has it, wear buckskin breeches and a long woven hunting shirt. So, I thought, I will grab hold of Boone's buckskin britches and ride into the early history of *Kaintuck*, which was the Indian name for the territory.

D. Boone hunted for two years in Kentucky for the adventure, the money he could make from the hides, for and the land that would eventually become home to his family. It must have always been in the back of his mind that he would return one day with his wife and children.

A year and a half after returning to North Carolina from his hunting trip in Kentucky, Boone was ready to lead a group of families back to Kentucky where they intended to found a permanent settlement. The ill fated journey began in late September of 1773.

The families moved along the hunters' trail, which was too narrow for wagons. Provisions were carried by a train of pack horses. Those lucky enough to have extra horses rode while many of

the party had to walk. In Powell's Valley Boone sent his oldest son, James, to Castle's Woods for a bigger supply of flour. Going with James Boone were John and Richard Mendinall. Captain Russell provided the flour as well as some cattle and farming implements. Returning with James Boone and Mendinalls to help transport the goods were Henry Russell, Isaac Crabtree and a young man named Drake. Two of the Russell family slaves, Charles and Adam, were also sent. They would catch the elder Boone and his party as soon as they could.

On October 9, 1773, the party was within three miles of the main body of travelers, but they probably did not know it. They camped along Walden Creek and were attacked the following morning at daybreak. Drake and one of the Mendinalls were killed immediately. The wounds to the second Mendinall proved fatal. Crabtree was hurt but he managed to escape and returned to the settlements with word of what had happened. The slave, Charles, was killed with a tomahawk. Adam, the other slave, hid in a pile of driftwood and escaped injury.

James Boone and Henry Russell were wounded in the first volley and could not move. Both the young men were tortured. The Indians were led by a Shawnee named Big Jim. Young James Boone knew Big Jim who had visited his father's home in North Carolina. James begged the Indian to spare his life. The boys' bodies were slashed and stabbed many times. Their toe nails and fingernails were torn out. The Indians kept the torture going as long as they could without killing their victims. Old Adam, hidden beneath the brush pile in the creek, could hear everything and must have been terrified. At last the two boys were dead.

When Boone's party learned of the episode, Daniel returned to the scene, buried the dead and decided it was too dangerous to go on. Kentucky would have to wait.

By 1775, Boone had thrown in with a wily old lawyer by the name of Richard Henderson. Henderson's plan was to purchase Kentucky from the Indians, settle the territory and sell the land to all those who came after him.

Henderson gave Boone two tasks. First, he would alert the Indians to the proposal and ask them to convene for a huge party which would be followed by the doling out of the 10,000 Pounds worth of clothes, trinkets, blankets, and other equipment. In return for this payment, the Indians would give up rights to the southern half of what is now Kentucky. Additionally, they would agree not to attack nor otherwise harass the settlers. Daniel Boone successfully completed the task. The party was held. The merchandise was distributed. Henderson had purchased a colony.

Daniel's second task was to lead a small party of men who would blaze the trail through the Cumberland Gap to the banks of the Kentucky River where Fayette County is now located.

Boone began the Wilderness Road in March, 1775. The trail was made with little trouble from the Indians. The camp that Boone's party made at the end of the trail became Boonesborough. Boone's road became the major highway for thousands of settlers who would pour into Kentucky in the coming years.

By 1779, Richard Henderson's gamble to steal hundreds of square miles of *Kaintuck* was lost. In the settled areas of Virginia the revolution was on, but Virginia officials found the time and money to send an official delegation to the outposts in the western most forts

of Logan Station, Harrodsburg and Boonesborough to settle disputed land claims. Henderson's deal with the Indians was not sanctioned by the powers in Williamsburg.

I looked for anything in print with a list of names. When my copy of *Kentucky in Retrospect*, a 1942 publication, arrived, I looked on every list of early pioneers for the name Drake. On a list of petitioners who went to the land court sent from Williamsburg to settle land claims was the name Joseph Drake. Petition No. 9 which was dated October 16, 1779, Joseph Drake was listed as having been killed in hunting or by the Indians. Two days before this on October 14, a Margaret Drake was awarded a parcel of land in Petition No. 8. I wondered aloud if Margaret and Joseph Drake had been husband and wife and even made a marginal note in the book asking the same question. Already, I was beginning to suspect that my Drake family had been one of the earliest to migrate from Virginia to Kentucky. What kind of a woman could this Margaret Drake have been? She was listed in early tax records as a taxpayer in the early 1780's. The record indicated she owned five slaves. Relative or not, I was acquiring a healthy respect for the grit of this woman.

## Five

Soon after our trip to Fort Wayne, Indiana, I sucked in my breath and made a phone call to Glasgow, Kentucky. I asked the information operator if she had a listing for a Sandra K. Gorin. Ms. Gorin was the lady who had edited the book in which I had discovered a reference to Greenberry Drake. This was early in my search for relatives, and I had always been a little afraid to call people that I did not know very well. I was a little nervous. Will she be annoyed with me for bothering her at home, I wondered. I have since gotten over the fear of calling people. The worst they can do is not talk to you. Anyway, I stood in the kitchen twirling the phone cord around my finger hoping she would be home.

"Hello," said a pleasant woman's voice.

"You don't know me, " I began without confidence, "but I'm calling from LaGrange, Illinois and . . ."

As soon as she heard LaGrange, she was like a long lost sister. She was a professional genealogist. She had once lived in Illinois. She knew LaGrange. "I'll do my best to help you." I was elated. I finally had a pro in my corner.

I sent her what information I had and what I was looking for. I believed that Greenberry Drake was a direct line to me. I wanted any information that would help in confirming that belief. Also, I

wanted to know where he had come from and who his parents were if possible.

It was the spring of 1993, and there was a Drake reunion coming up in the summer. I was in a hurry to get as much information as possible, put it into some kind of paper and distribute it to the relatives.

Sandra Gorin's work was quick and thorough. In all she sent me two packets of information on Drakes in Barren County, Kentucky in the early 19th Century. There was no quick fix. Sandra could not document for me who Greenberry's parents were, but she sent lots of information from which I could make reasonable inferences. I was in a hurry for results, so I made the inferences. In fiction, the end of the story is very often written first. When looking for historical fact, that system does not work so well.

Ephraim Drake had been indexed in the same volume as Greenberry Drake. The only other reference to a Drake was to an S. Drake. In my mind that narrowed things down pretty well. There was a strong possibility that this Ephraim Drake, whoever he was, was the father of our Greenberry. It was not a bad working hypothesis.

The earliest references to Ephraim Drake that Sandra Gorin could find were in *Fincastle & Kentucky County Va.-Ky., Records & History, Volume 1*. This handy record consists of abstracts of actual court records, unfortunately, and the details of the cases are not available. But some interesting detail is provided. On May 6, 1774, "Ephraim Drake, assignee of Reuben Wilkinson, v. George Meiss and Conrad (Illegible), on debt. Defendants not appearing, judgment awarded plaintiff for the debt."

The next case recorded mentions Joseph Drake. Joseph and Ephraim conducted business in the same court on the same day. I was beginning to wonder if they were related. Odds are, I figured, they were. I was pretty sure that Joseph Drake was the longhunter that I mentioned earlier. I wondered if this were the same Joseph Drake who had been mentioned in the land petition filed at Boonesborough. The record reads like this: "Arthur Galbreath, assignee of Justus Reynolds, v. Thomas Pitman and Joseph Drake, on debt. Continued for papers." Earlier in the same court session the record states, "John Lynch, v. Peter Dingus, on debt. Joseph Drake entered himself as surety for the defendant. Defendant made an exception to the complaint."

During the same court session, Ephraim Drake sued Adam Hance and was awarded ". . . 5 pounds, 10 shillings, with interest from December 25, 1773, with costs." In the very next case on the record, Joseph Drake, acting as assignee for Thomas Byrd, won the case and 5 pounds exchanged hands as a result of the judgment.

Joseph had been conducting business with this court since the previous year. He had been awarded 326 acres on the middle fork of the Holston River. He had been granted permission to run an ordinary, which probably meant that he could operate an inn. He had sued for debts and won. He had been sued and lost.

As we have already seen, Joseph Drake was directed by this same court to find the best route from the Town House to Eighteen Mile Creek. Also conducting business in this court was a Samuel Drake. Was he related to Joseph and Ephraim? Probably, but how? I was beginning to make what I thought were educated guesses. I

suspected at the time that Samuel Drake and Joseph Drake were brothers.

The second packet of information provided by Sandra Gorin was, in my opinion the most telling, the most valuable. It came from *Kentucky Records--Fayette, County, Volume I* edited by Michael Cook and Bettie A. Cummings and was published in 1985. On page 94 there is an abstract of a law suit that was considered by the District Court during the May, 1804 term. The case was a lawsuit filed by George Ramsey and Archibald Logan against Nathaniel and William Drake over a disputed plot of land.

The case is complicated, but it did state that William and Nathaniel Drake were the sons of Samuel Drake. A strong relationship between Samuel and Ephraim is implied. The record states, ". . . that a certain Samuel Drake on December 29, 1779, obtained by Ephraim Drake a preemption of 1,000 acres of land on the first branch above the mouth of Jessamine Creek on the west side "by making and marking and improvement on same during the year 1775."

One other relationship is clear. A deposition included in the record by Sarah Hunt establishes that she, Sarah Hunt, was the daughter of Samuel Drake.

Seeing this documentation, I began to make inferences once again. I was in a rush to judgment. Ephraim Drake had, as he had done in the Fincastle County Court two years before, acted in behalf of someone else. He had obtained in court for Samuel Drake a preemption for 1,000 virgin acres near the newly establish fort at Boonesborough. Ephraim was not listed as heir to Samuel, so I guessed that he was his nephew. I had already surmised that Joseph

Drake was Samuel's brother. Though my record had not stated these relationships, I was sure they were related somehow. Families stuck together at that stage of history. They had to, I felt.

As further proof for myself that these men were related, I studied a tax list for Fayette County, Virginia finding the following names and dates that taxes were paid:

NAME	TAX DATE
Enoch Drake	February 27, 1790
Ephraim Drake	February 27, 1790
James Drake	May 18, 1789
James Drake	November 28, 1789
Jno. Drake	February 27, 1790
Margaret Drake	January 11, 1790
Samuel Drake	February 27, 1790

The interesting thing about the list is that four of the Drakes listed paid their taxes on the same day, February 27, 1790. Because I imagined one of these men appearing at the appointed place to pay the taxes of the other three, I felt they must all be closely related.

I was working under the assumption that Ephraim Drake was the father of Greenberry Drake. I had assumed this because of the fact that both had lived in Barren County, Kentucky in the early part of the 19th Century. February 3, 1780, Ephraim Drake obtained a deed for 400 acres on Hingson Fork, which was a few miles north and west of Boonesborough. In 1796, *The Kentucky Gazette* reported that Ephraim Drake was late on his taxes. Why? Had he died? Had he no money? The answer, I believed as I looked at all my information in April, 1993, was that he had simply moved. He had

pulled up stakes and moved to Barren, and the fact that he had moved to Barren County was important to my line of reasoning.

Ephraim Drake acquired land in Barren County near where Joseph Drake had hunted and explored 25 years before. Drake's Creek, a tributary to the Barren River, is, in fact, named for Joseph Drake, the longhunter. As I studied the papers, it all began to make sense. Ephraim Drake had migrated to where Joseph Drake had hunted. I wanted to believe that Joseph Drake was the father of Ephraim, and that Ephraim was the father of Greenberry.

Sandra Gorin sent a lot of information. She kept referring to Ephraim as my ancestor in her reports. Ephraim Drake, Esq., was a sitting member of the very first court to convene in the newly established county. Barren County was established in 1798 from parts of Green and Warren Counties. The first court in that new county was held early in 1799. By 1820, the land settled by Ephraim would be in modern day Monroe County. He was an active citizen. He was given responsibility for establishing the best routes for needed roads. He had to find people who lived along these routes to maintain the roads. He was paid on at least two occasions the sum of one shilling and 34 pence for killing a grown wolf. Records show that he once investigated a horse theft.

In deed books compiled by Sandra Gorin, there is more information. In *Deed Book A* on page 221, it states, "Ephraim Drake, wife Ann, of Barren to Benjamin Netherland of Jessamine County 3 June 1805. &50.00 Lying on branch of Stoner's Fork of Licking in the County of Clarke containing 1,000 acres." On page 258 of Sandra Gorin's *Deed Book B*, it states, "Ephraim Drake of Bedford County, Tennessee, Power of Attorney to David O.

Anderson, to request money due from Michael Hatter, for 200 acres sold to him. Witnesses: Samuel Carter & Jacob Goodman, 1809."

From early Kentucky marriage records provided by Sandra Gorin, I learned that Sally Drake had married David Anderson on March 1, 1804. It took hours of study to make the relationship. Ephraim Drake had given power of attorney to his son-in-law, David Anderson, after Ephraim had moved to Tennessee. I reasoned that Sally had to be Ephraim's daughter. Additionally, I had learned that Ephraim's wife's name was Ann. Ephraim traded land extensively and had ended up in Bedford County, Tennessee by 1809.

Incidentally, there were other Drakes in Barren County from 1807 through 1824. Their names and years in which they were taxed are listed below.

NAME	TAX YEARS
Allen Drake	1807-1812
Sally Drake	1808
Carter Drake	1811-1812
Thomas Drake	1810-1811
William Drake	1815
Braxton Drake	1813-1814, 1818
Greenberry Drake	1812-1824

It was spring of 1993, and I was getting anxious. I had given myself a deadline. I wanted to write something by late summer to distribute to relatives at the reunion. But answers were not forming. I was getting lots of information, but conclusions would have to be made, I decided, through inference rather than plain facts. On May 28, I wrote in my journal:

*Information from Sandi Gorin. She sent xeroxed copies of two histories of the Drake Family. Each was compiled by Mildred Talbert Petitt of Jersyville, Illinois in 1962. The works are scholarly and complete. Each attempts to prove a particular linkage between her family line and Sir Francis Drake of the 16th Century. The claim is legitimate, but it doesn't include our line of the Drakes. Suspect genealogical hanky-panky.*

I had no doubt that Greenberry lay on a direct line back to Ephraim Drake. I had no documentation. I simply fixed in my mind that Greenberry was either the son or grandson to Ephraim. If he is the grandson, then perhaps Allen Drake or Carter or one of the others is the father to my Greenberry. By this time I was sure that Ephraim Drake was connected to Joseph Drake, the longhunter. They were developing into very sexy ancestors.

Joseph Drake was a member of John Floyd's company of hunter surveyors who were camped on Dick's River just west of Boonesborough in the spring of 1775. The company had surely made the trip into that area of Western Virginia even before Daniel Boone's party of woodsmen had blazed the trail to that vacinity. He is listed as a known visitor to Boonesborough in 1775. In a deposition taken in 1808 before Thomas Hughs in Paris, Kentucky, John Conover stated, "In the year 1779, I traveled with about 25 men the road from Boonesborough to the Lower Blue Licks. At the time . . . I recollect we crossed Hingston Fork and went into a big buffalo road that led from Grant's station to the Lower Blue Lick at a place known by the name of Ready Money Jack's. I recollect at this time that Colonel Richard Calloway, Colonel Daniel Boone, Cyrus Boone, Joseph Drake, Ephraim Drake, William Hancock, Jeremiah Price, Thomas

Foote, James Mankins were with me on the trip to Lower Blue Lick." Mr. Conover also told how was taken prisoner by Indians in 1780 and held near Detroit for four years before returning to Kentucky.

So Joseph Drake had ridden with Ephraim Drake, according to Mr. Conover's deposition. They had both ridden with the legendary Daniel Boone. The two Drakes had to be related. I guessed they were father and son. *But* I still had no clear evidence, no documentation. On Tuesday, June 8, 1993, I made the following entry in my journal:

*Sitting at Exit #1 guarding the hallway. Outside the sky is gray and it rains steadily. Hear the heavy spray from the open window behind. Thunder occasionally too--almost a continual murmur like a distant train. Last day of school today. Weather is rotten but spirits are not dampened. In ten minutes I meet my improv class in the library. Hope no one shows up.*

*Can't find my ancestors. Maybe I can get down to the Newberry Library Thursday or Friday and get some things cleared up with Census Records. There are too many names, not enough details.*



## Six

I had seen the publication before. It was one of those Drake family histories that I had scanned trying to make a linkage during my most recent visit to Fort Wayne. I was glad to get a copy of it from Sandra Gorin. I thought that, if I could study it long enough, I could find something that would link Joseph, Samuel and Ephraim Drake to a line of the family that would take me back to England. I was ever mindful of the family's belief that they were related to Sir Francis Drake.

It was entitled *OUR DRAKE FAMILY HISTORY AND THE DESCENDANTS OF THE THREE DRAKES WHO MARRIED THREE TALBERTS* and it was compiled by Mildred Talbert Pettit. Mrs. Pettit had done her homework. I will relate her findings in a brief outline that shows the relationships between Sir Francis Drake and Albrittain Drake, a man who had lived most of his life in Muhlenberg County, Kentucky.

A high school student with a genius for malapropisms once wrote, "Sir Francis Drake circumcised the world with a giant clipper." This was a student who had good intentions. Good intentions notwithstanding, however, his message was garbled. I had good intentions, when, in the early summer of 1993, I began trying to justify my desire to be related to someone famous.

Sir Francis Drake, the circumnavigator of the world, was the son of Edmund Drake, Vicar of Upchurch. Francis Drake was the oldest of several children. It is said that the only one of the males born to Edmund Drake to have descendants was his youngest son, Thomas Drake. Thomas Drake made the famous voyage around the world with his famous older brother, Sir Francis. Perhaps as a result of the notoriety of the expedition, Thomas, like his oldest brother, decided to make sailing his life's work. He became a sea captain for his queen and sailed several voyages of note, including the trip to Puerto Bello, which cost his oldest brother his life in 1595.

Sir Francis Drake's will is quaint in tone and spelling. Here is a sample:

*I Sir Francis Drake having advisedlie considered of the premises, being now in good health and perfect minde and remembrance, thankes e given to Almighty God for the same, doe make my testament containing my last will . . . in sure and certain hope to rise again to life eternal."* The document goes on to leave sums of money, including 40 pounds to the poor people of Plymouth, to various relatives, servants and friends. Most important, he leaves the residue of his realty and personality to his brother, Thomas Drake.

Thomas Drake was born in 1556. He married Elizabeth Gregory in 1587. She bore him a son whom they named Francis in 1588. Later, a daughter, Elizabeth, was born. The second Francis Drake inherits his uncle's title becoming Sir Francis Drake II.

Sir Francis Drake II marries Jane Bamfield. She dies early without bearing children, but her maiden name becomes a traditional name for Drake children who follow. Sir Francis Drake II marries a second time to Joan Strode. This union produces seven children, the

seventh of whom is Joseph Drake. I don't have his birthdate, but he died in 1706.

From his marriage to Margaret Crimes, Joseph Drake sires two children. One of these children is christened Francis Drake, named for his grandfather. This child is the third male in four generations to have the name Francis. It is said that Francis III died without producing children. The second child is named Bamfield Drake. The name is given in memory of the child's grandfather's first wife.

Bamfield Drake followed the religious profession to become Reverend Bamfield Drake, Rector of the Parish of Farway in Devon, England. He was baptized April 12, 1670, and died June 20, 1729. His wife's name is unknown. Reverend Drake's marriage produced four sons:

1. John Drake, who became the mayor of Plymouth
2. Joseph Drake, who was baptized August 11, 1694
3. Francis Drake, who was baptized August 2, 1701
4. Bamfield Drake, who was baptized in Farway, England in October of 1704

In her book *The Family and Heirs of Sir Francis Drake*, Lady Eliot Drake writes about the three Drake brothers, Joseph, Francis and Bamfield, "Little is known about this branch of the family. Their descendants, it is said, went to America."

Up to this point the family connections are clear and documented. In summary, the generational summary goes like this:

1. Edmund Drake, Vicar of Upchurch
2. Sir Francis Drake and Thomas Drake, heir to brother (1556-1602)

3. Joseph Drake (Died 1706)

4. Reverend Bamfield Drake (1670-1729)

Mrs. Pettitt tells us that the three sons of Reverend Drake stepped onto Virginia soil near Jamestown around 1733. She also quotes family tradition concerning the fates of two of the brothers. Bamfield, she says, was killed by the Indians shortly after reaching Virginia. Joseph Drake died without issue. That also is according to family tradition. The only one of the three brothers who had children was Francis Drake. There was a very good reason for her claim.

The search for the true picture of the Drake family tree in the United States was sidetracked in the early 1870's when heirs to the Drake fortune in England died off. Huge sums of money were suddenly at stake. Genealogical information became valuable currency in the scramble to inherit. Information was secreted. It was, in some cases, manufactured. It was certainly edited.

Short of real information in the spring of 1993, I began examining Mrs. Pettitt's information to see if there were clues I could use. Were we related to Sir Francis Drake? That was the question I wanted to answer. My problem was that I worked with practically no evidence. From Mrs. Pettitt's work, I took this excerpt from a letter written in 1903. It is from a post script written by Mary Amanda Drake of Lumberton, North Carolina to a Mr. H. H. Harrington:

*I enclose here with a list of affidavits proving Albrittain Drake, the oldest son of James Drake, who was the only child of Francis Drake who came from England. These ancestors of ours were not blood kin to any other line of Drakes in American, as was at one time supposed, and claimed to be by one "old Matthew Drake and Rev. Caswell Drake of N. C. I suppose you*

*know there are seven distinct lines, who cannot trace to the same ancestor here or in England.*

I used this excerpt to show how Drakes who hoped to inherit the money disregarded available information if it did not fit their theory. It must be remembered that the case had not cleared the English courts by this time, nearly 30 years after the inheritance crisis had arisen.

What did "Old" Matthew Drake say that was so disdained by Mary Amanda Drake? I took from a letter written to Reverend Benjamin M. Drake written by John H. Drake from Auburn, Alabama on May 10, 1854.

*I will here give you the tradition of the Drake family in this country, as I received it from old Matthew Drake who was a merchant and frated to Virginia. He said about 200 years ago or more, three young men by the name of Drake came into the mouth of James River from old England--one of them settled in South Ampton Co. Va. one of them went to the north (Say Rhode Island) and the other went South, say to South Carolina. They claimed to be descendants of Sir Francis Drake that sailed around the world. From that branch of the family that settled in S. Hampton sprang all the Drakes that peopled N. C.*

The most telling evidence of how valuable information was in this rush to inherit is in the form of a letter to Mrs. E. S. Drake on November 21, 1881. The letter was written from J. A. Harrison.

*. . .It is claimed some of the pretended heirs in Canada & Pa. & N. York that Joseph had a son Francis who was with him when he died but it is a mistake. We have his will, we have all*

*the wills from the Admiral of Queen Bess's time down, except Francis' (James' father). Everything has been done to throw us off the track, dates changed Special acts passed I think especially for the Estate. We thought Grandfather James Drake's oldest son died with issue, but Mr. Cory writes that he has found his descendants in Georgia, so it seems all have issue except the girls. Don't know any of them. There is one /Prince-Person/ in England now who would get the 312,000 pounds if we were out of the way. He offers to let them keep 1/2 if they will pay to him. I think we will come in ahead of him with evidence we have. He was our English correspondent during my connection with the association--got all he could from us and gave us as little as possible. He acted mean.*

By the time this letter was written, the Drake Family Tree was beginning to lose some leaves. In some cases entire limbs were shorn off and tossed into the historical bonfire.

But there was more. Tolton Drake, who was born February 25, 1771 and died October 16, 1852, actively claimed throughout his lifetime that he was a descendant of Sir Francis Drake. Tolton was not a part of Mrs. Pettit's family. Tolton lived most of his life in Kentucky near Bowling Green. Another fellow in Kentucky called himself Sir Francis Drake. I was on a roll. These guys were not related to Albrittain. At least they were not claimed.

Also, from a genealogy published in Boston, Massachusetts in 1896 by Louis Stoughton Drake, I learned that Joseph Drake was baptized August 11, 1696. Joseph was the oldest of the three brothers who came to Jamestown. he was married November 1, 1720, to widow Rebecca Hambly Bedion in Devon County, England.

Mrs. Pettit states simply that this Joseph Drake died without issue. I was not prepared to believe that.

At that stage, spring of '93, I theorized that Joseph Drake, the oldest of the three brothers to arrive in Jamestown in 1733, did, in fact, have children. It was my opinion that Joseph Drake, the longhunter, was his son. This, I was prepared to conclude, was the connection between Sir Francis Drake and my family. In a way I was right. In a way I was not.

One thing was clear. Mrs. Pettit had the facts about her family, and I want to give a brief outline of this family before continuing the quest for my own.

Francis Drake was the second of the three brothers to come to Virginia in 1733. His wife was Mary Buckingham. The son, James Drake, was born on March 8, 1725 in England.

James Drake's first wife was Sophia Valentine, whom he married in 1754. Their children were as follows:

1. Albrittain Drake (1755-1835) married Ruth Collins
2. Sarah Drake (b. 1757) married Samson Bridges
3. James Drake, who went to Oglethorp, Georgia to live
4. Silas Drake, who went to Oglethorp, Georgia, and later to Columbia, Mississippi
5. Elizabeth Drake, who married Michael Collins (brother to Ruth Collins). Michael was a member of the House of Commons, 1809, 1810, 1812-15

James' second union was with the widow Hartwell Hodges Davis.

That marriage brought two sons.

1. John Hodges Drake

## 2. Benjamin Drake

James Drake, the father, and Albrittain, his son, were both Revolutionary War Veterans. Mrs. Petitt gives a detailed account of an incident during the war. It is delightfully told and relates how James' home was attacked by tories. James and Albrittain fought valiantly. Albrittain, then about 17 years old, attacked the leader of the tories, the notorious Captain Beard with a cutlass. But the sword struck the ceiling joists. Beard knocked Albrittain to the floor. James Drake the father joined the fight. He too was struck down. As he lay helpless and bleeding on the cabin floor, Mrs. Drake rushed forth with a jug of Old Nash--brandy. The fighting stopped for a drink or two. Shortly afterward, a group of revolutionary cavalry arrived and drove the tories off.

Albrittain Drake migrated to Muhlenberg County, Kentucky. He came from Nash County, North Carolina. With him came his wife, maiden name Ruth Collins. Ruth was the daughter of Michael Collins, "a planter and an active Methodist," as Mrs. Petitt put it. Ruth Collins Drake was born in Nash County, North Carolina on November 12, 1765, and died March 4, 1847. She and the "heir to the Sir Francis Drake fortune," Albrittain Drake, had eight children.

I. John Drake, born, 1786, married first Elizabeth Alford and had seven children.

1. Zachariah Alford Drake
2. Martha Susan Drake
3. Ruth Collins Drake
4. Perilia Ann Drake
5. Albrittain John Drake
6. James Perry Drake

## 7. Clarke Sophia Drake

After Elizabeth Alford Drake died in 1823, John married Margaret McLaughin. This marriage produced five children.

1. Mary Amanda Drake
2. Alexander Little Drake
3. Nicholas McLaughin Drake
4. Sarah Drake
5. Elizabeth Margaret Drake

Mrs. Petitt notes that John Drake was a member of the legislature and died in 1863.

II. Sophia Valentine Drake, born January 5, 1789, married Wiley Alford and moved to Sumner County, Tennessee. They had eleven children, according to Mildred Petitt.

III. Silas Drake, born November 4, 1791, and died October 7, 1858. He was married February 11, 1811, to Martha (Patsy) Wells, daughter of Micajah Wells, a well known Kentucky pioneer from North Carolina. Silas Drake is the link between Albrittain Drake and Mrs. Petitt, the author from whom I take this information. Three of the children of Silas and Martha Wells Drake married three siblings named Talbert. Three marriages between siblings is unusual, and this unusual fact is one of the focal themes of Mildred Petitt's publication, along with the fact that all of this line of Drakes can trace back to Sir Francis Drake, the great English admiral.

1. Urban Owen Fletcher Drake married Julia Talbert.
2. Louisa Matilda Caroline Drake married John
3. Martha Ann Jane Drake married Benjamin C.

Talbert.

Talbert.

IV. Moseley Collins Drake, born June 5, 1795, and died in 1885. He married Laurana Wells, another daughter of Micajah. They had eleven children.

V. James Perry Drake, born September 15, 1797, married Priscilla Buell. They had six children and were foster parents of her nephew, General Don Carlos Buell, famous Civil War General who fought for the Federals distinguishing himself at the battles of Shiloh and Perryville.

VI. William Drake, November 14, 1804 to April 19, 1868, married Amanda Rice. Mrs. Isaac and Miss Estelle Drake are descendants of this branch of the family. Mrs. Isaacs wrote "The Story of Drakesboro," which had some information about the early Drakes in that area of Kentucky.

VII. Edmund Drake, born May 21, 1807, and married Ann Wells, daughter of Micajah Wells. They had six sons and four daughters.

VIII. Benjamin Michael Drake, born September 11, 1800, married Susanna Priscilla Magruder on October 4, 1827. Benjamin was a Methodist minister in Mississippi and Louisiana. He was president of Elizabeth Academy and build the first Methodist Church in New Orleans. He died May 8, 1860. Four of his sons served in the Confederate Army.

Mrs. Mildred Talbert Pettit has written a well documented account which is invaluable to the full understanding of Drake Families in America. In the summer of 1993, I was viewing it with a jaundiced eye seeing only what I needed for my own purposes. The Drake Family Reunion was fast approaching. We, the Drakes of the Charleston, Illinois area, would be meeting on Sunday, August 15. I

wanted to let these people know as much about our background as possible. I was using the Petitt publication to represent what I believed about the family but could not prove.

Boge, Meghan, Nate and I left LaGrange, Illinois late Friday afternoon on August 14, as we had done so many times before. We fought the traffic of Interstate 294, made the two toll booths before making the turn onto Interstate 80. Soon we were gliding down Interstate 57 in our black 1983 Ford Bronco. I had the xeroxed copies of my paper safely tucked away in one of the pockets of my canvas traveling bag. After a stop at Steak and Shake in Kankakee, we hit the road again. By nine that evening we were with my mom and dad in Charleston. Dad is a stroke victim, and had, by that time, become very hard to deal with. Mom was sweet but her memory was beginning to fail her.

The next morning, Boge and the kids left for Shelbyville, Illinois where Boge's family lives. I would stay with my parents and attend the reunion the next day. I watched a Cubs' game in the early afternoon with Charleston's most dedicated Cubs' fan, my father, and then drove to my youngest brother's new home west of town. Steve is a building contractor, a very successful one. I wanted to see his new home. Also, I wanted to talk to him about making blue prints for a room addition we were considering for the following spring. Steve regaled me with stories of how a client was suing over drywall and carpet in a new home. He laughed about it. "The woman just loves to sue people, Mike," he told me when I tried to understand the situation. That evening I worked with Mom trying to get an oil painting started. Mom, like myself, is an amateur painter. After that I rented some movies. Dad and I watched one before he went to bed that night.

At about 11:30 the next morning, I was driving Mom and Dad to Fox Ridge State Park. The park is located about miles southeast of Charleston. The Drakes would be eating at noon. That part of it never varied. We found the pavilion. I got Dad into his wheelchair and helped Mom collect our offering to the potluck table. The conversation is always somewhat stilted at these affairs. The reunion really represents Dad's generation. It is his cousins who have maintained the affair for the past few years. None of Dad's uncles or aunts had survived to that point. I knew only a few cousins. Each time I went I met someone whom I knew only by name or reputation. I did know Helen Drake, the chief organizer. Helen is the wife of Dad's first cousin, George. George and Helen reside in Chrisman, Illinois. I had gotten a lot of information from Helen early in my search. I was surprised when Helen asked me to say grace before the meal. I agreed to do it, but the prayer was very short and simple.

During the meal I met distant cousins whose names I had diligently copied into the paper I was about to present. Dad joked with his cousins often saying things in bad taste, but all the cousins seemed to understand his plight and replied politely.

I did not make a speech or anything. I just handed the 30 page paper to various members of the family and asked that they share the information with any of their immediate family who might be interested in genealogy. Most seemed glad to get what I gave them, but no one was ecstatic. The clan had never been real emotional. Our stay was limited by Dad's stamina to about an hour and a half. By 1:30 we were driving back down State Route 130 toward Charleston. It was a bright and hot day, I recall.

As we drove, Mom asked, "Don, what was the name of your youngest brother?" I felt vindicated. The generation ahead of me was slowly losing its memory. The record I had just provided to the family was needed, I thought. I had gone as far as I could. I had been honest, I believed, in my attempt to get to the bottom of things. I was ready to put this project to bed.

By early the following spring, however, I would be wishing I had never distributed the paper.



## Seven

I remember the ripple of excitement as I read the footnote in the old book. I said, "Bingo." My eight year old daughter, who was standing next to me in the aisle between bookshelves at the library, asked me, "Why did you say that, Daddy?" It was too complicated to explain.

From my journal:

Wednesday, March 23, 1994

7:00 A. M.

*Excitement Monday night when I took the kids to the library. The children's' section was closed. I browsed in the history section, and in an old book about Kentucky, in an obscure footnote, I found Joseph Drake, the descendant of Sir Francis Drake. The man was also a direct ancestor to us. I have long suspected the Joseph Drake who visited Boonesborough was descended from Sir Francis, but what I found seemed to confirm this. Joseph Drake built a house near Nicholasville, Kentucky, the county seat of Jessamine County. He is also buried there. He is the oldest of the three brothers who came to Virginia somewhere around 1733. He was married to Rebecca Hambly Bedion. She was a widow. Did they have children? They must have though I don't have documentation. Joseph Drake spent a*

*lot of time with Ephraim Drake. It may take a psychic to get this all sorted out. Seems they never wrote anything down.*

*We looked at a Bronco last night but did not make a real offer on it. Nice but priced too high. What a beautiful red color with Eddie Bauer styling. Kids thought we were buying for sure.*

I remember the rush of excitement vividly. The previous summer I thought I had gone as far as possible in the search. Now, there seemed to be hope that more information was available. I found the footnote on Monday. By Thursday, I was trying to find someone in Nicholasville, Kentucky who could give me more detail. The footnote came from *Kentucky, A Guide to the Bluegrass State*, which was compiled and written by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Projects Administration for the State of Kentucky. The project was sponsored by the University of Kentucky. It was published by Hastings House in New York in 1939. The footnote appears on pages 254 and 255. This is what it said.

*Right from Nicholasville on the Old Frankfort Pike to the Joseph Drake House, 5 m, which, according to legend, was built prior to 1780 by Joe Drake, described as a descendant and heir of Sir Francis Drake, the English Admiral. The red brick house contains seven rooms with beams and sills of hand hewn logs and massive walnut mantels and cabinets. Parts of the house are joined by large, crude iron spikes, instead of wooden pegs found elsewhere. The use of brick and iron makes its alleged age questionable. Across the road on land belonging to the estate is an old burying ground in the midst of a clump of trees. In the*

*center stands a reproduction of the original gravestone, bearing this inscription:*

*Joseph Drake  
of  
Buckland, Monaghorum England  
Born 1694 Died 1777  
Beloved Husband of Rebecca Hamble of Bodwin  
Cornwall, England*

Near lunch time on Thursday, March 24, I found Nicholasville, Kentucky on the map. Then I found the area code and called information looking for a number to the local chamber of commerce. The pleasant lady who answered the phone said she knew nothing of the Drake house to which I was referring. She did give the phone number of the lady who had recently organized a pageant commemorating the history of Jessamine County. She was nice too, but she knew nothing of the house and cemetery mentioned in the footnote I quoted to her. She referred me to a man who had compiled information on all known graves in the county. This man was a little brusque. As soon as he heard the name Drake, he said, "Call Clyde Bunch. I've got his number. Just a minute." He put the phone down and left returning within seconds with the phone number.

My journal:

*Thursday, March 24, 1994*

*10:20 P. M.*

*I knew he was out there somewhere and today I found him. His name is Clyde Bunch and Clyde is an old fellow who*

*lives in Nicholasville, Kentucky. I called him today, and he told me the relationships I've been struggling to divine for a year or more. Clyde is an expert on the Drake Family--our family--in the 1770's in Kentucky. He told me without even looking at his records that Samuel Drake was the father of Joseph Drake, Ephraim Drake, William Drake and Nathaniel Drake. I've written him a letter and will visit him soon. Can't wait!*

His letters were wonderful. Clyde loved history in general and genealogy in particular. Over the years he had taken a special interest in the Drake Families of Kentucky, even though he was not related to them in any way. He was especially proud of having uncovered very old entries from family Bibles that contained birth and death dates of some Drakes who had been very early settlers in Kentucky. He hinted early in our correspondence that he thought there was a possibility that some of the information he had, had been planted. He felt that all the disinformation was caused by the inheritance controversy. From the very beginning, Clyde Bunch had my attention. He had taught himself to read and write when he was 22 years old. Most of what he wrote to me, especially early in our correspondence, was pure gold.

I had high hopes. I had already surmised that my Greenberry Drake was the son Ephraim Drake. Clyde confirmed for me the relationship between Joseph Drake, the longhunter, and Ephraim. I had concluded that Joseph was the father and Ephraim was the son. Clyde straightened that out on the phone, the first time I spoke to him. These two men were brothers and both were longhunters. Another things Clyde told me the first time we talked was that these two men

were the sons of Samuel Drake, Sr. Samuel Drake, Sr. was the son of Joseph Drake, one of the brothers who had come from England in 1733. I was anxious to get something in print. I xeroxed everything I had and sent it to him. Clyde Bunch would, I believed, confirm everything I had inferred nearly a year earlier.

What follows is Clyde's first letter to me in its entirety. Note the folksy tone and clear thinking.

*Dear Michael:*

*I cannot tell you how delighted I was to hear from you. It has been several years since I have given any thought to the Drake family. Over the past years I have corresponded with a great number of members and branches of this family. They all had one thing in common, their search for their connection to the famous Sir Francis Drake. This is understandable. If I were a member of the Drake family, I would probably feel the same way. It, however, has created a problem when it comes to doing research on the family. No matter how hard I tried, the subject of Sir Francis Drake would always work its way back into the conversation. I tell this for one reason only. This is one of the most interesting families ever to brave the frontiers of Kentucky. I would like them to be seen as individuals, and for their accomplishments and not just descendants of Sir Francis Drake.*

*As I read through the material you sent, I came across the name of Tarlton Drake. A little light flashed in my head. I told you on the phone of the old Bible records I found in the estate settlement of Nathaniel Drake. I did not tell you that some of the pages were from an old record keeping book of Tarlton Drake.*

*In it he listed the births of his family and also the births of his horses. What was his connection to the Drake family in Jessamine County?*

*According to the Vital Statistics Records of Warren County, Kentucky, Tarlton was 81 years old when he died. His father was James Drake and his mother was Mary Drake. He was born in Powhatan County, Va. and died in Warren County on June 16, 1852. I think Tarlton's son, Preston C. Drake, was a school teacher in Vigo County, Ind., he also owned land in Sullivan County, Ind. I think Sir Francis Drake of Logan County, was a brother of Tarlton. Tarlton, his wife Mary, their sons, Preston and Powhatan are all buried in Warren County. They lie in a small family plot 6 miles northeast of Bowling Green, on Highway 71. This needs some more looking into, but before we get too far off track, we need to go back and fill in some blanks.*

*I had at one time thought about writing a story about the Drake family, but never got around to it. I am reaching the age now to where other things in my life are taking priority and doubt very seriously if I will ever get around to writing about the Drakes. Who knows, maybe you will be the one that will write it. I truly hope so.*

*For all general purposes we will begin in the western part of Virginia in what is now counties of Wythe, Smyth and Pulaski. In an Indian raid at Draper Meadows on the 8th of July, 1755, Colonel James Patton was killed. Colonel Patton had been one of the earliest settlers in the area. He was also one of the richest and most influential men to have settled there. Colonel John Buchanan was a son-in-law of old Colonel Patton's. He had*

*married Margaret, the colonel's daughter. Colonel Buchanan was also in charge of the Augusta County militia at the time of his father-in-law's death. Colonel John Buchanan had three sons, William, James and John. He also had four daughters, Mary Ann, Margaret and Jane. At the death of Colonel Buchanan the three youngest daughters, Ann, Margaret and Jane were taken in and raised by Colonel William Preston. Colonel William Preston became the head surveyor for Virginia. Colonel Preston hired a young school teacher to help in the education of newly acquired family. This teacher was John Floyd, who would later gain his fame as an explorer, surveyor, and Indian fighter in Kentucky. Colonel Preston and John Floyd took to each other and became the best of friends. Captain John Floyd became Colonel Preston's right arm and would later be sent to Kentucky by him to lay out the first surveys in the state in 1774.*

*I want to come back to John Floyd later on, he is one of my favorite subjects. But for the time being, I will just say that he married one of his students, Jane Buchanan in 1778 and moved to Kentucky where he was killed by Indians on April 9, 1783.*

*Now, here is the kicker. Of the other two youngest daughters of Colonel Buchanan, Margaret married Joseph Drake and Ann married his brother Ephraim. That's right, you heard me correctly. Colonel John Floyd, Joseph and Ephraim Drake were brother-in-laws.*

*Joseph Drake married Margaret Buchanan at Chilhowie in Smyth Co., Va. in March of 1773. In the summer of 1778, Joseph and Margaret moved to Kentucky, arriving at*

*Boonesboro on the 10th of April. Ephraim had married Ann Buchanan that same year in the home of his brother Joseph in Kentucky.*

*Joseph Drake was killed by Indians on or about the 11th of September of that same year near Fort Boonesboro. Joseph and Margaret Drake's names can be found on a large granite monument at Fort Boonesboro today. Margaret was left a widow in a wilderness with two children, John and Mary C. Drake. She later went to live at Captain John Holders Station, to be near her brother William. While living there, brother William too would die at the hands of Indians in 1783. The story of how she survived the wilderness alone is courageous, but yet sad. We will save it for another time.*

*Although Joseph and Ephraim had moved to Kentucky at a very early date, their father Samuel did not. I don't think he came in until about 1782 or 1783. He took up his land here in Jessamine County about this time. He, with several members of the family, lived here until he moved again to Barren County in about 1792 or 93. I think the families of Ephraim and Margaret Drake, Joseph's widow, moved with him. I know little of what happened to Samuel Drake after this, only that he died about 1795. After his death the family split up. Nathaniel and William Drake came back to Jessamine County and took up their father's land. Both died here. Ephraim went to Bedford County, Tennessee where he was living in 1809. He later moved to Franklin County, Tenn., where he died. He left a Will in Franklin County, dated December 13, 1816. Margaret Johns, Joseph Drake's widow was already living in Franklin County. She died*

*there in 1828. She left a will also, it was dated October 22, 1826. In her will she chose Joseph Drake as her executor. This Joseph Drake was a son of Ephraim. I think Ephraim had another son James. I don't know what became of him.*

*As for the old gravestone of Joseph Drake born in 1694, it lies in many pieces today. Someone ran over it several years ago with a cutting disk. I could never find any record of this Joseph Drake or Rebecca Hambly in the western part of Virginia, or in Kentucky. But you can certain that whoever put it there knew a great deal about the Drake family.*

*I am also enclosing copies of some pages I wrote about the Drakes in Jessamine County.*

*The pages from the Stovall Bible were also found in the estate settlement of Nathaniel Drake. He died here in 1815. I think I know who these Bible pages belonged to, but I cannot tell how they got there. Joseph Drake and Margaret Buchanan's daughter, Mary C. Drake, married Jesse Stovall, a son of Bartholomew Stovall, of Halifax Count, Va. They were living in Jessamine County up to some time after 1801. Then they too moved to Barren County and from there they moved to Rutherford County, Tenn., prior to 1820. Jesse died here in about 1840. Mary C. moved on west with her son-in-law Patton Anderson and died in Jackson County, Mo., in 1845.*

*I think I have given you a few things to think about, or as we call it "pondering" here in Kentucky.*

*So until I hear from you again, yours truly.  
Clyde N. Bunch*

He also included a short paper he had written about the Drake cemetery mentioned in the footnote I had found. The paper also provided some background on the inheritance controversy. I've taken the liberty of correcting some of the spelling. It read something like this:

*DRAKE CEMETERY-Across the road from where Drake's tavern once stood is a small cemetery. Only two gravestones remain standing today. One of these stones is illegible. The other reads as follows:*

*JOSEPH DRAKE OF BUCKLAND MONACHORUM ENG.  
BORN 1694 DIED 1777  
BELOVED HUSBAND OF REBECCA HAMBLY  
OF BODWIN CORNWALL ENG.*

*This old gravestone was first discovered in the early 1900's. It's discovery has caused much speculations over the years. If we were to accept it at face value, we would assume that Joseph Drake died and was buried here in 1777. The gravestone is of an old design, but in no way is it as old as the dates suggest. If this is true, then we must assume that some placed the stone here many years later. But, who and for what reason? The following is not an attempt to prove or disprove it origin. I simply would like to share a few things I have learned over the years about this very unusual marker. You can be the final judge. Buckland Monachorum stands today in Plymouth, England. It was once the home of Sir Francis Drake. Today it is a museum dedicated to Sir Francis Drake, the famed navigator of the Queen Elizabeth's era. At the death of Sir Francis Drake, he, in his will*

*dated 1595, he left all his property, including Buckland Monachorum to his brother Thomas Drake. This property remained in the Drake family for many years. It was handed down from generation to generation. Finally, in 1914, it was evident that this family tradition of passing the property from one generation to the other was about to end. The owner at this time was the Baronet Elliott Drake who was then 77 years old, in bad health and not expected to live very long. He was the last of the Drakes to fall heir to Buckland Monachorum. There was no other heir left living in England at the time. In the early 1700's , several members of the Drake family had come to America. Descendants of the Drakes were now scattered far and wide across this country. It is not known how these descendants found out about the situation in England or that this valuable piece of property was soon to be up for grabs. it is only evident that they did. They formed what they called THE UNITED ASSOCIATION OF DRAKE HEIRS. This was no fly by night organization. They hired lawyers and researchers. It appears from their research that Joseph Drake, buried in Jessamine County, was the great, great grandson of Thomas Drake, brother to the famous Sir Francis Drake. There was a great deal of evidence to support their claims. Records found at Buckland Monachorum, showed that Joseph Drake was baptized there on August 11, 1694. They even found ship records showing where Joseph Drake, his wife Rebecca Hambly and son Samuel departed for England in 1733. To make a long story short, the Drake law suit was carried on for several years. The end result was, the Drake heirs lost their case.*

He had made the case very simple in one of our early conversations on the phone. The English simply were not prepared, he told me, to let two or three billion pounds leave the country and go to the United States. They passed a special act which said, in effect, no one could inherit Sir Francis Drake's estate if they lived in a country that had ever conducted a revolution against the British crown. That had settled that.

Clyde had given me a multitude of things to ponder. I sat down and wrote him another letter with more questions. What I was looking for was any mention of Greenberry Drake, my link to the past. I wanted him to tell me that Greenberry was, in fact, the son of Ephraim Drake. The picture of my family was like a connect the dots picture. I had already placed the dots. All I needed was to connect the them. When Clyde documented this relationship between Ephraim and Greenberry for me, my picture would be complete.

By the time his next letter arrived, Clyde Bunch and I were becoming quite chummy. What follows are exerpts from the second letter.

*Dear Mike,*

*You and I are going to get along just fine. I see that you love history as much as I. Some people doing genealogy get hung on their family and cannot see much beyond that point. They seem to somehow miss the bigger picture. The Drakes are only one of the many families I have researched. You and I have a lot more in common than you may think. You mentioned in your last letter that you had read Seedtime on the Cumberland. Do you remember reading about a John Baker that traveled with Joseph Drake and the longhunters? My mother was a Baker. She was*

*born in Clay Co., Ky. in 1898. My gr-gr-gr-gr- grandfather was John (Renta) Baker. He was the same John Baker that traveled with Joseph Drake in 1769. He was a professional hunter. I found him buried in Owsley Co., Ky. a number of years ago. He and Ben Cutbirth, Boone's relative and old hunting companion were best of friends.*

*I didn't tell you much about myself on the phone. I will be 59 years old this coming July. I am now retired, for health reasons. I am a Ham Radio operator and computer nut. But most of all, history has been my main interest throughout the years. History has not only given a great pass time, but it has taught me a set of rules to live by. You could also say it is responsible for what little education I have acquired. For you see, I am self taught. I did not learn to read or write until I was 22 years old. If it had not been for my curiosity and desire to know, I would not be writing this letter now. I'll tell this, Mike, for your being a school teacher, you may take the above under consideration in grading my writing and grammar.*

Though Clyde Bunch may have lacked a formal education, his instincts as a historical scholar were keen. In the next paragraph of his letter he explained his view of evaluating historical documents and shared some opinions concerning the inheritance controversy.

*. . . I myself accept nothing at face value. The copies of the old pages I sent you are a very good example of accepting things at face value. This is my belief about them. They are authentic. Some of the Drake entries are what I question. I think someone*

*came across these old record keeping books of Tarlton many years ago, realizing that they were very old, they decided to make a few entries on their own. For what reason I do not know. It could have something to do with the Drake law suit. I cannot tell you this, however, whoever did this knew a great deal about the Drake family. But, like you pointed out, it was what they didn't know that set me to questioning them. They knew nothing about Ephraim or Joseph Drake and very little about their brothers and sisters.*

Clyde went on to give some more information about Joseph and Ephraim Drake's immediate family, information that I will summarize later. I had asked him by letter if he were sure that Joseph Drake had been killed by the Indians in the fall of 1778. I was concerned because the deposition I quoted earlier by John Conover stated plainly that Joseph Drake and Ephraim had traveled with Daniel Boone and others in 1779. This was his explanation.

*The deposition you spoke of, made by John Conover, came from the old Complete Record Book, in Fayette County. Just chalk it up to a mistake in the date. This deposition was taken some 25 years after these events took place. Remember this also, these depositions were also used in law suits. I won't say they sometime lied, only that they often conveniently gave misinformation. I have statements made by Joseph's wife, Margaret, and others that say he was killed on the 1st of September, 1778.*

Clyde showed clearly that he was very partial to Joseph Drake and John Floyd. Writing, perhaps, from the top of his head, he presented me with the following anecdotal information about these two early Kentucky woodsmen.

*Joseph Drake, the longhunter, was a out and out character. I wonder what history would have written about him had he lived. He was one of the most knowledgeable persons about the land laying west of the Alleghenies. Or at least the people living along the New River basin at the time thought so. He had an uncanny sense of distance and direction. I will give you an example. Col. William Preston had sent a party of surveyors, about 30 men, into Kentucky in the summer of 1774. The surveyors were lead by John Floyd. That same summer James Harrod and another party of men came in also. They were about the same in number as the surveyors. They began constructing a fort and town. This is on the site of where Harrodsburg stands today. The Indians, seeing such large parties of white men coming down the Ohio River, became upset. They dressed in war gear and set out vowing to kill every white man they found. When the news of this reached Col. Preston back in Virginia, he became deeply concerned. He decided to send someone in to warn the surveyors, and the other men. But, who to send? Only a few in the area had enough knowledge of the wilderness to carry out such a task. Many of these were already in Kentucky with James Harrod and John Floyd. A search was made for Joseph Drake, for as Col. William Campbell said, "He was tolerable well acquainted with the country." Drake was*

*nowhere to be found. So the next choice was Daniel Boone. After a search Boone was found and made the trip into Kentucky. He took Michael Stoner with him. This was the beginning of Boone's fame as a woodsman. Prior to this, he was little known. Now I ask you, why did they look for Joseph Drake first? Makes you wonder who the best woodsman was, doesn't it?*

*John Floyd and his brother-in-law Joseph Drake didn't get along very well. Joseph was always giving Floyd a hard time. They often butted heads. Did you know that John Floyd became a pirate during the Revolutionary War? Pirate may be too harsh of a word to use. I think they called themselves "privateers." Never the less, the end results were the same. He took to robbing British ships and plundering their cargo. He did real well at it until the British turned the tables on him. They caught him and threw him in a British prison cell. I think it was Ben Franklin himself that negotiated his release. This may be something interesting to enter into your writings.*

Finally, Clyde got to the most important items. He addressed the problem of who Ephraim Drake's children were. I read on hoping that the good fellow from Nicholasville, Kentucky would crack the case for me. At the time I was convinced that he had all the answers at his fingertips. At least, I believed, he could reach into his extensive files and find the answers to my questions. This is what he wrote.

*You are right about Sally Drake marrying David O. Anderson. She was a daughter of Ephraim. You are also correct in thinking this James Drake was a son of Ephraim. He did*

*marry a Trigg. I bet Patton Anderson, Margaret's son-in-law, and David O. Anderson were related.*

That was it, and my spirits began to sag some. There was no mention of Greenberry Drake.

## Eight

But Clyde did include copies of a publication by a Mrs. Gambill entitled *Leeper-Drake Kith and Kin*, which, as Clyde said, "came closer to anyone I know in figuring out the Drake history." He pointed out how he had tried to verify what Mrs. Gambill had said about the early Drakes. Most of everything she had written, according to Clyde, had checked out. That was good enough for me. I was enthusiastic about going over Mrs. Gambill's work hoping that somehow Clyde had missed a reference to Greenberry Drake. I was not willing to give up my hypothesis. What follows, then, is a summary of relationships of some early Drakes who lived principally in Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky and Tennessee as set down by Mrs. Gambill in her book *Leeper-Drake Kith and Kin*.

John Drake, of Mount Drake (Mubury), Devonshire, married, in the first quarter of the Fifteenth Century, Christiana, daughter and heiress of John Billett of Ashe, in Devon.

John Drake II, son of John and Christiana (Billet) Drake, was of Otterton, Devonshire. His wife was Christiana, daughter and heiress of John Antage.

John Drake III, son of John and Christiana (Antage) Drake, married a daughter of John Cruwys, or Crews.

John Drake IV, son of the preceding, lived at Otterton, and married Agnes, daughter of John Kailway. They had four children.

1. John Drake V
2. Johan (a daughter)
3. Robert Drake
4. Gilbert Drake
5. Thomas Drake

John Drake V, eldest son of John and Agnes (Kailway) Drake, was seated at Ashe and at Exmouth, in Devon. He married Margaret, daughter and heiress of John Cole, of Rill, in the Parish of Whytecombe Raleigh, Devon. John and Margaret Drake had children.

1. John Drake
2. John Drake ( a second son of the same name in accordance with a practice not unusual in those times)
3. Alice Drake
4. Gilbert Drake

John Drake VI, eldest son of John and Margaret (Cole) Drake, was of Mount Drake, Ashe and Exmouth. He was sheriff of Devonshire in the time of Queen Mary, probably, and died October 4, 1558. He married Amy, daughter of Roger Greenville, of Stow, in Cornwall.

John Drake VI and wife Amy (Greenville) Drake had two sons: Sir Barnard Drake and Robert Drake. From Sir Barnard Drake is said to have descended Thomas Drake, who came to Weymouth, Massachusetts, 1653. The line from Sir Barnard to Thomas is given as follows: John Drake, eighth son of Sir Barnard, and who married Dorothy Button; William Drake, second son of John and Dorothy, married Margaret Westover; Thomas Drake, baptized 1635, the colonist at Weymouth.

Another colonist of the family, John Drake, came to Boston, Massachusetts, 1630, was one of the Proprietors of Taunton, Massachusetts, and later settled at Windsor, Connecticut. He is thought to have been descended from the above mentioned Robert Drake (brother of Sir Barnard), son of John Drake VI. The lineage from Robert to John, the colonist, is given as follows: Robert, son of John and Amy, married Elizabeth Prideaux; William Drake, son of Robert and Elizabeth, married Philippa Denys; John Drake, son of William and Philippa, came to Massachusetts, 1630

Mrs. Gambill then returns to the specific lineage of Susan Drake and Captain James Leeper. Mrs. Gambill was descended from this particular union. Their marriage was one of the first marriages in Davidson County, Tennessee. Captain Leeper was killed before their first child was born in a skirmish with Indians which came to be known as the Battle of the Bluff.

Unfortunately, Mrs. Gambill does not make the connection between her line of Drakes and the line she describes earlier. She simply tells us that Susan Drake could be traced back to John Drake, of Crowndale, in Tavistock, Devonshire. His will was proved in 1556. The wife of John Drake was probably Margery Hawkins. They had four children.

1. John Drake who died by 1567 and left no issue, probably
2. Edmund Drake
3. Robert Drake who married Anna Laxmore
  - a. John Drake who became page to his cousin, Sir Francis Drake, the admiral
  - b. Dorothy Drake
  - c. Elizabeth Drake

4. John Drake, youngest son and the second son of the same name, died in 1610

Edmund Drake, second son of John and Margery (Hawkins) Drake, became a Chaplain in the British Navy under Elizabeth. Later, he probably became Vicar of Upchurch, in County Kent. He died in 1596. The wife of Edmund Drake was a daughter of Richard Mylwaye. They had five children.

1. Sir Francis Drake, the great admiral, who brought such glory to the reign of Queen Elizabeth, is believed to have been born about 1545, but perhaps several years earlier. He died in 1595, on January 28 on board his ship near the town of *Nombre de Dios* in the West Indies. He was the first Englishman to sail around the world. For this and other exploits, he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth. He sailed against Spanish ships and ports. About himself he said, "singed the King of Spain's beard," by sailing into Cadz and destroying there ten thousand tons of shipping, planned as part of the great Spanish Armada for the conquest of England. When the Armada approached the English coast, he captured one of its largest galleons and was, at about this time, made Vice Admiral. He was the mayor of Plymouth in 1581. He had two wives but sired no children.

2. John Drake

3. Edmund Drake, Junior

4. Joseph Drake

5. Thomas Drake

It was to Thomas Drake, his youngest brother, that Sir Francis left his estate, and from this point on through to the migration of the three Drake brothers to Virginia, Mrs. Gambill's account does not vary from that of Mrs. Pettitt's, which has already been set down.

What happened after that is controversial when comparing the accounts of the two family historians. The question of who the real descendants of the Thomas Drake were is never actually settled. More questions than answers exist.

In summary, this is the way it went from Thomas Drake, youngest brother of Admiral Sir Francis Drake, to the Drakes who landed in Virginia around 1733. Thomas Drake had a son named Francis Drake. This Francis Drake had a son named Joseph Drake. This Joseph Drake had a son named Reverend Bamfield Drake. Bamfield Drake had four sons:

1. John Drake, who was mayor of Plymouth and married Ann Spicer. This marriage produced at least two children.
  - a. John Drake, a lieutenant in the 33rd Regiment
  - b. Catherine Drake, married Captain Rogers of the Royal Navy
2. Joseph Drake, who went to Virginia and is said to have left no children
3. Francis Drake, who went to Virginia and had children
4. Bamfield Drake, Junior, who went to Virginia.

So what is the controversy? Mrs. Pettit, in her rush to prove that Albright Drake is the only legitimate heir to the Drake estate, takes some information that Mrs. Gambill provides and ignores other information. Mrs. Pettit tells us repeatedly that the oldest of the three brothers, Joseph Drake, died without issue. He had no children. She also quotes sources to show that Bamfield Drake, Junior, was killed by Indians shortly after getting to Virginia. Bamfield, according to Mrs. Pettit, had no children. Further, she insists that the last brother,

Francis Drake, had but one child, and that was a son, James whose oldest son was Albritain Drake. But Mrs. Gambill, who seems a little more open-minded about the whole thing, suggests that there had to be more children issuing from those three brothers than Albrittain's father, James, alone.

What was Mrs. Gambill's motivation for doing the research? It was the same as Mrs. Pettitt's. It was the same as my own motivation for writing. She was looking for ancestors. She refers often to an "old family chart" to which she had access. I do not know where the chart is, but I suspect it is a chart I have seen on a bibliography list somewhere. I cannot remember where, but I do remember that it was dated 1867 or thereabouts. Seems the chart is either in the Library of Congress or in a genealogical library somewhere in Massachusetts. Anyway, according to the "old family chart," her ancestor, Susan (Drake) Leeper, was the granddaughter of John Drake who married Margaret Weldon in Devonshire. John Drake, who married Margaret Weldon, is the focus of the controversy.

Who was he? I asked Clyde Bunch who he was in my third letter to him. Clyde did not see the significance of the question. At any rate, he did not try to answer. Perhaps he could not. Mrs. Gambill's explanation does not make sense to me. The reader can decide for himself. Mrs. Gambill says that John Drake, who married Margaret Weldon in Devonshire, was either the son of Bamfield Drake, Junior, or he was the son of Francis Drake, Bamfield, Junior's brother.

Mrs. Pettitt, Albrittain's advocate, will not have anything to do with either of these possibilities. She says Francis had only one son

and that Bamfield, Junior, was killed before he could father any children.

What makes Mrs. Gambill's theories absurd is the fact that she gives John and Margaret (Weldon) Drake's son, Samuel Drake, the birthdate of 1719. We know that Francis Drake and Bamfield Drake, Junior were born around the turn of the 18th Century. That would have given whoever the father of John was a fourth grandson by the time they were 20 years old.

So one of our family historians was poor at math and the other tended to ignore evidence that did not suit her own theory.

But this gets even more curious when we consider the fact that someone near Nicholasville, Kentucky was planting a bogus tombstone suggesting, at least, that Joseph Drake who married Rebecca Hambly and who supposedly died without issue, was the father of this same Samuel Drake.

We may never know the truth. I suspect the confusion was caused when so much money was at stake late in the last century.

But back to Mrs. Gambill's outline, which, by the way, is relatively free from controversy from here on out.

John Drake and Margaret (Weldon) Drake who were married in Devonshire, England had seven children.

1. Jonathan Drake
2. Enoch Drake
2. John Drake
4. Samuel Drake
5. Mary Drake who married James Null
6. Margaret Drake
7. Benjamin Drake

The descendants of John Drake and Margaret (Weldon) Drake were on the cutting edge of the colonial move westward the established colonies of North Carolina and Virginia. These Drakes were in the wilderness early and often. Of the sons and daughters named above, records indicate that some went south into Tennessee while others drifted in a northerly direction toward Central Kentucky. Mrs. Gambill shows clearly how Jonathan, John and Benjamin ended up near Davidson County in what is now Tennessee. Samuel, Margaret and Enoch settled in relative proximity in Fayette County, Kentucky.

A Summary of the Three Generations  
to Follow  
John and Margaret (Weldon) Drake

I. Jonathan Drake, the first son listed in Mrs. Gambill's account is one of two Jonathan Drakes to settle in Tennessee. The second Jonathan Drake came from Virginia and eventually settled in Montgomery County, Tennessee where he died in 1804. The first, who is the son of John and Margaret (Weldon) Drake came from North Carolina to a place near present day Nashville. He was Building Commissioner and Salt Commissioner for that town in 1784. Mrs. Gambill does not provide a date or birth date. Nor does she mention the name of a wife.

A. Sarah Drake, born in 1777, was married to Joseph Harden, Junior, about 1795.

1. Benjamin Hardin was killed by Indians when a boy.
2. Jonathan Hardin moved to Arkansas in 1820.
3. Prudence Hardin married Ira Nash and moved to either Texas or New Mexico about 1827. Her husband was killed near their new residence.
4. Joab Hardin married Amy Dillahunty in 1832. They had one child, Sara Ann Hardin.

B. Other children, if any, were not listed by Mrs. Gambill.

II. Enoch Drake is mentioned as a son, but no specific detail is given by Mrs. Gambill. I should say, however, that an Enoch Drake was paying taxes in Fayette County in the early 1780's along with Samuel Drake. There is a strong possibility that this Enoch Drake was, in fact, the brother of Samuel and son of John and Margaret (Weldon) Drake. I have no information at this time as to who his wife and children might have been.

III. John Drake owned land in Yadkin Valley, North Carolina and on April 17, 1786, was granted 640 acres in what is now Davidson County, Tennessee. The grant for this land was signed by, among others, Benjamin Drake, who, Mrs. Gambill states, was John Drake's brother and son to John Drake and Margaret (Weldon) Drake. Again, there is no mention by Mrs. Gambill of a wife or children.

IV. Samuel Drake was born in 1719. He married first Margaret Pottle and second Mary Cox in 1743. He was 24 when he married

for a second time, and it must be assumed that nearly all his children were born to his second marriage.

A. Joseph Drake, who Mrs. Gambill believes was the longhunter who came to near where Nashville now stands as early as 1769 and returning several times thereafter. He came from Western Virginia. He married Margaret Buchannon. This agrees with what Clyde Bunch had told me. However, Mrs. Gambill has the two being married in Tennessee in 1773. There were very few white women in Tennessee at that early date. Clyde states that the marriage took place in Smyth County, Virginia. Joseph Drake, she informs us, was killed in 1778. He left a son, John, who ended up in Bedford County, Tennessee in 1809.

B. Ephraim Drake married, says Mrs. Gambill, married Ann Richardson. He had a son, Joseph Drake. She says there was an Ephraim Drake, known to be related to the above mentioned Joseph Drake who married the sister of Joseph Drake's wife, Margaret Buchannon, Anna Buchannon. Ephraim was living in Bedford County, Tennessee in 1809. There seems to be some confusion here insofar as Mrs. Gambill is concerned. Ephraim Drake was probably married only once and that marriage was most like to Ann Buchanan.

C. Samuel Drake married Pauline Cox and had a daughter, Mary who married a man by the name of Jackson. That marriage produced a son, Isaac Jackson.

D. Nathaniel Drake married Mary Jackson and had a son, Isaac Drake, and a daughter, Mary Drake.

E. Mary Drake married in 1771 or 1772 James Crockett who was born in 1750 in Wythe County, Virginia. The couple was

granted 640 acres on the south fork of Little Harpeth in what is Davidson County, Tennessee.

1. Sallie Crockett (July 6, 1773 to 1854) married Thomas Harbert, June 3, 1792.
2. John D. Crockett (1775 to 1856)
3. Samuel Crockett married Nancy Craig.
4. Mary Drake Crockett (May 23, 1778 to November, 1826) married James McGavaock, Junior in 1799.
5. Esther Crockett ( January, 1780 to July 9, 1870) married Francis Jackson Carter.
6. James Crockett, Junior (1782 to 1862) married Nancy Friel.
7. Ephraim Crockett was born in 1784.
8. Stephen Crockett was born in 1787.
9. Abraham Crockett (1791 to 1827)
10. Nathaniel Crockett (1792 to 1870) married Mary Graham.
11. Elizabeth Crockett (September 7, 1795 to January 31, 1862) married Lysander McGavock on December 5, 1832.

F. Rebecca Drake married William Newell.

1. Betsy Drake married man named Duncannon.
2. Thirza Drake married a man by the name of George.
3. Lenah Drake married Andrew Sanders.

G. William Drake is mentioned in his father's will.

H. Elizabeth Drake is probably the Effie mentioned in Samuel Drake's will. She married a Daugherty.

I. Rachel Drake married a Shepherd and is mentioned in the will.

J. Margaret Drake married a Livingston.

K. Sarah Drake is mentioned in the will. Other sources indicate she married a Hunt.

The following is an abstract of Samuel Drake's will:

*In the first place I will and bequeath unto my son Ephraim Drake one Negro boy named Ned, and in the second place to Elizabeth Daugherty the sum of one dollar. To Mary Crockett the sum of one dollar. To my daughter Rebecca Newell one dollar. To my daughter Rachel Shepherd one dollar. To Margaret Livingston one Negro girl Luce she has her in possession.*

*In the third place I give and bequeath unto my two sons Nathaniel and William my whole lands entail to be equally and impartially divided among them.*

*It is my desire and intention that after the death of my wife her part of the slaves she be divided equally among Nathaniel, William, Sarah, and Effie. My three sons, Ephraim, Nathaniel, and William Drake to be executors of this my last will and testament. lastly I desire that my estate may not be appraised as witness my hand and seal this 6th day of December A. D. 1795.*

V. Mary Drake married James Null.

VI. Margaret Drake married General John B. South. He received several grants of land in Kentucky in 1784. He died in 1819. Clyde Bunch tells me that Margaret (Drake) South was involved in the famous siege of Boonesborough and will forever be remembered as the woman who cautioned Captain John Holder not to throw stones at the attacking Indians because it might make them mad.

A. Colonel John South, a soldier of the Revolutionary War, married Betsy Hay.

1. John South, Junior
2. Thomas South
3. Elizabeth South
4. Judith South
5. Elgin South
6. Theodosia South
7. Sally South
8. Margaret South

B. Colonel Samuel South, a Revolutionary War soldier, married and had at least one son, William King South, who married Ann Glover.

VII. Benjamin Drake was born in 1730. Whether he was born in the colonies or in Devonshire, England is not known. He probably held land in on the Yadkin River in North Carolina in 1755. He served as guard to the State Commissioners of North Carolina who laid out the tracts allotted to the Revolutionary officers and soldiers serving in the Continental Line of the state. As compensation for this, which, in those frontier days of peril from the Indians and hardships of the wilderness, must have been active and dangerous service,

Benjamin Drake received a grant of three hundred and twenty acres in Tennessee. The survey for this land was dated August 15, 1785. On April 17, 1786, the State of North Carolina granted him a larger tract, containing six hundred and forty acres of land, "lying and being in White's Creek." The name of Benjamin's wife is unknown. There were four children, three boys and one girl. Since the girl's name is Susan, Mrs. Gambill speculates that the mother's name was also Susan.

A. Benjamin Drake, Junior

1. Ephraim Drake
2. Benjamin Drake
3. Thirza Drake
4. Sarah Drake
5. William I. Drake
6. Lucretia Drake

B. Jonathan Drake

C. John Drake, born 1761, married Elizabeth Renounceville.

D. Susan Drake who married Captain James Leeper and who provides the direct line of Mrs. Gambill. This marriage is the focal point of her entire publication, *Leeper-Drake Kith and Kin*.

Thus ends Mrs. Gambill's outline of the family relationships between the descendants of John and Margaret (Weldon) Drake.

A speculation that I want to make concerns the three sons of Benjamin Drake. I had read in *Kentucky in Retrospect, Noteworthy Personages and Events in Kentucky History* by Mrs. William Preston Drake, Judge Samuel M. Wilson and Mrs. Wm. Breckenridge Ardery, a publication made to commemorate Kentucky's 150th birthday, that Benjamin, John and Jonathan Drake

had been members of Captain Benjamin Logan's company of Kentucky militia in 1778 or 1779. Likely, these three Drakes accompanied the punitive expedition that attacked Chillicothe, the Indian town located in what is now Ohio. The expedition was commanded by Colonel John Bowman. Logan was second in command. The three Drakes on the company roster were probably the sons of Benjamin Drake as outlined above. All three would have been in their late teens or early twenties when they served.

These three young men were probably longhunters as well as Indian fighters. From Collins' *History of Kentucky* I take the following account of hunters' carvings in Kentucky.

***Ancient Marks on Trees--**On the north side of Barren river, about three miles from Bowling Green, and about a quarter mile above Vanmeter's ferry, there are some beech trees which indicate the camping ground of a party, perhaps the "Long Hunters," as they were called, in June, 1775. The most conspicuous tree has the names of thirteen persons. The letters were handsomely cut with some instrument adapted to the purpose. The highest name is about nine feet from the ground, the lowest four feet. They stand in the following order beginning with uppermost and descending to the lowest, to wit:*

*J. NEWELL*

*E. BULGER*

*I. HITE*

*V. HARMAN*

*J. JACKMAN*

*W. BUCHANNON*

A. BOWMAN

J. DRAKE

N. NALL

H. SKAGGS

J. BOWMAN

THO. SLAUGHTER

J. TODD

*The date is thus given: "1775, June Th 13"*

*The apparent age of the marks corresponds with the date.*

*About five steps south of the above named tree, and near the verge of the river bank, stands a beech, marked on the north side with the name of "Wm. Buchanan," and dated "June 14th, 1775." On the south side of the same tree, there is the name of "J. Todd," dated, "June 17, 1775."*

*About twenty steps north of the first tree, there stands a third beech, with the names of I. DRAKE, and ISAAC HITE engraved, and each with the date "15 June, 1775." The names and dates on this tree seem to be as old as any, but made with a different instrument from that which cut the names on the first tree, and the are not so well executed.*

The J. Drake written on the first beech tree in this account could have been Joseph Drake. After all, his old traveling companion, Henry Skaggs, was there. It might have been Joseph's cousin, Jonathan Drake. I make this speculation because E. Bulger, who is Edward Bulger, no doubt, named Jonathan Drake as a friend and beneficiary in his will dated 1782. Bulger was also a member of Captain Logan's company, the same unit of Jonathan, Benjamin, John and Isaac Drake. Bulger was one of the many killed in the Indian

battle that took place at Blue Licks in the summer of 1782. In this same battle Daniel Boone lost a son, Israel. Whoever the Drake hunter was, his name appears on an honor rolls of early Kentucky frontiersmen after it was carved on that beech tree on the banks of the Barren River back in 1775.

Mrs. Gambill continues her outline of the Drake family by describing Isaac Drake. She believes that this Isaac Drake was born in 1756. He was the son of Nathaniel Drake, who was the son of Samuel Drake, who was the son of John and Margaret (Weldon) Drake. Isaac Drake's father, Nathaniel, married Mary Jackson. That union produced two children, Isaac and Mary Drake. Mary (Jackson) Drake died early, and August 29, 1797, Nathaniel married a second time to Peggy Curd. That union brought forth the following children:

1. Polly Drake (1798 to 1823)
2. Patsy Drake, born 1802
3. Edmund Drake, born 1806
4. Joseph Drake, born 1806 and married Patsy Chambers in 1828. Produced three children.
  - a. Mary S. Drake, born 1831
  - b. George W. Drake, born 1836
  - c. Joseph Drake, born 1841
5. Samuel Drake, born 1808
6. Sallie Drake, born 1811 and married Joseph Haydon, 1822.

Mrs. Gambill hedges a bit when linking the Nathaniel Drake who married Mary Jackson and producing a son, Isaac, in 1756 and

the Nathaniel Drake who married Peggy Curd in 1797. She points out how Isaac Drake would have had half brothers and half sisters who were more than 50 years his junior. If he was their brother, the age differential could have made him their grandfather.

Eight days before his death, Isaac Drake made his will, May 5, 1815. It was recorded on August 17, 1815, at Nashville. His wife had already died, presumably, since she is not mentioned in the document. Her name was Jane Todd, and she was from Kentucky. They had eight children.

1. Polly Drake married a Curtis.
2. Elizabeth Drake married Laban Abernathy in 1819.
3. Joseph Drake was born April 17, 1784, near Nashville.

He married Rhoda Eddington on September 6, 1817. They had eight children.

4. Amelia Drake made her will June 2, 1820.
5. Rachel Drake (1785 to 1850) married Freeman Abernathy on January 18, 1816, in Davidson County, Tennessee.
6. Jane Drake
7. Sallie Drake

Mrs. Gambill describes the ancestry of Albrittain Drake in her publication. Her outline does not vary from the lineage described by Mrs. Mildred Talbert Pettit, an account of which I have already written in "Chapter Five" of this paper. But Mrs. Gambill does outline the descendants of a Richard Drake whom she suggests is the brother to Albrittain's father, James Drake. This is important in that Mrs. Pettit pointedly ignores any mention of Richard. Richard Drake and his descendants would have ruined her contention that Albrittain was

the one true heir to the Sir Francis Drake fortune. What follows is Mrs. Gambill's version.

Richard Drake was brother to James Drake, whose descendants, through his son, Albrittain Drake, have herein been recorded. It is said that Richard and James came from England to Virginia and that James went to North Carolina while Richard settled in Southampton County, Virginia. Richard Drake died sometime prior to September 13, 1759. From his will and what Mrs. Gambill calls "other sources" she concludes that Richard Drake had nine children.

1. Matthew Drake settled in Nash County, then part of Edgecombe County, North Carolina. He was justice of the peace for that county in 1782. He married Ann Arrington. In Mrs. Gambill's exact words, "He espoused the cause of the patriots in the War for American Independence, and served this cause in his public activities." The General Assembly of North Carolina appointed him as member of a committee concerned with construction of the public buildings of the county. He died around 1810. His will was proved in Nash County.

a. Matthew Drake, Junior, married Milly, daughter of General Hardy Griffin.

b. James Drake married the daughter of Peter Arrington.

c. Mouning Drake married Cassell Drake, son of Edmund Drake. She married her first cousin.

d. Patsy Drake married William Parker first and then a man named Woodruff.

e. Betsy Drake married Michael Collins.

f. Polly Drake married Duke W. Sumner.

g. Frank Drake married Betsy Drake, who was the daughter of Nathaniel Drake and brother to his father. Frank Drake married a first cousin.

h. Tempty Drake married Exum P. Sumner.

i. Dolly Drake married John Sumner first and then a Judge Phillips.

j. Amy Drake died at the age of twelve.

2. Francis Drake settled in Chatham County, North Carolina.

3. William Drake settled in Edgecombe Count, now Nash County, North Carolina. He married Zilpah Kirby. She was the sister of William Kirby, who married Sarah Drake, daughter of James Drake, who was a brother to Richard, ancestor of the Drake line now being described. Information regarding this connection was given by Mrs. John Lewis Kirby.

4. Nathaniel Drake

5. Tristram Drake

6. Richard Drake settled in Chatham County, North Carolina.

7. Edmund Drake

Given the information provided by Mrs. Gambill that states flatly that Richard Drake and James Drake were brothers and sons to Francis Drake who migrated to Virginia in 1733, it is understandable why Mary Amanda Drake of Lumberton, North Carolina was so anxious to disprove the claims of "old Matthew Drake" and Reverend Caswell Drake. Remember what she wrote:

*These ancestors of ours were not blood kin to any other line of Drakes in America, as was at one time supposed, and*

*claimed to be by one "old Matthew Drake" and Rev. Caswell Drake of N. C.*

But, as the outline of Richard Drake's descendants shows, Matthew Drake was just as eligible as Albrittain Drake to claim a direct line to Sir Francis Drake's estate. Isn't that interesting?

My problem, after review of *Leeper-Drake Kith and Kin*, was that I could find no link to Sir Francis Drake's fortune for my own family. I was getting discouraged.

## Nine

Clyde Bunch provided me with a copy of a lengthy newsletter to members of the United Association of Drake Heirs. There were two branches of the association, the Tennessee Branch and the Kentucky Branch. Officers for the Tennessee Branch, with an office located at 614 Jefferson Street in Nashville were as follows:

Prof. B. F. Drake, President and Trustee for Tennessee  
F. P. Bumpous, Vice President and Treasurer  
Mrs. G. D. Skeggs, Secretary

Offices for the Kentucky Branch were located at 423 W. Jefferson Street in Louisville. Officials of the branch were listed like this:

W. G. Goodman, President  
J. C. Drake, Vice President  
R. A. McKinley, Treasurer  
J. F. South, Trustee for Kentucky  
G. P. Jean, Secretary

The document reads as follows:

*April 14, 1914*

To the Members of the Association:

*There is a lack of understanding as to the measures required to obtain the Drake estate in England and it is necessary to make matters plain so that the members may know what they must do.*

*1. Dr. Lewie South, General Manager and Legal Representative of the Association, has in his possession a great deal of valuable genealogical data tending to show our legal claim to the estate, and has spent two and one half years on England studying the case.*

*(a) But this data is not all in the forms of proof that will be accepted by the courts of England.*

*(b) And, suit to obtain the estate cannot begin until proofs, in legal form, are obtained.*

*2. The proofs required by the English courts, are, certificates of births, marriages, deaths etc., in unbroken succession back to the will of 1661. These certificates and all supplementary affidavits must bear the seal of duly authorized legal officers at various places where the proof-documents are obtained. Dr. South will then have them certified by the British Consul General in New York City.*

*3. The Association's contract with Dr. Lewie South provides that the Association shall bear his expenses while in the United States and England, collecting such proofs as the individual members cannot readily obtain for themselves; and during the suit for recovery in the English courts. If won, the estate is to be distributed to the members of the Association according to the decree of court. The contract further provides that duplicate copies be obtained of each proof-document, one of*

*which is to be deposited, under seal, in a safety vault, in case of loss of the other.*

*4. Dr. Lewie South's contract with the attorney provides that when the Association, at its own expense, has produced the proofs in legal form acceptable to the English courts, the attorney will then prosecute the suit at his (the attorney's) expense for a contingent fee of 10%. This contract further provides that the attorney will not deal with claimants outside this Association, nor with individual members thereof except through Dr. Lewie South or on Dr. South's personal orders.*

*5. These contracts protect every member alike, and every member is subject to them.*

*6. It will be of especial advantage to have the proofs ready before the present Baronet Elliott-Fuller-Drake dies. He is 77 years old and reported to be in poor health. Upon his death, his son-in-law, a wealthy English lord, will claim the estate, and unless the American line, howbeit the only legal heirs under the wills, appear in court with complete proofs of the descent to forestall it, there will be nothing to prevent his succession. Then it will be more trouble for us to obtain possession than it would have been to forestall his succession.*

### ***The Cost***

*7. Dr. Lewie South thinks he can carry on the work in this country for \$150.00 a month. He will have to economize to do it, for his will be likely have to go into every state in the Union. He must dig into old records of births, marriages, deaths, wills, deeds, etc., to find what is needed. It may require more, but for the present \$150.00 a month must be had.*

(a) *Then the Association must pay county clerk and notary fees for the two certified copies of needed records obtained by Dr. South, together with the Consular fees in New York City. The amount of these expenses cannot be foretold, but they are not expected to be considerable.*

(b) *No one can tell how long it will take here. The time has been variously estimated at from six months to two years. It may take longer, it cannot take less.*

(c) *Then, Dr. Lewie South must be sent to England and maintained there at the expense of the Association until the estate is won or lost. If lost, the Association must bear his expenses back to this country.*

8. *Hence the members must pay into the Association in addition to their entrance fees, enough in monthly dues of assessments to provide, as stated above, \$150.00 a month for Dr. Lewie South; for the notary fees and such items expended by him; enough to provide Dr. South's expenses to England and maintainance there, and postage and running expenses of the Association. What the expenses will be after the work is complete in the United States is not know now. As to that, it is anticipated that when Dr. South is able to say that the case is made up in this country, there will be offers of large amounts for membership fees, in which event, if accepted, our assessments may not be so large at the finish as in the immediate future.*

9. *The dues are now 50 cents a month, and by resolution, payable six months in advance, to October, 1914.*

10. *All members who have not paid dues to October, 1914, must send the amount to the secretary at once. Any who*

*have not paid entrance fees in full should pay their installments promptly.*

*11. Future monthly assessments will depend upon the amount of new membership fees and the total number of members admitted. There are now some 200 members--in Kentucky about 65, and Tennessee about 135.*

### ***What the Members Must Do***

*12. The individual members must procure, at their own expense, the duplicate proof-documents of their own descent on the Drake line as far back as they can, and send them promptly to Dr. Lewie South. Then he will do the rest, as per agreement. A letter of instructions from his comes to you under this date.*

### ***General Information***

*13. It is deemed wise, at this time, to add a somewhat general review of the case, for the benefit of members who have been unable to attend branch meetings, and for answers to inquiries of others of the Drake lines who may wish to become members. This letter, however, should not be shown promiscuously, nor allowed to be published in newspapers. General publicity may hinder, rather than help, our cause. But keep this letter for future reference.*

### ***As to the Estate***

*14. An attorney of Chicago, who has the right to practice at the bar in England, and who has recovered several small estates over there for American heirs, heard of this Drake estate when on one of these cases, and looked it up several years ago. Upon the strength of his investigation then, he offered to*

*prosecute a suit in England for the American heirs upon contingent fee of 10%, upon condition that the American heirs produce at their expense the proofs of their descent in required legal form. This offer is now part of the agreement referred to above. It means that the Association does not have to pay the attorney, nor the court costs, unless he could win the suit.*

*Nevertheless, to be even better assured of our chances of winning, some of the members raised a special fund last November and employed this attorney to go again to England for the sole purpose of investigating further, and reporting upon the present legal status of the case. He went to England in November, and is there now.*

*(a) He wrote, under date of January 1st, 1914, to Dr. Lewie South:*

*I have done nicely, and the best of it all is the fact that a very large majority of this investigation is most favorable to us, and that there is indeed much less than I expected that can be used against us. So, I am indeed very much encouraged, and I wish you to inform all that I have advanced rapidly and carefully and thoroughly in the enormous amount of work necessary to make the thorough investigation desired, and that I am pleased to report that I am greatly encouraged, and am now expecting the final results of my investigation to be favorable, although, like every legal contest anywhere, we must not expect others to give up the property without a struggle. However, with the facts, as you have stated them to me, and a correct proof of heirship of the heirs you represent, my investigation thus far would indicate that with same kind of results in our further investigation, we*

*should have but little trouble in winning the case once we get it under prosecution. This report is conservative as based on my own investigations and should certainly encourage all concerned. I am sure there are no so foolish as to expect those now in possession to kindly and cheerfully give us the property without any sort of a contest. Nor should there be any so foolish as to suppose that those now in possession are holding the property and have been holding it all these years without any sort of foundation of claim, either of descent or under legal contrivance. The fact is, they are related, but not in the proper way which in certain ways, give them certain claims and rights, but we now believe these are very limited in the face of the facts as we understand them, and we think we understand the facts concerned fairly well.*

*From these statements you can secure plenty of material to make a rather extensive, as well as encouraging report to those concerned, and I hope you will get the report to them as soon as possible, so they can get busy raising funds for you, so you can get the work over there that requires money to do it. My work here is worthless unless they furnish you with funds to prosecute the work here.*

*(b) Again, under the date of March 8th, 1914, he wrote to Dr. South:*

*I am glad to know that parties there are beginning to wake up and respond to your call. As you say, the important thing in the whole matter is your work of making out a case in proper legal proof of heirship, and to do this, you must have quite a bit of both time and money. If the heirs are interested and in*

*earnest, they will supply these. And the sooner they do so, the sooner you can accomplish your work on that line, and the sooner you accomplish this, the sooner we can get into the case to secure the funds. If all can be made to realize these facts, work will progress more rapidly.*

*I have seen quite a bit of the property involved. Have also seen parties who have very recently seen Baronet Elliott-Fuller-Drake. e is now about 77 years of age and it is claimed that his health is not very good. As you are aware, the records show that he is not a descendant of the Drakes at all, and his wife, of course, is not a male descendant. Heretofore, under the wills, neither one can possibly have any legal rights to the Baronetcy or property going with 4state. They are, of course, holding under certain obtained rights but these rights are in contradiction of the terms of the will. With very best wishes, I remain your friend (Signed by the attorney).*

*P. S.--If I am not greatly encouraged, I would not want to remain.*

*15. This is the best evidence we have as to the existence of the estate and our legal right to it. It should be stated that the Baronet mentioned by the attorney does not hold possession of the estate in fee simple, but that it is, and has been since the will of 1661, in the hands of trustees, and a portion only of the income goes to the Baronet under the obtained rights, which are in contradiction of the terms of the will. But unless we get our proofs of descent up to legal requirements and sue for recovery, the estate will remain in England and its income will go to any distantly related persons who may obtain such partial rights as*

*the present Baronet, just as has been with previous English claimants since the direct line died out in England.*

### ***As to Obtaining the Estate***

*16. Owing to the Revolutionary War and the property laws of England relative to aliens inheriting, the American line could not have claimed the estate until these laws were repealed in 1870. Attempts have been made before now to obtain the estate, but owing to the wide scattering of the Americans the labor and cost of proving their claims have been so great that previous efforts have not been pushed to a successful conclusion. Dr. Lewie South has a great deal of genealogical data compiled in these former efforts, and is firmly convinced that, if he be maintained in the field long enough, he can secure all the proofs that will be required by the English courts, and that the property is of sufficient value to return many times over the expense incurred.*

*17. The United Association of Drake Heirs has been organized with a view to getting enough of the American claimants interested to raise enough money to carry the work on to a successful conclusion.*

*18. The Association started with a membership fee of \$25.00, to be followed by monthly dues and assessments sufficient to keep the general manager in the field until the work is done. New members are required to pay, at this writing, upon admission to the Association, the amount already paid by each old member.*

*19. This to October, 1914, amounts to \$35.00.*

*(NOTE--The money raised by certain members by*

*special subscription to send the attorney to  
England  
in November, 1913, is not counted in the above.  
New  
members do not have to pay any part of that  
subscription.)*

*20. This rate of \$35.00, however, is only temporary, for as stated in the circular of last fall, the entrance fee was to be \$50.00 from January 1st, to June 1st, 1914, and \$250.00 thereafter, until further notice, but at a conference in March, the date of putting these new rates into effect was postponed, and until notice to the contrary is given, the entrance fee for new members will remain at \$85.00, which pays in full to October, 1914.*

*(a) It must be understood, though, that as the work progresses, the entrance fees will be raised very materially.*

*(b) Furthermore, when the case is made out, ready for suit, no new members can be accepted; and the admission of new members may cease before that time.*

### ***Protection of Individual Members***

*21. This Association is organized with a constitution and by-laws designed to do simple justice to every member according to the laws governing the property, and the agreement with Dr. Lewie South as gneral manager and legal representative, and though him with attorney are framed with the same end in view.*

*(a) If any persons join this Association and are not proven heirs, if the estate is won, the Association is bound by its By-Laws to refund to such persons all money, with interest,*

*contributed by them to the Association's expenses, and to remunerate, them properly for personal services rendered by order of the Association. Of course, if the estate is not won, all members necessarily lose the money and labor they may have contributed to the cause.*

### ***Some Erroneous Notions Corrected***

*22. Some have the idea that if the estate be recovered, every descendant of the right Drake lines will be awarded a portion of the estate, whether a member of this Association or not, or whether represented by attorneys in England or not.*

***THIS IS NOT CORRECT.***

*No one, it matters not what kin he or she may be will be awarded a share by the English courts, in response to suit brought by this Association, unless a member of this Association; nor can individuals interclaim in this suit through their own attorneys, as co-claimants and co-heirs.*

*(a) The United States courts have no jurisdiction over English property, distributed by English courts. Those who are not represented in the English courts, at the time of this suit, can get no portion of the estate whatever.*

*(b) The Association means to collect the proofs, bring suit, and obtain this estate in England, if possible, for its members. But it will not represent any descendants of the Drake family unless they are members of the Association and have paid in full heir obligations to the Association as members thereof.*

*24. Some think that if one of a number of brothers and sisters join the Association, and the estate be won, the one who is a member will be awarded as much by the court as all together.*

**THIS IS NOT CORRECT.**

(a) *The English laws differ from American laws.*

(b) *The estate will be pro-rated according to the total number of proven claimants. If all the brothers or sisters are members of this Association, and the estate is won, each of the brothers and sisters will receive his or her undivided pro-rata. If only one of the brothers or sisters is a member, the brothers and sisters who are not represented will not be considered, and the portion they might have obtained by being represented as members, will be divided among all the claimants who are represented as members.*

*25. The foregoing states the case according to the best knowledge and belief of your officers at the present writing. If futher light upon the subject necessitates modification or change, ou will be duly notified. But keep this one thing clearly in mind: We cannot hope to win this estate unless we put up money enought to obtain and present to the English courts incontrovertible proof of our descent down the right Drake lines.*

**Caution**

*26. Members are forbidden to give out information of the Association's data to any persons not entitled thereto and should report to Dr. South any outside activities about this estate that may come to their ntoice.*

*27. As the estate has heretofore been the basis of fraudulent schemes, all members are warned against dealing with outsiders and should warn their Drake kin, who are not members of this Association, to make the most searching investigation of*

*all offers to recover this estate. This Association will expose all fraudulent schemes that are discovered.*

***In Conclusion***

*28. Attend all your Branch meetings that you can, to hear the current reports of progress.*

*29. Read carefully all letters sent out from time to time and retain them, so that you will not be writing for information that has once been given.*

*30. Remember, in writing for personal information, to enclose stamps for reply.*

The document is signed by the secretaries of both the Tennessee and Kentucky Branches of the Association.

## Ten

I remember sitting at a table in the LaGrange Public Library pouring over Census Indexes and tax lists from Fayette County, Virginia. Sitting there hearing nothing but the clack of a computer keyboard, the hum of electric lights and the occasional flap of a page being turned, I knew I was looking at the names of ancestors, but who these people were and how they fit into family groupings was a nagging mystery. Yet, even more mysterious was the question of Margaret Drake. Who was she, I wondered, and how could she be surviving in a Kentucky territory that barely five years before had been under siege by hundreds of hostile Indians? Indeed, the Indians were still a menace in 1782, when she paid her taxes.

Clyde Bunch is a true gentleman. The proof of that matter lies in his insistence that, if I were write anything about Margaret Drake, I should be kind to her. Obviously, Clyde regarded Margaret as a true pioneer heroine. He was quite concerned that I not spread gossip about this woman. I agreed with Clyde from the beginning. At that stage of my search for ancestors, I was pretty sure that she was a grand aunt. Ephraim Drake, whom I suspected was a grandfather, was married to Margaret's sister. Further, Margaret's husband was Ephraim's brother. I was satisfied that Margaret was kin.

She must have hated Indians. Her father was killed by Indians in a raid at Draper's Meadows in Western Virginia. Her first husband,

Joseph Drake was a longhunter in Kentucky and Tennessee. By 1769, he made his way from Western Kentucky to near where Nashville, Tennessee is now located. He must have had many encounters with hostiles prior to the time he was actually killed by Indians on or around September 1, 1778. The incident took place on the land he marked near where Boonesborough was built. One can only guess what happened. He may have been surprised. He may have known the individual Indians who killed him. There was so much bloodshed in those days. In later years, when depositions were taken in an attempt to reconstruct early Kentucky history, the names of dozens of individuals were listed as having been killed while hunting or in defense of the fort.

Most of what we know about the life of Margaret (Buchanan) Drake comes from the records of a lawsuit that filed many years after the death of her first husband. Arthur M. Walson copied the court records of the case on April 15, 1983. The record, he says, is true and correct as copied from the Circuit Court Record Book, June term, 1827, Clark County, Kentucky. It was a civil suit involving disputed ownership of slaves. The two contestants were husbands of half-sisters.

Court records show that Joseph Drake brought his wife and two small children to Boonesborough in the spring of 1778. He also brought a slave by the Aggy. They arrived on April 10, 1778, and settled in the fort. Five months later, the Indians had made Margaret Drake a widow. She and Joseph had been married for barely five years. Their two children were very small, then, when their father was murdered. Margaret was left with all Joseph's possessions. He must have had guns, traps, clothes and perhaps tools. We know he had the

Negro girl, Aggy. From the court record we get, "That the place he was killed was near the said fort, where his widow afterwards continued to reside, keeping in her possession the property said Drake died possessed of until the fall of the year 1781."

From this place, we are told, she moved across the Kentucky River to a place called Holder's Station, where she stayed for several years. While she was there, she bore a third and fourth child. Clyde Bunch asked me to be kind to Margaret Drake if I wrote about her. It was this illegitimate child that worried Clyde so much. The woman was alone on the frontier. She had two small children and was surrounded by a forest full Indians. She could not go back to an established family in the slightly more civilized counties in Virginia. She moved Captain Holder's Station to be near her brother, William Buchanan. Needing protection for herself and her children, she accepted the affections of Captain Holder himself, for it was he who fathered Margaret's third child, John Holder, Junior, and a little girl who was named Rhoda.

Evidently, John Holder was an honest and affectionate man, for his illegitimate daughter, Rhoda, lived with him until she was married to Eli Vaughn sometime around 1797. The relationship between John Holder and Margaret Drake, the widow, must have been well known. Aggy, the slave, had a daughter by the name of Celia, and it was this Celia who had several children, all of whom became slaves of her owner. Margaret Drake lived about 150 to 200 yards from John Holder's place. During that time, according to a witness, the slaves were observed in possession of John Holder who appeared to exercised acts of ownership over them. According to the record, ". . . the widow Drake, after living by Holder two or three

years, moved up to the Pond's (illegible) four or five miles from Holder's and that he (the deponent) frequently saw the Negroes at Holder's in his possession and at work, after she moved to the 'ponds.'"

Margaret's oldest child, John Drake, went to live with an uncle who lived in the vicinity. Possibly, it was Margaret's brother, William Buchanan. The second child was Mary Drake. Whether Mary lived her childhood with her mother or not, I do not know. She did marry sometime prior to the turn of the century to John D. Stovall.

Margaret's son, John, was heard by witnesses to say that he believed that his half-sister, Rhoda, was entitled to some of the slaves. He and his sister, Mary, had been given some of the slaves. All this indicates that it common knowledge that Rhoda was the daughter of John Holder.

In the reconstructed census of 1790, Margaret Drake is listed as owner of five slaves. How did Holder get possession of some of the slaves that came to her when her husband died? Joseph Drake died intestate. He died also owing money. Apparently, John Holder had helped Margaret settle these debts. In return, it is said, Margaret gave him some of the slaves. John Holder then gave these same slaves to his illegitimate daughter, Rhoda, when she married Eli Vaughn. At this late date, it seems a fair thing for him to do. He gave his daughter slaves that had once belonged to her mother. This view was not shared by all, however.

The lawsuit came many years after the events. By 1815, John Drake, Joseph's only son, had died at Blue Licks of natural causes. Near the end, it is said, he had decided to try to get the slaves from the Vaughns. Nearly ten years after his death, his legitimate sister,

Mary Stovall, was trying to get the slaves away from her half-sister, Rhoda Vaughn. The plaintiff in the case was John D. Stovall. He was suing defendant Eli Vaughn.

One witness introduced by the defendant stated that John Drake had often frequented the house of Eli Vaughn. The witness testified that he had heard John Drake say on more than one occasion that he thought Rhoda was entitled to the slaves.

The record suggests that the Vaughns won the case and retained ownership of the slaves. Margaret must have been dead by this time. She would have been near 80 years old. Court records from Franklin County, Tennessee dated January 18, 1813, show that Margaret gave her power of attorney to her son-in-law, Preston Anderson. She was trusting him to sell the land she had first attained back in 1779, on Drowning Creek. There was 400 acres there that had been granted to her when she was known as Margaret Drake, the widow of Joseph Drake, deceased. By this time she had been widowed a second time. She had married William Jones, who had passed away prior to January, 1813.

What would she have said about this dispute between her two daughters? One can only guess, but she is likely to have told them to stop fussing and to get on about the business of maintaining home, hearth and family. She was a brave lady who did what she had to do to survive on the frontier, the kind of real character whose life could serve as model for a romantic novel.



## Eleven

Clyde said to me on the phone, "You're starting to lean away from Ephraim being on your direct line, aren't you?"

"I am," I said. "I've looked through everything you have sent a dozen times and can find nothing to indicate that Ephraim Drake was closely tied to Greenberry."

"That's what I like about you," he said. "You want the truth and aren't afraid to give up a theory." Clyde always knew how to brighten my day. He had come to the conclusion that I was barking up the wrong tree long before I did. But my new found friend, Clyde Bunch, was wise enough to let me figure it out for myself. Shortly after that his letters began to change focus. He drew me back to Barren County, Kentucky, but this time we were looking for connections between Greenberry Drake and some of the other Drakes who did not seem to be associated with Ephraim.

I learned a lot more about Clyde in his next letter. He wrote:

*I guess the old saying there is a little boy in every man is true, or at least it has been true in my case. When I was younger, I enjoyed the woods and outdoor life very much. My love of history and my love of the outdoors seems to go hand in hand. When I was a young man, I did some very unusual things, or at least according to today's standards. I remember thinking to myself, I wanted to do and see a great many things in my life*

*time. In my thinking at the time, I could collect memories. Memories that I could recall when I got older. As I look back I think I accomplished most of what I set out to do.*

*I remember one time, in trying to get a better understanding of frontier life, I took a canoe trip down the Kentucky River. I carried no food and only a few bare essentials, such as, a gun and fishing line and hooks. My journey began on the head waters of the Kentucky River. It was in July and one of the hottest days of summer one could imagine. After five days and about fifty miles on the river, I had about all the "understanding" I could stand. I was sunburnt, dirty, full of mosquito bites and about half starved to death. If it had not been for a few scattered corn fields along the river banks, I think I would have starved. If this was anything close to pioneer life, I had no envy for them whatsoever.*

*In 1978 I moved to Williamsburg, Ky. I took a job in a Bottling Plant for 7UP and RC Companies. I soon became assistant manager of the plant. You're talking about throwing Brier Rabbit into the brier patch. Our routes covered thirteen counties in Eastern Kentucky, three in Virginia and four in Tennessee. I had the freedom to go where I wanted to, when I wanted. I was my own boss. I spent about four days a week on the road, for about three years. I guess I have seen every historical site and was in every library within 150 miles of Williamsburg. I have walked and charted several miles of the Wilderness Road, some spots long lost in the memory of man. I walked on this old road at different seasons of the year. I guess God's greatest gift to a man was an imagination. Anyone who*

*loves history should stand on this old road in the fall of the year, when the trees are in full color. Even today you sense the dangers, fear, hopes and anticipation those early travelers must have felt. So, as you read about the life of Daniel Trabue, use your imagination and travel with him. He will take you on a trip that will remain in your memories always.*

*I went to the Kentucky Historical Society Library in Frankfort the other day. If you are still planning on coming for a visit, you need to allow yourself a couple of days in the Library. Everything you wanted to know about the Drakes in Kentucky is at your fingertips there. Also, about a mile away is the Kentucky State Archives. It houses the records of each county in the state. Save a little time to visit Daniel Boone's and Rebecca's graves and the Historical Society museum. Many of Boone's belongings can be seen here, including his gun and powderhorn. It is full of everything covering frontier life. There I go sounding like the Chamber of Commerce again.*

*I would like you to see Boonesborough. I would like you to stand on the river bank there and use that imagination I spoke of earlier. There are only a few monuments to mark the fort site today. All the people killed in the fort are buried on this river bank, no markers or headstones can be seen. Among the buried there are Col. Richard Calloway. Richard Calloway had a brother Thomas, who died in Ash County, N. C. Thomas Calloway's wife was May Baker. She had a brother named Andrew Baker, who was the father of John "Renta" Baker which I told you about earlier. Small world. A reproduction of Fort*

*Boonesborough is about a mile from the original site on top of a hill.*

*Back to my trip to Frankfort. I was trying to find you some clues to help you. I think by now you are beginning to lean away from Samuel Drake of Jessamine County as being in your ancestral line. I am also. I think you are from a line of Drakes I have not researched. I do have my suspicions, however. If I were to guess, I would say through the line as Tarleton, Sir Francis, Carter, Braxton or Allen. Of the ones I mentioned, I would lean more toward Braxton or Allen. This is mere speculation on my part. When all is said and done, let's see how close I came.*

The best lead Clyde gave me in that letter concerned Allen Drake. Allen Drake had appeared in Barren County, on the tax lists, in the same period of time as Greenberry Drake had. Clyde told me he had found Allen Drake in the Census of 1850 in Hardin County, Kentucky. At that time Allen Drake was 80 years old. He was a black smith. Other Drakes in the same county at the same time were as follows:

1. James Drake, aged 60
2. William Drake, aged 56
3. Cad Drake, aged 54
4. Sally Drake, aged 62
5. Abram Drake, aged 52
6. Elizabeth Drake, aged 50
7. Francis Drake, aged 45.

Clyde was speculating that these were mostly children of Allen Drake. Further, he was guessing that Allen Drake was the son of James Drake, a Revolutionary War veteran who resided in Powhatan County, Virginia. Clyde had already confirmed that James Drake, the Revolutionary War veteran, was the father of Tarlton (Tolton) Drake and Sir Francis Drake. It seemed a perfectly legitimate inference on the part of my friend, Clyde. I made plans to follow up Clyde's theory.

He had also discovered a second Greenberry Drake in Meade County, Kentucky in 1850. This man was 40 years old at the time. He was much younger than *my* Greenberry Drake so I assumed he was a nephew to the older Greenberry. It was not likely that he was a son to the first Greenberry Drake since he was born before my Greenberry had been married in 1811. Knowing there were two Greenberry Drakes cleared up a mystery for me. I had received word months earlier that a Greenberry Drake had married Elmira Stiles in Meade County, Kentucky in 1833. Naturally, I had concluded that my Greenberry had remarried because his wife, Nancy Lane Drake, had died. Learning of the second Greenberry Drake, I quickly surmised that my Greenberry Drake had come to Indiana with his wife, Nancy. Later, I would learn this was indeed true. It had been the younger Greenberry who married in Meade County, Kentucky in 1833.

Clyde gave me some other things to think about. He had made a series of maps on his computer that showed the locations of Drake heads of households in Kentucky in Census records from 1800 to 1840. What the maps showed was a cluster certain Drake men tended to stick together. There was Greenberry Drake, of course,

but along with him were Allen Drake, Carter Drake, and Braxton Drake. Clyde wondered if these men were closely related. At various times in the first half of the Nineteenth Century these men had appeared in Casey, Barren, Hardin and Meade Counties.

Clyde Bunch had shown me that he had no particular theory to prove. He simply looked for the truth, wherever it took him. His hunches were good enough for me. I decided to try to follow up on his hunch that Allen Drake was the son of James Drake, Revolutionary War veteran, of Powhatan County, Virginia. It was time to get in touch with The Daughters of the American Revolution

## Twelve

Back to the public library I went. This time I checked the rolls of the established members of the DAR. Sure enough, as Clyde had promised, James Drake was a proven veteran. Also from Powhatan County, Virginia was a Joel Drake.

It was the ninth day of September, 1994, when I called the headquarters of the DAR. The voice at the other end of the phone was Caribbean, I thought, and very pleasant. Her name was Geraldine. "How can I help you?" she asked. I told her who I was interested in. She checked the records very quickly. Yes, they had records for James Drake.

I was hesitant, but I had to ask. "Could you read the names of the children?"

"Certainly," she answered. She read four names that I did not recognize. Geraldine told me that Thomas Drake, who was born August 13, 1728 and who had married Eurah Humphreys had five children. They were Hannah, Jacob, Susanna, Tacy and Deborah. This Thomas Drake had died August 25, 1811. There was a second Thomas Drake who was a veteran. He was born in 1760 and married Catherine Vaughn. They had two children whose names were listed in the DAR record, Susan and Jane. Geraldine had been very helpful, but certainly she did not read Allen Drake's name. Undaunted, I asked about Joel Drake. She could not help me there.

I knew Joel Drake, of Powhatan County, Virginia, was a veteran. His lineage had not been proven with the DAR, as yet, and the pleasant woman had no information on him.

Later that day, I mailed an official request to the DAR headquarters in Washington, D. C. asking for the records of James Drake and John Drake, both of Virginia. That done, I went to papers that Sandra Gorin had supplied when she had done work for me the previous year. She had provided scattered bits and pieces of information on both Tarlton Drake and Sir Francis Drake. The men were brothers and proven sons of James Drake, the veteran. Maybe, I thought, I have overlooked something.

Waiting for copies of documents from DAR headquarters, I poured over the Gorin information. I found lists of the children of Tarlton Drake. Also, I determined to my own satisfaction that Tarlton Drake and Tolton Drake were the same person. Clyde had already informed me that Tarlton was buried along with several of his family in an obscure cemetery near Bowling Green, Kentucky. What I found interesting about the names he chose for his children is that they were unusual and some of them were named for places in Virginia. For example, one of his sons was named Powhatan.

Sandra Gorin had also included an abstract of the will of Sir Francis Drake. He was known to be a brother to Tarlton. Both actively claimed throughout their lifetimes that they were descended directly from Admiral Sir Francis Drake, the great navigator.

Finally, the records from the DAR came. I had the full record of James Drake. I thought I had sent for the record of John Drake, also of Powhatan County, Virginia. I was speculating that John and James of that county were possibly brothers. But it turned out that

they sent me the records of a John Drake of Botetourt County, Virginia.

Information was trickling in at a steady rate. The more I got, however, the more I wanted. The frustrating part of it all was the fact that none of the paper I was received mentioned anything about Greenberry Drake. Where the hell did this guy come from?

All I could do was keep looking--and figuring. I made charts and formulated hypothetical family trees, all based on Clyde's hunch that Allen Drake had to have been related to the James Drake of Powhatan County, Virginia.

The following is what I have put together using the DAR records, an abstract of Sir Francis Drake's (of Kentucky) will, and information supplied by Sandra Gorin concerning the lineage of James Drake, veteran of the War of Revolution, and his wife, Molly, of Powhatan County, Virginia.

James Drake was born about 1740. He married a woman named Mary or Molly. Mary (Molly) was born around 1744. James lived until around February 1, 1806. His wife survived until January 3, 1828. Their children were as follows:

1. Thomas Drake
2. Samuel Drake
3. Lavernia or Lavinia Drake who married John Taylor on September 26, 1787
4. Nancy Drake who married, first, Hughs Taylor and, second, a man named Rice
5. Sir Francis Drake, born around 1765, who married Martha Gilliam
6. Joseph Drake

7. William Drake
8. Delphia Drake who married Anthony Martin November 9, 1796
9. Tarlton Drake
10. Sally Drake who married an Adkinson
11. Martha Drake who was 21 when she married Robert Goode September 19, 1803
12. James Drake, Junior

The record shows that James Drake served as a lieutenant under Captain Edmund Vaughn in the Cumberland County, Virginia Militia beginning November 3, 1775. He also served as second lieutenant under Captain Richard Crump of the Powhatan County, Virginia Militia beginning August 21, 1777. James Drake served as a lieutenant in Cumberland County, Virginia Minute Men beginning February 18, 1775, William Fleming, Colonel.

The following are the children of Sir Francis Drake, son of James Drake, who married Martha Gilliam. Sir Francis Drake died in 1814 in Logan County, Kentucky.

1. John Gilliam Drake
2. Taylor B. Drake who married Elizabeth Lucas in 1814
3. Sara S. Drake who married a Jackson
4. Sir Francis Drake, Junior, who married Jayne Mayner on August 27, 1820

What follows is a list of the children of Sara S. (Drake) Jackson which shows their ages in 1850:

1. Marcus Jackson, 22

2. Cordelia Jackson, 20
3. Monterell Jackson, 20
4. Tennessee Jackson, 18
5. Thomas Jackson, 17
6. Terracy Jackson, 15

The children of Sir Francis Drake, Junior, and wife Rebecca (Spratt) Drake.

1. Rebecca F. Drake
2. William H. Drake who was born March 13, 1856

The children of Jacob G. Drake and Jane (Mayner) Drake.

1. Carrie Anna (Drake) Smith
2. Walter (Sir Francis) Drake
3. Edwin Porter Drake
4. William Talmadge Drake
5. Robert Thomas Gilliam Drake
6. Mary Elizabeth Amy Lynn Drake

The children of Tarlton Drake, son of Revolutionary War veteran, James Drake:

1. Mahala Drake who married Booker Thomas Ramsey
2. Delilah Drake
3. Castillion J. Drake
4. Preston G. Drake who was born August 6, 1807
5. Gelina P. Drake who married A. Kirkham
6. Alvin G. Drake (1818 to 1850)
7. Mary Ann E. Drake

8. Virginia F. Drake
9. Thermomia Drake
10. Terrissa Drake
11. Powhatan Drake

The second DAR record I received was for John Drake of Botetourt County, Virginia. He was born September 5, 1748, in Hopewell Township, Hunterdon County, New Jersey. He married Jane Neely. He lived until March 3, 1839 where he passed away in Madison County, Alabama. The couple had ten children whose names appear on the DAR record:

1. Zachariah Drake, who was born December 12, 1775, and married, first, Anne Leftwich and, second, Rhoda Neely
2. Robert Drake who was born December 23, 1777
3. James Drake who was born April 30, 1780 and married, first, Roseanna Neely and, second, Agnes Neely
4. John Drake who was born January 31, 1783 and married Frances Campbell
5. Andrew Drake who was born July 26, 1785, and married, first, Amelia Leftwich and, second, Caroline McCartney
6. William Michael Drake who was born March 23, 1789, and married Elizabeth Leftwich
7. Anna Neely Drake who was born April 3, 1791 and married Jackson Leftwich on August 13, 1808
8. Elijah Drake who was born May 16, 1793, and married Elizabeth W. Buford
9. Elizabeth Drake who was born August 30, 1795 and married Jackson (Addison) Neely

10. Neely Drake who was born October 12, 1798, and married, first, Lucinda Guder and, second, Eliza Leftwich

Lots of names but no Allen, no Carter, no Braxton, and certainly no Greenberry. Where the hell did these guys come from? I was ready to give up.

Then I heard from Clyde Bunch.

## Thirteen

Josh Billings, for *Encyclopedia of Proverbial Philosophy*, wrote, "I honestly believe it iz better tew know nothing than tew know what ain't so." By the early fall of 1994, a lot of work had gone into finding out "what ain't so." I was learning who we weren't, in other words. Being a high school teacher for many years, I had always preached to my students that any knowledge is better than ignorance, but at that stage, I was beginning to question my own philosophy. Where did Greenberry Drake come from? I was clueless and frustrated.

"I'm calling Diane later," my wife said to me as I breezed into the kitchen. I was home from school on a short break. I commute from the South Campus of Lyons Township High School, where the freshman and sophomores attend, and the North Campus, where the Juniors and Seniors take their classes. I like to check in with my wife each day just to make sure everything is all right.

So she was calling Diane, I thought, and cracked a wry smile. "Do you want me to ask her anything for you?" Boge asked.

"Sure," I said. I wrote down a few questions near the phone in the kitchen. "Can't believe I'm doing this," I said handing her the questions.

She did not say anything, just took the sheet of paper and went on with her chore of preparing a meal for the children she watches. Boge has done day care for small children for over six years now.

We were having plumbing problems. Boge had made her living as a bookkeeper before we were married. When our children came, she gave up the idea of a full time job. Like many mothers, she felt she should stay in the home to raise her children. My wife is hard-headedly realistic about practical problems. That is, *most* of the time. For years my practical wife and her youngest brother have regularly consulted with a psychic named Diane who lives in Decatur, Illinois. When our sewer line required its seventh rodding in less than two years, Boge did what most practical people do. She contacted Diane, the psychic.

Diane told Boge the sewer was clogging because there had once been a huge tree in our front yard. It had been cut, but the roots were still clogging the drain tile.

*My questions?* Were Allen, Braxton and Carter Drake brothers? What was the name of Greenberry Drake's father? Crazy, I guess, but desperate people sometimes do desperate things. Diane's answers were like this. She felt that Allen and Carter Drake were brothers, but Braxton was an outsider who was treated like a brother. She said she was not good at names. "She paused when I asked her that one," Boge said. "She said the best she could do was Cyrus." So Diane thought that Greenberry's father's name had been Cyrus. Sadly, there was not much help for me from Diane, the psychic.

On September 26, 1994, a letter from Clyde Bunch came with some real help. He had recently purchased compact disks that his computer could read. Clyde was buying these from J & D Distributing in Orem, Utah. He had transferred information from the compact disk to a floppy disk. It was a list of hundreds of weddings of Drakes from pre-revolution times to well after the turn of the 19th Century. I was so anxious to get a reading of what was on the disk that I put the disk into my word processor, which is not a legitimate computer. I did not have a computer at that time. The Brother word processor, at my command, initialized the disk. That meant it erased everything Clyde had put on it. My friend who had a computer confirmed the loss to me later that night. Sheepishly, I called Clyde the next day and told him what had happened. "Oh, hon," he said with genuine sympathy. "I'll make you another copy. Don't worry about it."

A few days later a second disk arrived in the mail. I took it to the computer lab at school and let the experts handle it. The lady in the lab made a back up copy and then showed me how to print out the information. It rolled off the printer for several minutes, page after page. I was surging with anticipation. In the note that came with the computer disk, Clyde told me that he thought he had found Allen, Carter and Braxton Drake in Franklin County, Virginia. He had. What follows is a record of Drake marriages in Franklin County, Virginia:

*Clayton Drake to Sara Meador, August 29, 1791*

*Braxton Drake to Patsy Greer, April 29, 1795*

*Allin Drake to Anny Wood, December 29, 1793*

*Turner Drake to Polly Graham, May 5, 1797*

*Mary Drake to Robert Harman, May 20, 1794*  
*Clary Drake to Joseph Wright, November 28, 1793*  
*Elizabeth Drake Oaks to Ben Smith, Aug. 20, 1786*

In the same printout, listed as having been married in Lincoln County, Kentucky was this:

*Carter Drake to Polly Hosling, January 16, 1797*

I studied the names and dates and let the information ferment for a time. Then it hit me. When Greenberry Drake had had a survey done in Barren County in 1823, a person by the name of S. Drake was listed as a marker. Furthermore, listed in the 1810 Census was a Sary Drake who lived in Barren County. My heart jumped at the prospect. I had searched for so long. Perhaps, I thought, just perhaps, Greenberry Drake was the son of Clayton and Sara (Meador) Drake.

I checked the Census records again and discovered that Sary had a male living in her household who would have been the right age for Greenberry. The most likely scenario was that Clayton had died prior to 1810. This was a strong possibility since Clayton Drake's name was not on any tax or census list I had seen. Also, I knew Greenberry was born sometime after 1790 because the 1830 Census had listed his age at between 30 and 40. In 1810 he would have been between 10 and 20, but closer to 20 since he was married in 1811. Living in Sary Drake's household in 1810 was one male between the ages of 16 and 26 years. I felt it had to be Greenberry Drake, and that he could well have been the son of Clayton and Sara

(Meador) Drake because they had been married in 1791. But where could I go to prove it?

Vaguely, I remembered having seen a book in the LaGrange Public Library that might help. It had to do with wills in Virginia. I found it quickly. I had been through the genealogical shelf so often, I nearly had it memorized. The book was called *Virginia Wills and Administrations*. It listed all the wills that were left in Virginia's County records from earliest colonial times through about the beginning of the 19th Century. Would there be any wills from Franklin County that might help?

I was in luck. I found three wills that might bear fruit. The first was of a Thomas Drake of Amelia County dated 1797. Next, there was a will dated 1798 which was written by Michael Drake of Montgomery County. Finally--and this was the one that really got my attention--there was a will for a William Drake dated 1792 in Franklin County. Boge helped me as she always does. She is a great detective, and I've often encouraged her to go into the detective business. She can find out just about anything by making a few phone calls. She found the telephone numbers for the clerks of the circuit courts of Amelia, Montgomery and Franklin Counties in Virginia.

From this point selected entries from my journal can tell the story more accurately than I can remember it.

*Thursday, October 4, 1994*

*7:55 AM*

*Mailed a lot of correspondence yesterday and can't wait till I start getting some answers. I've written Clyde, of course, asking for everything he's got on the disks. I've also written three counties in Virginia requesting copies of wills.*

*Saturday, October 8, 1994*

*8:30 AM*

*Copies of wills from three different Virginia Counties will be coming soon, I hope. Boge thinks I'm obsessed with my genealogy. I am too. I just can't stop wanting to know to know.*

*We all watched Jurassic Park on tape last night. Meghan and Nate are watching it again right now.*

*Monday 10 Oct 1994*

*9:30 AM*

*Last night Meghan and Nate were writing in their diaries. They always have a project going on.*

*No genealogical material in the mail this weekend. No mail delivery until tomorrow so I'll have to occupy myself with other things for a time.*

*Friday 14 Oct 1994*

*8:00 AM*

*I'm elated. There was a brown envelope from Clyde Bunch waiting for me when I got home yesterday. This time there were two computer disks and a nice letter from Clyde. I have become his heir apparent in dealing with Drake genealogy. He knew it, he says, from the first time I called him on the phone. He likes the way I look for truth rather than irrationally try to prove what I want to be true--that we are somehow related to the great Sir Francis Drake. Clyde says he is getting along in years and needs someone like me to carry on with an interest in the Drake family. Lord, I'm lucky to have found this guy.*

*Sunday 16 Oct 1994*

*7:40 AM*

## **WAIT A MINUTE**

*John Drake, vet, was born 5 Sept 1778 in Hopewell Twp., Hunterdon Co., New Jersey where in 1741, a William Drake is listed on the tax rolls.*

*Thursday 20 Oct 1994*

*7: 40 AM*

*I've been to the library twice since my revelation concerning New Jersey. There are Archives there. I ran across several Drake wills in Hunterdon Co., New Jersey. This may be the well spring for my line of Drakes. I'm sure I found John Drake, Revolutionary War veteran, who was born in New Jersey. His father's name was John. He had a cousin named William who might well be the William Drake of Bedford Co., Va. in 1782. (More later)*

*I have this cockeyed theory now. I'm always having theories. The names of the family that I believe to be my direct ancestors are unusual. The names are Allen, Braxton, Clayton and Turner Drake. All these men were married in Franklin County, Virginia in the 1790's. That they were brothers is most likely. Why the unusual names? Here is a distinct possibility: William Drake of Hopewell Township of Hunterdon County, New Jersey migrated to Franklin Count, Virginia between 1770 and 1782 (or thereabouts). He may have made short stops along the way. I think he may have named his boys after the places where they were born. On a line between Hopewell, New Jersey and Franklin, Virginia is Allentown, New Jersey, Clayton, Pennsylvania and Braxton County, West Virginia.*

*Boge and I looked long and hard at maps last night trying to find a town named Turner, but we could not find it.*

*I'm expecting wills. Yesterday, I saw the mail delivery woman across the street. I yelled and asked when she would be delivering at my house. In ten minutes she told me. I drove the Explorer to John's General Store where I bought \$10 worth of gas, a kitkat candy bar and some Big Red gum. Since I quit cigarettes, I chew a lot of gum. I came back home and sat on the cold, concrete steps waiting for the mail. She had it, an envelope addressed to me in my own handwriting. I knew it had to be one of those three wills I had sent for from Virginia. There was 23 cents postage due, and I gave the mail lady a quarter and told her to keep the change.*

*I put it in my file folder and took it to North Campus because I was afraid to open it. Also, I wanted to prolong the suspense.*

*I taught my two repertory theatre classes savoring the suspense and dreading disappointment at the same time. Suppose it was a will from Franklin County--the will of William Drake and there was no mention of Allen, Clayton, Braxton or Turner or Mary and Clary?*

*When my last class had filed out of the room after "Make Me Laugh," I sat at my desk with the letter in front of me. Taking my Swiss Army knife from my pocket, I slit the edge and opened the envelope. It was from Montgomery County, the will of Michael Drake dated 1798. As I suspected there was little to be learned. He was not related to Clayton and the others. At least, they were not mentioned.*

*I'm still waiting to hear from Franklin County.*

*Friday 28 Oct 1994*

*7:50 AM*

*No family history in the mail. Got to stop looking for it every day. Watched pots never boil.*

*Monday 31 Oct 1994*

*7:30 AM*

*The Bears play Green Bay tonight on national television. Something to look forward to.*

*Boge wanted me to come home early today to help the kids with their Halloween costumes. Meghan will be a gypsy while Nate will be a werewolf.*

*Maybe something will come in the mail today. Got to stop thinking about it.*

*Wednesday 23 Nov 1994*

*7:55 AM*

*"I wonder why I haven't heard from those people in Virginia," I whined. I was standing in the dining room. Boge had an armful of kids. She was harried as usual. Everyone in the household looks to Boge when they have a problem. I was finished with work.*

*"Why don't you call them? Get on the phone," she said as though she was saying something obvious, something that didn't need to be said.*

*"Yeah!" I said dumbly.*

*"You should have called them a long time ago," she said doing a spin move with little Frannie in her arms and heading for*

*a paper towel to wipe the baby's nose. She had a how-dumb-can-you-get look on her face.*

*I had to call information to get the number. First I tried area code 804. Made a mistake and dialed 803 ending up talking to an operator in North Carolina. "Virginia area code is 804," she told me with the drawl that always comes from operators in that part of the country. Then I had 804 on the line and was told that Rocky Mount, the seat of Franklin County, Virginia was in area code 703. I always guess wrong in such matters.*

*"Clerk's Office," said the Virginia woman's voice.*

*I began tentatively. "Some weeks ago," I said, "I made a rather trivial request for an old will."*

*She said brusquely, "Hold on," before I finished. Another phone was ringing.*

*"This is Mary," the voice said. I imagined Mary was alone in a dusty basement office. She sounded harried, nervous.*

*My story started again. Remaining contrite, I told Mary that I was looking for a copy of William Drake's will dated 1792. Yes, my request was there at the bottom of the pile. I could hear paper rattling as she talked. "We do have our regular work to do first," she said.*

*I understand," I said.*

*"You sent a check for five dollars, I see"*

*"Yes, I did. Whatever I was told."*

*Mary promised to put my request on the top of the pile. More paper rattling.*

*"Just wanted to make sure it wasn't lost in the mail," I said.*

*She signed off with a smile in her voice, and I put the phone back in its cradle feeling very good. With luck, I will get the will by next week. Hope I find some names I'm looking for. If I don't, I don't know what I'll do.*

*Saturday 3 Dec 1994*

*4:05 PM*

*The phone in my room at North Campus clattered to life. The ringer hasn't worked in more than a year. It was after two and seventh period class was in session. When the phone rings, my joke is to say, "Excuse me, my phone is rattling."*

*It was Boge. "Sorry," she said, "I know your class has already started."*

*It was all right, I assured her.*

*"You have mail," she said. "It's a small envelope, but there is something in it. It's from Rocky Mount, Virginia."*

*"Hot dog!" I said slapping the back of my chair gleefully.*

*Couldn't wait to get home. My stomach was queasy. Hadn't felt good all day. Couldn't even eat lunch. I walked across the tracks, across the sidewalk across Hillgrove and down the sidewalk to our house. It was warm, I recall.*

*I saw the envelope on the desk propped against our new computer. I held it in my hand. Boge came in from the dining room. My wife peered over my shoulder as I opened the envelope. "It's hard to read," she said. I was afraid I would not find Allen, Clayton, Braxton, etc. Then I saw "Braxton" clearly and was very relieved. The following is a copy of the will:*

*Will of William Drake*

*In the name of God Amen (Illegible) in a lo state of Health am willing this to be my last will and testament I am willing my wife Mary shall have her state of widowhood on my Land then to be sold Seven pounds ten shillings to my son William Drake. the balance to be Equally Divided between my three sons Carter Braxton and Turner I Give William one ten pound horse other three sons Carter Braxton and Turner One horse saddle and Bridle apiece I give my four daughters one feather Bed apiece my Daughter Clary the bed that she lies on I wish my stock of cattle Sheep and Hogs and Smith tools to be sold and my Just Debts paid particular the three little boys to be schools out of the money arising from the estate. I give my Daughter Clary a two year old Heifer known to be in her possession So concludes this 26 day of March*

<i>Clerk</i>	<i>Beyond the (illegible)</i>
<i>William Drake</i>	
<i>George Asburry</i>	<i>as Exetors</i>
<i>Otey Prosser</i>	
<i>his</i>	
<i>John Meador</i>	
<i>Bansler X Meador</i>	
<i>William Drake</i>	
<i>mark</i>	
<i>her</i>	
<i>Anna X Meador</i>	<i>Since this 26 day of march</i>
<i>mark</i>	<i>in the year of our Lord 1792 .</i>

*Franklin August Court 1792 the last will and Testament  
was Exhibited in Court by Otey Proser John Meador & William  
Drake Executors (illegible) named and proved by the hand of  
George Asbury Bansler Meador (illegible) (illegible) Subscribed  
and ordered to be Recorded*

*Clerk James Calloway CCC*

*So there it was, what I've been waiting for.*

## Fourteen

Clayton Drake's name was not in William Drake's will, but I had little doubt that Clayton was an unnamed son. Clayton had married Sara Meador in 1791. Three individuals named Meador had signed the will, however, indicating that the Meador and Drake families were close. I felt the evidence was strong that Greenberry Drake was Clayton Drake's son. I wanted to pursue it.

The Clerk of the Circuit Court of Franklin County sent with the copy William Drake's will a list of local genealogists. The Clerk's Office was actively discouraging further requests for documents. Their cover letter made it clear that their personnel really did not have the time to chase ancestors. June Stratmann's name was on this list along with four others. I don't know why I chose her name, but I did.

I called June on Saturday, December 3, 1994. She told me she charged ten dollars an hour and worked for a minimum of three hours. "I think that's fair," she added. I told her I thought it was fair too and sent the check right after I talked to her. With the money I sent a xeroxed copy of William Drake's will and a summary of what I knew and what I thought was true. I asked her if she could document that Greenberry Drake was the son of William Drake. I also wanted to know more about William.

I'm a school teacher. I had time off between Christmas and New Years. As always, I would take my family downstate in Illinois

to visit our relatives. I thought that it was time I visited Clay County, Indiana, which lay directly east of my home town of Charleston, Illinois a distance of not more than 70 miles. Early in December I called the court house in Brazil, Indiana, which is the county seat of Clay County. Yes, they would be keeping regular hours in the week between Christmas and New Years. Boge said she didn't mind if I made the trip. The stage was set.

We were in Charleston visiting with my Mom and Dad the day after Christmas, which was a Monday. The next morning Boge went to Shelbyville with Meghan and Nate to see her mother. I drove to Brazil, Indiana in a thick fog.

I had been looking forward to it for weeks. When I got to Brazil, I found a restaurant and ordered a hamburger before going to the court house. A farmer by the name of Hoffman sat next to me at the lunch counter. Enjoyed talking to him. He knew some local Drake. He owned 160 acres south of Brazil. The land had been in the family since before the turn of the century.

I wanted to find the will of Greenberry Drake in the Clerk's Office at the court house. I looked though the large leather bound volumes of handwritten documents, but there was no will for Greenberry. Would I ever document what I knew in my heart was true--that Greenberry Drake was my great great great great grandfather? Then I found something almost as important, the will of Nancy (Lane) Drake.

*I, Nancy Drake, of Clay County State of Indiana do make and publish this my last will and testament.*

*I desire as soon after my decease as possible that all my just debts and funeral expenses be paid and fully discharged.*

*After the payment of said debts and expenses it is my desire I will and bequeath to my esteemed and beloved son Daniel Drake all my property of every kind including money, notes, accounts, stock, land if any, and all else to be absolute property except that, it is my desire that my beloved son Joel S. Drake have one bed and blanket and my beloved son George Drake have one bed of those I now own.*

*In witness whereof I herewith set my hand and seal this 11th day of March A. D. 1873.*

The will is attested by W. W. Carter. Nancy made an X mark next to her name at the end of the document. Witnesses to the signing were William W. Carter and Elijah Ormau. The will was proved on the 18th day of December, 1876. Since the Census records of 1860 show Nancy Drake to be 62 years old, we can assume that she was born somewhere around 1798. Her birthplace is shown to be Virginia in the same Census records. Nancy would have been 13 or 14 years old when she married Greenberry Drake in 1811.

I was still looking for a link between Greenberry and Elijah Drake, a proven ancestor. The search then led to the Brazil, Indiana Public Library Annex. This facility contained much pertinent material. The final resting place of Greenberry and Nancy (Lane) Drake was recorded in county cemetery records. They are said to be buried in the Sloan Cemetery, which is described as follows:

*The Sloan cemetery is about three fourths of a mile north of our County Infirmary, on land that was entered by the pioneer Campbell; it is now a wilderness of a pasture lot. From all*

*appearances, it once adjoined a pioneer trail; but today it is a full 1/4 mile west of the Bowling Green Road, on a sort of ridge, very heavily covered with large trees, rank vines and other coarse vegetation. It is in this old, long abandoned cemetery that the records of the U. S. Pension Department show Benjamin Wheeler, the Revolutionary Patriot was buried.*

One important clue concerning Elijah Drake was the fact that he had married Susan Wheeler around 1836. This, according to information provided by my own Great Grandfather, Henry Brasater Drake. The cemetery records showed that both Drakes and Wheelers were buried in the same cemetery. It was not proof, of course, but it was a strong indication that the two families lived close together during the period in which Elijah Drake and Susan Wheeler were wed.

In *The History of Clay County*, a multi-volumed publication I found in the library annex, I gleaned much information, which combined with Census records, marriage records, and Nancy Lane's will enabled me to piece together the history of Greenberry's children. From *The History of Clay County*, I take the following accounts:

***Thomas Drake***, a resident of Bowling Green, was born in Barren County, Ky., November 18, 1815, and is the second of nine children of Greenberry and Nancy (Lane) Drake, natives of Virginia, and of English lineage. He was brought up on a farm, and received his education in the common schools. He emigrated from Kentucky with his parents in 1831, locating in Washington Township, Clay County. Here his parents resided until their death.

*Joel S. Drake, of Bowling Green, was born in Meade County, Ky., January 24, 1831, and is the seventh of nine children of Greenberry and Nancy (Lane) Drake, natives of Virginia, and of English origin. Our subject was reared on a farm, working in the summer and attending the common schools in the winter seasons. In this way he acquired an education that qualified him as a school teacher. In his younger days he also acquired the trade of brick-mason, which trade he followed for twenty-eight years. After serving his time, he went to Des Moines, Iowa where he sojourned about fifteen years, when he returned to Bowling Green, and purchased a farm of 140 acres near the town, and on this farm he now resides.*

When I returned to LaGrange, I phoned Clay County genealogist, Mary Gibbens, who helped fill in the gaps. What follows are tidbits of information she provided over the phone from her own sources which included, for the most part, ancient newspaper accounts. William Drake, Greenberry's son, died in 1855. Daniel Drake was born in Indiana in 1837. He married, first, Eliza Staggs on September 6, 1855. His second marriage was to Mary Sparks on March 7, 1859. James Drake housed his mother, Nancy (Lane) Drake until the time of her death.

Back in LaGrange I tried to put it all together. The sum total of the information about Greenberry Drake's family in Clay County, Indiana is represented in the following outline. I had learned a lot, but what really bothered me was that I could not document what I knew had to be a fact. Elijah Drake must be a son to Greenberry. Again,

frustration set in. Anyway, here is an outline of Greenberry and Nancy (Lane) Drake's children:

I. William Drake who died in 1855

II. Thomas Drake who married Mariah Bybee, January 14, 1842

A. Margaret Drake who married an Allee

B. Steward Drake, born November 10, 1845, married Delila Tressel of Tuscarawas County, Ohio. He was owner and proprietor of a grist mill.

1. Otis Drake

2. Harley R. Drake

3. Zella Drake

4. Ernest T. Drake

5. Chester Drake

6. Olga Drake

III. George Drake who was born 1822 in Barren County, Ky.

IV. James Drake who was born in 1826 and married a woman whose first name was Drucilla. It must be assumed he born in Meade County, Kentucky. Living with James Drake in 1860 was Joel G. Drake, who was born in Kentucky and was 17 years old. William D. Drake lived with James in 1860 and had been born in Iowa. Also in the household in 1860 was Daniel Drake, who was 23 years old at the time.

V. Joel S. Drake who married Melissa Shafer, a native of Owen County, Indiana, on June 18, 1873. Mrs. Drake died October 7, 1880.

A. Maude S Drake

- B. Nancy A. Drake
- C. Howard J. Drake
- D. Albert A. Drake

VI. Daniel Drake who has already been discussed

There must have been daughters, either two or three of them since reliable sources show that there were nine children. I could not find records of them, and still, I could not find a connection between Greenberry and Elijah. Making this link was almost as difficult as finding a father for Greenberry.



## Fifteen

It was Friday, February 2, 1995. Boge and I were sitting at the dining room table talking to an insurance salesman. It must have been around 7:00 P.M. The phone rang. I answered leaving my wife to ask some intelligent questions, something I was having trouble with. I fully expected a sales pitch and was ready to hang up the phone fast after telling the caller we already had aluminum siding or whatever they were selling. We get a lot of those kinds of phone calls.

"This is June Stratmann," the caller announced. "From Virginia. Do you remember me?"

"Of course, I do," I said. In that instant I could feel a surge of anticipation. I knew June did not like making written reports when she found information. She had called some weeks before on a Saturday morning when I was replacing some hardwood flooring in the living room with some trivial facts she had found. "It's really nice to hear from you," I said sincerely.

"I got hooked on this Drake problem," she told me. "This is just like peanuts to me. I can't get enough of it" She really enjoyed her work. I had the distinct feeling from the beginning of our relationship that she did not do genealogical work for the money as much for the enjoyment. "Anyway," she said, "I have found Elijah's father for you."

"You have?" I said expectantly. This is it, I thought.

"Elijah Drake, born 10-22-1814, was the son of Braxton Drake," she said. I sat in dumb silence for several seconds.

Finally, I found a voice. "Can you repeat that?" I asked.

"Certainly," she said. "Elijah Drake, born 10-22-1814, was the son of Braxton Drake."

"But," said I with a minor tear in my voice, "I've been operating under the assumption that Elijah Drake was the son of Greenberry Drake of Clay County, Indiana."

"Well," said June with a slight chuckle, "that isn't what the Mormon records say."

So she had gotten her information from the family files of the Church of the Latter Day Saints, had she? I had always known, somewhere in the back of my mind, that some day, when all was said and done, that the answers would have been within easy reach from the very beginning. Not twenty miles from my home, I learned a week later, was a library of family history maintained by the Mormon Church.

June gave me some brief details over the phone, including, the names of some of Elijah's brothers. What cinched it for me during that phone call was the name Ervin. June told me that one of Elijah's brothers was named Ervin Drake. On a direct line between me and Elijah Drake was Elijah's oldest son, James *Ervin* Drake, who was my Great Great Grandfather. It was beginning to look like James Ervin Drake had been named after an uncle.

Finally, I had to give up Greenberry Drake. I had harbored the belief that he was a direct ancestor since 1978 when I made my first visit to Fort Wayne, Indiana. Greenberry and Elijah Drake had been the only Drakes living in Jackson Township of Clay County,

Indiana in 1840. The age difference had been right. I had made the wrong assumption, which is another example of my character flaw. I rush to judgment. It seems clear now that Elijah was living near his cousin, Greenberry Drake, a man who was about 23 years his senior.

Naturally, after June Stratmann's news, I reviewed my own information on Braxton Drake. He was the son of William Drake whose will had been proved in Franklin County, Virginia in 1792. Braxton had married Patsy Greer in 1795 in Franklin County. He had lived in Casey County, Kentucky in 1810. June had told me on the phone that Elijah had been born in Casey County. He had paid taxes in Barren County, Kentucky in 1813, 1814, and 1816. Census records for 1820 showed Braxton living in Hardin County, Kentucky. By 1840 he had made his way to Pike County, Indiana.

It was February 21, 1995, about three weeks after June's call informing me of the relationship between Elijah and Braxton Drake. I was at school in my classroom. The phone rang. It was Boge. "Where is June from?" she asked.

"Rocky Mount, Virginia," I said.

"You got something from her," she said. I felt a curious mixture of relief and disappointment. I was pretty sure the big mystery had been solved. With the satisfaction of knowing the truth came the end of the game.

That night I sat on the couch in the family room trying to absorb the information June had sent. Once again, I was struck by the bitter-sweet irony that the answers had been so close from the beginning. Had I only made the short trip to the Mormon library in Naperville, the whole question could have been solved much sooner

and much cheaper. But then, there would have been several persons that I would not have met along the way.



## Sixteen

So what did Mrs. Stratmann tell me? The oldest known member of our line of Drakes, William Drake, whose will has already been quoted, married Mary Watts in Middlesex County, Virginia on March 3, 1760. Middlesex County is located along the southern shoreline of the Rappanhannock River just where the river empties into Chesapeake Bay. The *Douglas Register* states that their first child was born March 3, 1761 and baptized June 21, 1761. He was named Martin Drake. As this name does not appear anywhere else in subsequent records, it is probable that he died young.

The last will and testament of John Watts of Charlotte County, Virginia, written October 23, 1770 and probated October 7, 1771, lists the following heirs:

1. Wife, Ann Watts
2. Son, John Watts to receive land south of Sandy Creek
3. Son, Thomas Watts to receive land north of Sandy Creek
4. Daughter, Clairry
5. Son, William Watts
6. Son, Richard Watts
7. Daughter, Mary Watts who married William Drake
8. Elizabeth Christopher
9. Ann Watts
10. Utley Watts

A second child of William and Mary (Watts) Drake was named Anna, perhaps after Mary's mother and sister. Anna Watts, Mary's mother, was listed in father's will which was filed in Cumberland County, Virginia. His name was William Bond.

As we know, Braxton Drake married Martha (Patsy) Greer. Mrs. Stratmann tells us that the name Greer is quite common in her area of Virginia. Martha (Patsy) Greer was the daughter of Aquilla Greer and Elizabeth (Bandy) Greer of Cumberland County, Virginia. Elizabeth was the daughter of Richard and Lucy Bandy of Cumberland County.

Aquilla Greer was the son of Joseph Greer and Anne (Lowe) Greer. Anne was the daughter of William Lowe and his wife, Sarah. Anne (Lowe) Greer married a second time to a widower by the name of Thomas DeMoss.

Joseph Greer was the son of John and Sarah (Day) Greer. Sarah was the daughter of Nicholas Day and Sarah (Cox) Day.

John Greer was the son of James Greer and Anne (Taylor) Greer, who was the daughter of Arthur and Mary (Hill) Taylor. James Greer was the progenitor who transported into Maryland on November 2, 1675, from Dumfriesshire, Scotland. He lived with his family on the Gunpowder River in Baltimore County with his family. The material concerning the Greer family comes from two sources, which are *Greer Kinsman of American Descendants*, 1986, by J. B. Bell and *MacGreger, Macghee, Magruder, Grierson, Grier and Greer Families* by Robert Torrence.

Also included in Mrs. Stratmann's packet of information were the names and birth dates of Braxton and Patsy's children. My own census records on CD Rom showed that Ervin Drake, Ranson Drake

and Jefferson Drake were residing in Orange County, Indiana near French Lick Springs in 1850. All three were sons of Braxton and Patsy. I mention this because it illustrates, once again, my personality flaw. Information I had received more than fifteen years earlier had listed French Lick Springs, Indiana as the birth place for James Ervin Drake. This did not fit my theories at the time. I had crossed out French Lick Springs and written Bowling Green, Indiana in its place. I had guessed wrong again.

### **Generation Summary**

The children of William Drake, who died in 1792, and wife Mary (Watts) Drake of Franklin County, Virginia

1. Elizabeth Drake
2. William Drake
3. Clayton Drake (This is actually a cousin, the son of John Drake who was the brother of William Drake.)
4. Mary Drake
5. Carter Drake
6. Braxton Drake
7. Turner Drake
8. Clary Drake
9. Daughter, name unknown

Children of Braxton and Martha *Patsy* (Greer) Drake

1. Female (b. 1796)
2. Charles Drake (b. 1797)
3. Female (b. 1799)

4. Elizabeth Drake (b. 1802 in Casey Co., Ky. and married Hiram Flack, Meade Co., Ky.)
5. Ranson Drake (b. 1804, Casey Co.)
6. Female (b. 1806, Casey Co.)
7. Jefferson Drake (b. 12/25/1809, Casey Co.)
8. Martha Drake (b. 1811, Casey Co.)
9. Elijah Drake (b. 10/22/1814, Casey Co.)
10. Female (b. 1822, Hardin Co., Ky.)
11. Ervin (Irvin) Drake (b. 1822, Hardin Co.)
12. Female (b. 1822, Hardin Co.)
13. Female (b. 1825, Hardin Co.)

## Seventeen

From this point the story is easier. Information I received many years before that had come originally from my Great Grandfather, Henry Brasater Drake, identified his grandfather as Elijah Drake who was born on October 22, 1814.

The 1850 Census reports that he lived in Clay County, Indiana and was worth \$400.00.

Around 1836 Elijah married Susan Wheeler. They were married in Bowling Green, Indiana. Susan's birth date was July 8, 1818. On December 28, 1837, Susan gave birth to their first child. He may have been born in French Lick Springs, Indiana. I propose this because Grandpa Henry had told Helen Drake, the wife of one of his grandchildren, that Elijah had been born in French Lick Springs. The Census record contradicts this as does the Mormon record. Both say he was born in Kentucky. French Lick Springs had probably not been established in 1814. It is likely, however, that Grandpa Henry or Helen Drake had mistaken Elijah's birth place for that of his son, James Ervin Drake. Clearly, most of Elijah's immediate family lived in French Lick Springs when James Ervin Drake was born. Maybe old Braxton, the baby's grandfather, was living there at the time.

The second child was George Washington Drake. Born on May 24, 1840, he never married and died young in February of 1861.

Third was Martha Drake. She was born on July 24, 1841, in the town of Logansport in Clay County, Indiana. In 1867 she married Henry B. McKee. On the 6th of March, 1911, she passed away. Uncle Henry married again after the death of his first wife. My father remembers talking to the old man back in the 1920's. "He used to tell me about the Civil War battles he'd been in," Dad said. "I never knew if he was telling the truth or not." Uncle Henry was probably telling the truth. I found his name in a list of Civil War veterans from Coles County. If memory serves me correctly, he was a member of the 62nd Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment, a unit that saw touch fighting with Grant's army, especially during the Vicksburg campaign. Interestingly, Uncle Henry McKee was the brother of Evaline McKee, the wife of James Ervin Drake. A brother and sister named Drake married a brother and sister named McKee.

The fourth child was Frances Melissa Drake. She was born on February 15, 1843, in Logansport, Indiana. In 1867 she married Ellis Michael Johns. She and her husband stayed in Brazil, Indiana, the seat of Clay County. Aunt Frances died March 27, 1932.

Sarah Elizabeth Drake was the fifth child. She arrived on October 13, 1844. Her marriage took place March 2, 1864. Her husband was David W. Mote. She passed away March 9, 1919.

Sixth was Milton Arthur Drake. He was born on September 13, 1846, in Logansport. Uncle Milton served for 90 days in the 143rd Illinois Volunteer Infantry. He served in Company A along with his brother James Ervin Drake. Uncle Milt married Emaline Larrison on April 2, 1870. My Dad, Uncle Harold and Uncle Howard knew their Great Great Uncle Milt Drake well. I have often heard Dad speak of the man. Milton lived his adult life in Charleston,

Illinois where he died on October 25, 1929. The Great Depression did not bother him much. He is buried in the cluster of Drake graves I found in the old section of Mound Cemetery on a gloomy, rainy spring day seventeen years ago. His marker is the kind granted only to veterans of the Civil War. Proudly, it proclaims that Milton A. Drake was a member of the 143rd Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment.

Nancy Jane Drake, the seventh child of Elijah and Susan Drake, was born February 15, 1848, in Logansport. She married Perry Babb on October 31, 1871. I wonder if Nancy Jane was named for the wife of Greenberry Drake, who I suspect was Elijah's cousin. She died May 13, 1911.

The ninth and tenth children were twins. Eliza Drake and her twin brother, Peter Elihu Drake, were born February 9, 1852. The twins were born in Brazil, Indiana. Eliza became the wife of Isaac Newton Clarke on October 29, 1873. She lived with her husband in Charleston, Illinois. On June 29, 1926, she passed away. Pete married Amanda Jones sometime in 1873. He and his wife also lived in Charleston. Pete lived until February 28, 1934.

The eleventh child was Susan Drake named after her mother. She was born about 1853. The records I have do not show a date. Her birth place was Midway, in Edgar County, Illinois. Midway is the old name for the present day town of Kansas, Illinois. Following the birth places of the children shows clearly the path of migration taken by Elijah and Susan Drake. They were married in Bowling Green, Indiana. From there they went to Logansport, Indiana. Then they went to Brazil, Indiana, and from there they moved to Edgar County, Illinois getting closer and closer to where most of the children would end up, Charleston, Illinois.

Susan Drake was married about 1873 to Benjamin Matthewman. Unfortunately, she died the following year.

Elijah's twelfth child was Josephus Drake, and he was born August 13, 1855 near Midway, Illinois. He married Nancy Ellen Sanders on October 29, 1873. The couple lived for a time in Newberg, Indiana. Josephus passed away on the fifteenth of September, 1913.

Elijah Drake moved to Quincy, Iowa, located in Adams County sometime in the late 1850's. Apparently, he took the whole family with him. Even his oldest son, who by that time was married, went with his father and mother. I do not know what took Elijah so far off the beaten path. He may have had relatives there. Perhaps he was drawn there by the rich soil. Anyway, that is where Elijah died on March 10, 1861, just a year before his second grandchild, Henry Brasater Drake, was born.

Shortly after Elijah's death, the rest of the family returned to the Coles County, Illinois area. Elijah was only 47 years old when he died. Perhaps the confidence of the family was shattered causing them to return to more familiar surroundings.

Susan, Elijah's widow, survived until June 29, 1882. She was buried at Mount Cemetery in the same plot as her son, Milton. She was 61 years old and probably very weary after rearing twelve children. All but one of her children, Susan, survived her.

## Eighteen

My father's great grandfather was James Ervin Drake, the oldest son of Elijah and Susan Drake. When he was around 21 years old, he married Evaline McKee. She was the daughter of John and Lucinda McKee of Clay County, Indiana. Having been born on December 20, 1834, she was three years older than James. There is strong suggestion that Evaline was very devoted to her parents. Both John and Lucinda McKee are buried in Mound Cemetery in Charleston, Illinois along with Susan Drake, Evaline herself and Milton Arthur Drake.

James Ervin and Evaline went to Iowa with his father, Elijah, but left there and came to Charleston shortly after Elijah died. We know this because both of their children, Henry Brasater Drake and Cynthia Drake, were born in Iowa.

By the time they reached Coles County, Illinois, the Civil War was in full swing. James did not enlist immediately. It seems it took a genuine riot to get him mad enough to join up. *My Grandfather*, Ross Drake, often talked to me about *his* grandmother, Evaline (McKee) Drake, and the riot in Charleston in the spring of 1864. Unfortunately, I do not remember all the details as he told them. I do remember, however, that the controversy, as he described it, involved his grandmother and a copperhead (Southern sympathizer). They were in

a tavern in Charleston when the argument started. According to Grandpa, Evaline gave the copperhead hell and then struck him. By the time Grandpa was done telling about it, I was convinced that his grandma had single-handedly begun and ended the entire riot. Well, there *was* a riot in Charleston. The result of an altercation between copperheads and elements of two Illinois regiments on leave in Charleston, the gun play left eleven dead, several wounded and got one fellow hung for the part he had played. But there was no mention of Evaline Drake in the accounts that I read. I figure she must have had some first hand knowledge of the events since she lived in the town at the time.

James' daughter, Cynthia, was not five years old when, in the spring of 1864, he enlisted. Cynthia was born November 8, 1859. James' son, Henry Brasater Drake, was barely two years old. He signed up for 100 days in the new 143rd Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment. I often wonder if he made the commitment because of the trouble in his home town a couple of months before he signed on.

The 143rd was organized at Freeport, Illinois by Colonel Rollin V Ankney as a Battalion of eight companies, and ordered to Camp Butler, Illinois where two companies were added, and the Regiment mustered in on June 18, 1864. On the 21st of June, the Regiment moved for Memphis, via Cairo and Mississippi River, and arrived on the 24th. On the 26th, it moved to White's Station, eleven miles from Memphis on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, where it was assigned to guarding the railroad. The survivors of the Regiment were mustered out of service on October 27, 1864, in Chicago.

From the *Muster Rolls, Adjutant General's Office* I take the following information. James E. Drake held the rank of private. His unit was Company A, a company of men who were enlisted almost exclusively from Charleston, Illinois. James Ervin Drake, at the time of his enlistment, was 26 years old, had brown hair and hazel eyes. His complexion was dark. He was married, and his occupation was farmer. He had been born in Clay County, Indiana. He signed the papers on May 15, 1864, and was mustered into service on June 11, 1864, in Mattoon, Illinois.

Joining James E. Drake in the great adventure were his father-in-law, John McKee, and James' younger brother, Milton A. Drake. At the end of James' service record are these remarks. "Died of disease, July 14, 1864, in a hospital in Memphis, Tennessee." Grandpa told me it was the measles that killed his grandfather. Cousin Cynthia Sherman dispenses some inaccurate information when talking about James Ervin Drake. She recorded his death as being at Chattanooga, Tennessee, an error that caused me to look for months for his service record in the wrong regiment, the 123rd Illinois Infantry. I knew this unit had been recruited largely from Charleston and that they had gone to Chattanooga. Cynthia also claims that James Drake was captured by guerrilla forces. He was paroled on the promise that he would not rejoin his unit. It could be true, I suppose, but it seems a lot of activity for a man who was in the service for a little over a month before he died. Incidentally, James' father-in-law, John McKee, also died while in the regiment. The record shows that he died in Charleston on September 21, 1864. Of course, James' brother, Milton, made it back home.

Evaline Drake lost her father and her young husband to the biggest killer of soldiers during the Civil War--disease. She was left with two small children. Cynthia probably had memories of her father. Henry would have none. Evaline married a second time in the early 1870's to Peter Weaver. She bore him children, the most memorable being Sam Weaver. My Grandpa Ross maintained strong ties with his half-great-uncle Sam Weaver who was not much older than he. My Uncle Harold described same as, "the honeriest old bastard I ever knew." Uncle Harold claimed that Sam, after midnight liaisons with married ladies, would hang his used condom on the door knob as a calling card. Evaline married a third time to a man by the name of McCoy.

Evaline McKee Drake Weaver McCoy died in 1915 at the age of 81. She was buried at Mound Cemetery in Charleston next to her mother and father.

## Nineteen

When I was a kid, Grandpa and Grandma Drake lived about a hundred yards south of our house. We lived right on the edge of the town. We lived on the east side of "H" Street, later to become Reynolds Drive, and to the west of the road was pasture and beyond the pasture there was woods. Guess we lived half in the country and half in the town.

I spent a lot of time at Grandma's house. Hanging on their wall in the dining room, the room where they did most of their living, was an oval picture frame containing a photographic portrait of a man and a woman. This picture hung between the door leading into the living room and where the stove pipe from the coal burning heat stove plunged into the wall. Until I started school at the age of six, I thought it was a picture of my Grandfather and Grandmother. My older brother, Bob, informed me one day that I was an idiot and the picture was not of Grandpa and Grandma. The two people in the picture were of Grandpa Drake's mother and father. It was Henry Brasater Drake and his wife, Martha Elizabeth (Horn) Drake. I heaved a six year old's sigh of relief because the woman in the picture did not look much like my Grandma. Before I was informed as to the real identify of the two people, I often wondered how and why Grandma Drake had changed so much.

Martha Drake showed a twinkling eye, high, ruddy, rounded cheek bones and hair pulled tightly back into a bun. Her collar rode high up on her neck. Henry Drake had thick, dark hair and an impressive handlebar mustache. He wore a dark coat, white shirt and thick bow tie.

Since his father had died as a volunteer in the War of Rebellion, Henry was raised by his mother and step-father, Peter Weaver. This arrangement lasted until 1877 when Peter Weaver died. Martha Elizabeth Horn, Henry's wife to be, was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on September 16, 1862, making her about six months younger than Henry. Her father, Nicholas Horn, had been born on the ocean, according to family legend, in 1830, coming from the old country. Nicholas Horn lived until January 24, 1875. Martha's mother had been born Jane Hayes. She was born in Michigan on November 12, 1832. She lived in Mattoon, Illinois until January 16, 1916. Henry had just turned twenty when he and Martha were married on Saint Patrick's Day, 1882, by Reverend E. B. Davis.

All I ever heard about Henry Drake's profession was that he was a tenant farmer. My Grandpa was born in Coles Station, a wide spot in the road that lies right on the border between Coles and Moultrie Counties in Illinois. From this area, Henry moved south to near Neoga, Illinois in Cumberland County, a distance of perhaps 20 miles. In Henry's family Bible were two certificates for Sunday School attendance given to two of their children including Ross Drake, my Grandfather, by a Baptist church in Neoga. I remember distinctly that Grandpa told me that he had lived in a house on the banks of the South Fork of the Embarras River about ten miles south of Charleston. This location would have put the family midway between

Neoga and the small town of Union Center, which was also in Cumberland County. Grandpa told me how he had many times driven teams of horses pulling fully loaded wagons across the frozen Embarras River. "Many times," he told me, "I had to shake the snow off my blanket when I woke up in the morning."

My Uncle Harold Drake, Dad's oldest brother, told me that Henry Drake had lived for a time in Union Center, a small town located east of Greenup, Illinois. This must have been where he was living when my Grandpa began his courtship with his future wife, Grace Augusta Tipword, who lived with her father, John Tipword, between Greenup and Charleston.

The first born to Henry and Martha Drake was Charles Henry Drake. he was born June 28, 1884. He married Milly Lavada Zike on December 5, 1903. The couple had seven children. I knew three of them. Charles Henry's son, Lester and his wife Goldie, often visited my Grandpa. As a small child, I was never quite sure who they were. I would hang around the fringes of their conversations as they stood in Grandpa's driveway talking about mules and such. My Grandfather did most of his talking, it seemed, leaning on the running board of his truck or talking across back fences. He did love to talk, and did most of it outside. Charles Henry's son, Jim, was milk man to my maternal Grandma and Grandpa Smith in Mattoon, Illinois. I was never sure who he was either. I saw him come into Grandma Smith's kitchen toting two or three quarts of milk. He didn't leave them on the front porch. He brought them in and put them in the refrigerator. Then he poured a cup of coffee and sat eating a powdered donut reading the funny papers. He never spoke to me. I must have looked confused by this as a small child as I remember Grandma Smith

reassuring me. "Don't worry about him," she said. "He's just your dad's cousin." Edith Beatrice Drake was the fifth child of Charles Henry. I got to know her quite well, and much of what I know of Uncle Charlie came from her.

Edith was one of the few cousins with whom my Dad maintained more than casual contact. In the middle of my junior year in high school, our family took a car trip to California. We figured we needed two cars since there were eight of us making the trip. My oldest brother, Larry, had been married a short time. He and his wife drove their '57 Oldsmobile. Dad drove his '60 Pontiac, and we traveled in tandem the whole distance stopping to celebrate Christmas Eve somewhere in New Mexico or Arizona. With us was my Grandpa. His intention was to spend a few days with his niece, Edith, and her husband Kenneth Adkins. They lived in a suburb near Los Angeles. That was the first I ever met Edith. When we dropped Grandpa at her house, she struck me as being down to earth and generous.

Two years later Ron DeHollander, a high school buddy, and I decided to make an unauthorized trip to California. That is, we decided to leave without bothering our parents about our plans. We spent one night with Edith. She and her husband gave up their bed to us. Being thoughtless teenagers, we left town the next day without even saying thank you. I've always regretted that.

Three or four times in the following decade Edith traveled back to Illinois by train to visit with relatives. She always spent a few days at my parent's house. She collected pennies, I remember, and once threatened to spank me if I didn't mind my mother better. I was 19 years old at the time.

About six years ago, when Boge and I were living on Malden Avenue in LaGrange, the phone rang. It was Dad. "I'm in trouble," he told me.

"What's the matter, Dad?" I asked.

"My cousin, Edith, is stranded at the train station in Chicago. She missed her train to Mattoon," he said, "and doesn't have anywhere to go." Dad always felt responsible for people he liked. "I can't get up there to get her tonight." That was understandable. It was a 200 mile drive.

"Don't worry, Dad," I said. "I'll get her." It was 9:30 in the evening when I hit the Eisenhower Expressway heading for Union Station in Chicago. Edith sat in the Am Trac lounge with her luggage spread out about her. She looked calm and I'm not sure she knew who I was when I approached her. It had been more than 20 years since I had seen her, but the second she heard the name Drake, she was up and ready to go.

Putting her suitcases in the trunk of our '79 Chevrolet, I asked her, "Didn't you know you were in Chicago?"

"No," she answered in her husky drawl, "I thought this was Mattoon." The city of big shoulders loomed over us. "My ticket was to Mattoon so when they stopped the train and made us get off, I figured I was in Mattoon."

"This?" I asked throwing a hand toward the Sear's Tower, the tallest building in the world. "Didn't you walk around, Edith? Didn't you see the big buildings?"

"I just figured Mattoon had grown," she said and slammed the door of the car. I drove her to LaGrange. In the wee hours of the next morning when I was asleep and had forgotten we had a house

guest, a bear-like apparition in white threw my bed covers back and contemplated getting into bed with Boge and me. Scared me to death before I remembered Edith was sleeping on a day bed in the living room. Having forgotten where she was sleeping, Edith wandered into Meghan's bedroom and got into bed with our daughter. Boge retrieved our little girl, wide eyed at that point, and put her to bed with us.

My cousin spent three memorable days with us talking freely about her family and making us laugh. "My dad," she said unabashedly, "was the meanest white man who ever lived." She showed us a picture of Uncle Charlie standing on the steps of his home in Mattoon. He was a small man, like his mother, who had short white hair. I guessed the picture had been taken in the early 1930's. Much of what she told us about her immediate family was harsh, things I don't want to relate here, but much of it was funny. We laughed uproariously when she told us how her younger brother, Eural, had been "shipped" to her. She was living in Phoenix at the time. The family back in Illinois had chipped in to give Eural a free vacation to visit his sister, Edith. "He didn't have a dime in his pocket," she told us. "I tried to take care of him, but he wouldn't behave." She told how he often crawled under the bed naked and barked like a dog. "The price of an airline ticket back to Illinois," she said, "was a bargain. I happily drove him the two hundred miles to the airport."

On the third day of her stay, Boge called me at work. "Edith," she said, "is going to Mattoon on today's train." It wasn't a suggestion or a question. My cousin had been giving my wife too much help with the rearing of our small daughter. I took the afternoon off work and

rode with Edith on the Burlington Commuter to Union Station where I walked with her bag and baggage to the Am Trac train departing for Mattoon. The old lady wanted to stay with us because she was afraid she wouldn't make it to Mattoon. But I talked to the conductor asking him to see she got off at Mattoon, said good-bye to Edith and jumped a commuter back to LaGrange. That was the last I saw of her.

Dad talked to her on the phone some months later, after she had made it back to Phoenix. He told her he would come to visit her if she wanted him to come. She was dying. She said it was not necessary. "Kenneth is here with me," she said. Her husband, Kenneth, has been dead for some years. Not long after that Edith passed away.

Henry and Martha's second child was Alice Frankie Drake. She was born on Christmas Day, 1885. She married Eaton Paxon on February 2, 1908. Eaton was a barber in Charleston. Dad said he and Uncle Harold used to sweep up the shop for Uncle Eaton when they were in high school. Eaton and Alice (Drake) Paxon had one child, a daughter, Eros. Eros was nicknamed Peggy. She was Dad's all time favorite cousin. After Peggy married Sam Schwartz, Mom and Dad often took us to the Schwartz house many times for games of pinochle that last late into the night. We were great childhood chums to the Schwartz children, Charlene, Ted and Bob.

James Milton Drake was the third child of Henry and Martha, and he was born June 6, 1888 and lived for just a little more than a year, until July 19, 1889.

Next was my Grandfather, Roscoe Edward Drake. The family Bible shows his date of birth as May 26, 1889. The 1889 had

been crossed out, however, and the year 1890 had been written in beside the original date. I remember some controversy concerning his date of birth when he applied for Social Security benefits in the mid-1950's.

After Grandpa came Dessie Belle Drake on February 26, 1892. She married Charles Rapp Ingle on November 25, 1916. She bore seven children. I don't know the date of her death.

Beatrice Grace Drake, born January 1, 1894, married Joseph Welton Greene in Terre Haute, Indiana on October 26, 1916. They had three daughters, Cynthia (who became Cynthia Sherman), Ruby Blanche and Nellie Emma. Uncle Joe Greene became a living legend who was referred to by all in our family as "the laziest man who ever lived." A brother-in-law to my Grandfather, Uncle Joe helped Grandpa in his well digging business in the 1920's. Uncle Joe was not one for details. A "Joe Greene" in our family means using an estimate when building something. Uncle Joe disdained the use of ruler, square and level when constructing things. When building himself a new front porch, he told my Dad who was helping him at the time to forget about a level. Uncle Joe stepped back a few paces, sighted down the joist and declared it level. When I was in fifth grade, I walked home from Lincoln School along "C" Street. I knew the old man who sat on the front porch of a small frame house covered with fake brick, asphalt siding was related in some way, but I did not know *how* at that time. His face was always red. His eyes were watery and bulbous. He wore bib overalls, and he scared me some because he watched me intently as I passed by on the broken sidewalk. But he never said anything. He suffered terribly from asthma. His wife, Beatrice, was the last of Henry and Martha's children to die. I'm told

she spoke her mind right up until the end. She died in the early 1980's.

Fredrick Milton Drake was born on March 17, 1897. He married Lilly Arthur on August 1, 1917. They had eight children. Uncle Fred died young. He was 48. My brother, Bob, claims he was making his way from Charleston to somewhere in the Southwest. Just on the far side of St. Louis, he had an asthma attack and died on December 8, 1945. Aunt Lillie died five years later. Helen Mae Neese married Fred and Lillie's third child, George Drake. It was Helen who gave me much of the information I am now setting down. I must mention that one of Uncle Fred's children, his youngest, Tom, used to visit Grandpa Drake from somewhere near Chicago. Though he was a nephew to Grandpa, he was about the same age as my brother, Bob, with whom Tom became good friends. At the Drake Reunion in 1993, I sat next to Tom's nephew, Steve Drake. Steve told me that his Uncle Tom lived in Elk Grove Village and was in the insurance business.

The eighth and last child of Martha and Henry was John Albert Drake, born on the second of October in 1899. He married Mayme McGahan on April 12, 1922. I remember Uncle John well. His home was "A" Street in Charleston just two doors north of the house where his father and mother lived. John seemed Grandpa's closest brother. John's house was a two storied frame house sided with that fake brick asphalt that was so popular in the 40's. It had a big front porch that sprawled the entire width of the house. On the north side of the house was a glider swing, the kind where two people could sit on one side and two on the other. By pushing with the feet, the swing would glide back and forth. When I was a small child, I

remember enduring long conversations between my Grandfather and Uncle John as they stood talking about God knows what next to Grandpa's truck in the driveway. Seems they encouraged me to glide back and forth in the glider. It was just a notch below the merry-go-round at the carnival. Uncle John always wore a green cotton shirt and pants and a baseball cap of the same material. He worked at the Brown Shoe Factory. Out back of his house was a row of chicken houses, as I recall. I remember my Dad storing things there.

A fond memory of Uncle John comes from Dad. Dad tells about the Saturday that Uncle John intended to paint his front porch, dig his potatoes and put in a new hot water heater. Dad helped him with the hot water heater. Dad always loved helping people with home projects. He and his uncle put their tools away at midnight Sunday morning. The potatoes and front porch had to wait.

Uncle John's wife, Aunt Mayme, had exotic good looks in my opinion. She was a faithful parishioner of the First Christian Church in Charleston, our church too, and she often attended alone. Sometimes we would give her a ride home. We always caught up with her in the car on Jackson Street just before the road dived into the hollow of the Town Branch, the polluted creek that ran through the heart of our town. Sometimes she rode with us, but sometimes she refused politely saying she would just as soon walk. She was not much more than a quarter of a mile from her home at that point. The look in Aunt Mayme's eye was sad. She had lost two children. Her son, Dale Albert Drake, was not seven years old when he was killed by a car on Division Street in Charleston. It happened September 6, 1935. In January, 1945, Uncle John and Aunt Mayme received the news that their boy, William Henry Drake, had been killed in action. Dad says

William Henry died in the Battle of the Bulge. "He came to see me in Vandalia," Dad said, "just before he left for the service." He was not yet 21 years old when he was killed.

Uncle John's two youngest sons, Gerald and Roy, were just a few years older than my two oldest brothers. When Uncle John brought his two boys to my Grandpa's house for a visit, Larry and Bob spent a good deal of time with their second cousins as playmates.

Dad was close to his Uncle John. I have a vivid memory of going with my father to visit John early in 1957. John was dying of cancer. He lay on his couch in the living room with my father standing over him calling in a heightened voice, "John, can you hear me?" He said it several times, but Uncle John was too heavily sedated to respond. He died on December 17, 1957.

But what of Grandpa Henry himself? I asked my Uncle Harold to describe him. I needed facts, some details about his grandfather. "What do you want to know?" asked my Uncle Harold. I was on the phone with him. He was in Mattoon. I was in LaGrange.

"Just talk about him some," I said.

"They lived for a time," he told me, "between Neoga and a small town called Neal, which is no longer inhabited. From there they moved to McCan's Ford on the Embarrass River. Then they went to Union Center."

"What was Grandpa Henry like?" I asked.

"Grandpa was a very autocratic man," Harold said. "Things had to be his way. He maintained a lot of control over his children even after they were married." Uncle Harold maintained that his grandfather was good to the grandchildren. "Maybe," he said, "I liked

to visit them so much because they lived better than we did." Apparently, Grandpa Henry had money to spend on frills. Harold told me that his grandfather had not been a good businessman. The patriarch of the Drake family liked to listen to ball games on the radio. My mother told me of long, hot summer afternoons when the stillness of the heat was shattered by Henry's radio bellowing a Chicago Cub's game. It could be heard all up and down "A" Street block where the old man lived.

From the latter part of the 19th Century to the early part of the 20th Century, a train line the locals called the interurban linked Charleston with Mattoon. By the time my own kidhood ramblings had begun, the track had been torn up. One thing remaining was a black cinder path beginning where Monroe Street ended at Division Street and continuing due west to Mattoon. Another reminder of the old track were the two bridges over which the interurban track had crossed the meandering Town Branch. The streetcar line, as we kids called it, was nothing more than a convenient foot path connected my sparsely populated neighborhood with the rest of the town.

Grandpa Henry and Grandma Martha had a house that sat along the tracks. The place was not accessible by road. They had not car, I suppose, and no need of a road. The house sat where "E" Street would have intersected the tracks if "E" Street had run that far. Like many streets in Charleston, "E" Street just petered out as it ran north from Polk. Henry and Martha Drake lived at the bottom of the hill near the creek and railroad track. Their lifestyle sprawled across the dividing mark between the 19th and 20th Centuries. No road ran past his house, but a modern-for-its-day rail line did.

My description of Great Grandfather Henry is likely to read like an impressionistic poem with flashes of images rather than hard facts. It cannot be helped. He died two years before I was born. Those who do remember him have trouble remembering an accurate time line. So I report what I have heard in passing, what I have wrenched from older people who knew him and what I have observed in old photographs.

That Henry was autocratic and maintained control over his children even after they were married can be believed when one considers that four of his married children lived within a half a mile of the two houses Henry owned in Charleston. His son, Fred, lived on "A" Street between Madison and State. His daughter, Dessie Ingle, lived one house north of the old man when he lived on "A" Street between Harrison and Jackson Streets. His youngest son, John, lived two houses north. Ross lived on "F" Street (now Fuller Drive) and then on "H" Street (now Reynolds Drive).

From my Mom I learned that Grandma Martha smoked a clay pipe. She kept her tobacco tucked up under skirt and was not shy about hauling up her dress and loading her pipe when the urge to smoke struck her. She was a very small woman. Dad claims she was a mean woman. Apparently, she did not shower her grandchildren with affection. Uncle Harold claimed that, according to his cousins named Horn, Martha was born in Coles County somewhere south of Mattoon. She was not, as Helen Drake's records show, born in Cincinnati. Anyway, she died on September 2, 1936.

My father hosted countless family gatherings. We always ate and ate very well. Without fail, he always asked the grace and then ordered mothers to get into line first and prepare plates of food for

their children. The little ones always ate first at Dad's house. He watched out for the kids. My Mom told me why. When Dad's grandfather, Henry, hosted his family, the pecking order was the reverse. At noon the table was set for the men. The men ate by themselves and sat at the table as long as they wanted. When they vacated, their women cleared the table and then sat themselves for the meal. The children were invited to eat after their mothers were finished. Much of the time there was nothing left to eat. Dad remembers going hungry at family gatherings. Sometimes his mother would slip food out the back door to him and his brothers. It must have been Grandpa Henry's idea. He was the autocrat. The family was male dominated. It was not a tradition my father cared to continue. At his house the kids *always* ate first.

My Mom and Dad were married April 11, 1936. Still teenagers, they had no money and few prospects. After a short time in Peoria, Illinois where, Mom says, Dad got fired from every job he landed because he always knew more than the boss, they accepted an invitation from Grandpa Henry to move in with him. Grandma Martha had died in September. Henry needed someone to cook his meals and tend the house. Mom got the position. "My goodness," says my Mom, "I had to have his breakfast on the table at six o'clock in the morning no matter what day of the week." She shakes her head. "He had to have meat, white gravy and biscuits too."

"Why so early?" I ask. "What did he do after breakfast?"

"He didn't do anything," Mom says. "He just sat there." She hated cleaning the place for him. "He was just like the rest of them," she says. "He sort of aimed at the coal bucket when he spit his tobacco juice, but he never hit it."

The arrangement came to an end one night when Dad took Mom out for the evening. Dad's grandfather didn't want them to go. Dad, who has always had a mind of his own, did not agree with the old man. They went dancing. When they came in late that evening, the old man said, "That's the straw that broke the camel's back!"

"Okay, Grandpa," Dad said. "We'll be moving out." That was that. Grandpa Henry had trouble getting people to stay with him thereafter. That is what Uncle Harold told me. The old man died on June 30, 1943.

I saw a photograph once. It was one of those four generation things. The picture, I imagine, was snapped by Mom. It was taken at Henry's house on "A" Street. Featured were Grandpa Henry, my Grandfather Ross, my Dad and my oldest brother, Larry. The picture shows schizophrenic genes. Henry stands wearing a collarless, white, long sleeved shirt. He wears suspenders and stands towering over his son. He appears to be well over six feet tall. Grandpa Ross is in his ubiquitous bib overalls and dark long sleeved shirt. Dad, as I recall, wears a white shirt, open at the collar, and dark trousers. Larry wears diapers. Ross is not taller than five feet, six inches. For this reason, I've always imagined Henry's mother, Evaline McKee, to be a tall, raw boned lady. I've never seen a picture of her. There are a few men of succeeding generations who approach six foot, like Uncle Harold, but most of us are on the short side. When Grandpa Henry got together with his small wife, the genes got very mixed up and confused.

Outline of the Children of Henry Brasater and Martha Elizabeth  
(Horn) Drake

## **Descendants of Charles Henry and Millie Lavada (Zike) Drake**

- I. John Henry Drake (3/23/1904--7/14/1919)
- II. Leslie Byron Drake (4/21/1904) married Goldie Nale
  - A. Leslie Drake, Jr. (2/1/1931)
    - 1. Jane Drake
    - 2. Leslie Byron Drake
  - B. Robert Lee Drake (4/12/1934)  
(Two children)
- III. Edna Drake (10/3/1908) died at 14 months
- IV. Charles Samuel Drake (10/28/1906) married first Marguerite Walker and second to Ruby Cobble
  - A. Rosetta Drake married Douglas Kraus
    - 1. Sammy Kraus married Vickie Dill
- V. Edith Beatrice Drake (9/11/1910 to about 1988) married Kenneth Adkins
  - A. Donald Adkins is married and has children
- VI. James Drake (3/11/1913 to January, 1981) married Emily Bennett
  - A. Lavonna Drake
  - B. Holly Drake
  - C. Alice Drake
- VII. Earl Sedrick Drake (7/12/1916 to 7/16/1916)
- VIII. Eural Fredrick Drake (7/12/1916) married Thelma Redd.
  - A. Michael Drake
  - B. Linda Drake

**Descendants of  
Alice Frankie Drake and Eaton Osmond Paxson**

I. Eros Burdilla Paxson (11/12/1910) married Sam Schwartz (4/15/1912) in Shelbyville, Illinois on March 1, 1933

A. Martha Charlene Schwartz (8/12/1934) married Gerald Kent Vaughn (7/18/1931)

1. Dirinda Lyn Vaughn (8/20/1957)

2. Brenda Kay Vaughn (11/1/1959)

B. Theodore Paxson Schwartz (4/18/1937) married Shirley Ann Smith (8/15/1938) after her first husband's death

1. Robin Kay (7/30/1957)

2. Theodore Samuel Schwartz (4/17/1957)

3. Joshua Paxson Schwartz (10/8/1960)

4. Shadrack Allen Schwartz (3/14/1960)

5. Thaddaeus Meshack Schwartz (7/17/1971)

6. Trevor Abednego Schwartz (7/3/1973)

C. Robert Allen Schwartz (7/25/1942) is married and has children

**The descendants of  
Roscoe Edward Drake (5/26/1890 to 4/24/1972)  
and  
Grace Augusta Tipsword (10/9/1893 to 7/9/1953)**

I. Harold Edward Drake (2/26/1915 to 3/29/1995) married first to Juanita Poulter

A. Harold Lee Drake (1936) married first Mary Woodward

1. Laura Drake (May, 1964)

Second marriage to Ruby Lee who brought a son into the marriage

B. Terry Lee (1941) married with a son and a daughter

II. Donald Franklin Drake (7/11/1916) married Dorothy May Smith (5/1/1916) on April 11, 1936

A. Larry Lee Drake (3/8/1938) married Martha Marie Honnold (3/21/1939)

1. Donald Lester Drake (9/12/1957)

a. Jason Alan Drake (12/3/1975)

b. Marco Lane Drake (3/25/1981)

2. Daniel Lee Drake (11/25/1958) married Tona

Whitecotton

a. Nichole Marie Drake (12/18/1986)

b. Jonathon Paul Drake (3/30/1991)

3. William Lynn Drake (7/27/1961) married Dawn Tull (7/21/1963)

a. Jeremy Ray Drake (3/25/1984)

b. Jessica Lynn Drake (11/29/1986)

4. Susan Kay Drake (7/11/1962) married Jon Thomas Talbott (8/28/1963)

a. Cathryn Marie Talbott (10/3/1985)

b. Lianne Michelle Talbott (12/15/1988)

5. Richard Allen Drake (9/2/1963)

B. Robert Duane Drake (7/15/1939) married Anita Ervin (2/11/1940)

1. Cindy Kay Drake (1/6/1960) married, first, Robert Simpson producing no issue. Second, Bradley Dean Sloat

a. Dustin Michael Sloat (8/23/1985)

Married, third, Kenneth Fredrick Keefer (5/19/1964)

b. Kyle Marcus Keefer (5/19/1986)

c. Kenzie Keefer (10/15/1990)

2. Robert Douglas Drake (12/25/1962) married

Teresa Joann Lang (10/10/1963)

a. Adam Wesley Drake (3/17/1987)

b. Ryan Andrew Drake (5/1/1989)

c. Shawn Douglas Drake (11/15/1991)

3. Bradley Ross Drake (7/8/1964) married, first, Tia

Jo Seitsinger

a. Derek Drake (5/13/1982)

Second marriage to Mary Kay Black (2/25/1965)

C. Michael Eugene Drake (3/13/1944) married, first, Lynette

Ellen Jenne (11/17/1944)

1. Darren Michael Drake (4/6/1964)

Second marriage to Sandra Jo (Boge) Robinson (8/19/1954)

2. Meghan Elizabeth Drake (9/14/1985)

3. Nathaniel Matthew Drake (2/26/1987)

D. Jeffrey Lynn Drake (3/17/1947) married, first, Renee

Taylor

1. Kimberly Marie Drake (about 1969) married

Daron Kimball

2. Brian Lynn Drake (9/25/1970) married Denise

Livingston

a. Brian Richard Drake (12/22/1988)

b. Emily Lynn Drake (1/20/1989)

c. Jarron Drake (7/4/1992)

3. Michael Patrick Drake (9/2/1975) married Heather Danielle Spence
  4. Anna Lee Drake (10/17/1980)  
Married second to Sheila Ann Harding Baker (9/24/1948) who brought two children from a previous marriage
  5. Michael John Baker (7/14/1967) married Maria Katrina Gustavson
  6. Andrew Corbit Baker (11/9/1973) married Christine Anne Mitchell
- E. Steven Randal Drake (6/20/1951) married Lola Shaw (6/20/1954)
1. Jason Lewis Drake (6/9/1974)
  2. Stephanie Lynn Drake (1/20/1978)
  3. Dennis Eugene Drake ((12/4/1980)
- III. Howard Elsie Drake (2/3/1918 to 2/6/1979) married Betty Lou Conley (1/21/1920) on January 1, 1938
- A. Howard LeRoy Drake ((2/3/1942) married Norma Jean Probst (7/28/1945) on December 26, 1965
1. Scott Christopher Drake (11/24/1968) married Jana Kelly Edwards (8/20/1971) on December 15, 1990
    - a. Jordyn Audrey Drake (1/10/1994)
  2. Shawna Lea Drake (6/23/1971) married Michael Ray Sweeney (6/27/1969) on August 22, 1992
    - a. Drake Brendan Sweeney (10/19/1994)
  3. Gregory Alan Drake (5/4/1973) married Michelle Weaver (9/15/1973) on May 20, 1995
- B. Vicki Beth Drake (2/9/1944) married Harry Louis White (9/24/1941) on July 28, 1961

1. Lori Ann White (7/13/1969) married Russell Scott Finley (10/31/1965) on August 12, 1989
    - a. Allyssa Danielle Finley (11/21/1990)
  2. Todd Aaron White (10/8/1972)
  3. Kindra Gale White (11/6/1979)
  4. Seth Michael White ((9/25/1983)
- C. Jimmy Dale Drake (3/12/1946) married Sandra Sue Satterfield (3/19/1948) on June 11, 1966
1. Melissa Jill Drake (11/23/1968) married Todd Mitchel Beavers (6/2/1966) on October 6, 1990
    - a. Emily Haiden Beavers (10/13/1992)
  2. Belinda Gayle Drake (7/25/1970)
  3. Kyle Ryan Drake (8/23/1978)
  4. Amanda Danielle Drake (4/11/1980)

**The descendants of  
Dessie Belle Drake and Charles Rapp Ingle**

- I. Charles Ingle Jr. ((6/29/1917 to 6/30/1917)
- II. Dorothy Elizabeth Ingle (6/14/1918 to 9/19/1919)
- III. Russel Ingle (12/2/1919) married Virginia Rutan
  - A. Alan Lee Ingle  
Second wife, Vera, had a daughter when married
  - B. Cheryle Renee Stifal
- IV. Marjorie E. Ingle (7/5/1921) married Carl Cahoon
  - A. Sandra Cahoon married Bill Rardin
    1. Terry Lee Rardin

- 2. Debra Lynn Rardin
- B. Sharon Kaye Cahoon married a Montz
  - 1. Robbie Montz
  - 2. Jery Lynn Montz
- C. Ronnie Lee Cahoon married
- D. Gary Dean Cahoon married
- V. Ralph Ingle (12/21/1923) married
- VI. Ernest Ingle (5/12/1926) married Barbara
  - A. Ernest Anthony Ingle
  - B. Rose Marie Ingle married
  - C. Thomas Ingle
- VII. Norman Ingle (1/6/1928) married Ruby Ketchum
- VIII. Carl Richard Ingle married
  - A. Pamel Mae Ingle
  - B. Carl Richard Ingle Jr.
  - C. Susan Belle Ingle

**The descendants of  
Beatrice Grace Drake and Joseph Welton Greene**

- I. Cynthia Ivetta Green (11/19/1917) married Ralph Sherman
  - A. Barbra Louise (1/19/1938) married James Milton Miller
    - 1. Jamie Miller
    - 2. Mark Miller
    - 3. David Miller
  - B. Jerry Dean Sherman (4/14/1939) married Judy Thompson
    - 1. Michelle Sherman

- 2. Cheryl Sherman
  - C. Richard Sherman (8/25/1943) married Judy Motley
    - 1. Thomas Sherman
- II. Ruby Blanche Greene (7/15/1919 to 4/26/1973) married Charles Black (2/25/1918)
  - A. Carl Eugene Black (6/10/1941) married Nancy Abernathy
    - 1. Mary Kay Black married Bradley Ross Drake
    - 2. Douglas Black
  - B. Elmer Dale Black (7/27/1944) married Gail Stratton
  - C. Robert Joseph Black (2/17/1947) married Ethel Holladay
  - D. Johnny Ross Black (11/6/1950) married Phyllis Siglor
- III. Nellie Emma Greene (12/8/1927) married William Thomas Bennett (2/8/1922)
  - A. Thomas Harvey Bennett (8/13/1947) married Bonnie Larson
    - 1. Tommy Bennett
  - B. Jeffrey Lynn Bennett (12/17/1952) married
  - C. Bryan A. Bennett (1/20/1962)
  - D. William Thomas Bennett Jr. (1/8/1965)

**The descendants of  
Fredrick Milton Drake and Lillie Ann Arthur**

- I. Cora Elizabeth Drake (4/7/1919) died at birth
- II. Paul Edmund Drake (2/26/1921 to 6/28/1981) married Lucille McFall (1/7/1926 to 9/4/1981)
  - A. Fredrick Lee Drake (6/12/1948) married

1. Rhonda Drake
2. Tonya Drake

B. Catherine Lynn Drake (12/2/1947) married Joe Overmeyer

1. Joe Overmeyer Jr.
2. Tammy Overmeyer
3. Jamie Overmeyer
4. Michelle Overmeyer
5. Jennifer Overmeyer

C. David Drake (7/17/1949)

D. Bob Drake (9/13/1950)

E. Ted Drake (7/15/1952 to 1/20/1981) killed in car wreck, married

1. Tedra Drake (April, 1976)
2. Curtis Drake (1978)

F. Jim Drake (7/25/1954)

III. George Edward Drake (7/18/1923) married Helen Mae Neese (8/9/1926)

A. Steven Fredric Drake (1/26/1953) married Connie Lynn Cobb

1. Jason Paul Rinehart Drake (adopted) (12/15/1975)

2. Sarah Marie Drake (10/29/1979)

B. Allen Edward Drake (7/14/1954) married Patricia Coates (7/13/1952)

1. Susan Beth Drake (6/8/1976)
2. Jeffrey Allen Drake (4/23/1979)

IV. Raymond Eugene Drake (2/21/1925) married first Maxine McQueen

A. Sharon Kay Drake (6/15/1944) died

B. Diana Jean Drake (3/13/1946) married Fred Turner

1. Robbie Turner (adopted)

C. Michael Eugene Drake (1/31/1949) married

V. Hazel Burdilla Drake (1/3/1929) married Norman Aufdenkamp (7/29/1925)

A. William Melton Aufdenkamp (4/26/1949) married Debbie Armstrong

1. Erik Aufdenkamp (4/26/1977)

2. Amy Aufdenkamp (5/13/1980)

B. Thomas Edward Aufdenkamp (9/13/1950) married and divorced in Florida

C. Lynn Marie Aufdenkamp (4/20/1960) married Bill Jenkins in Hollywood, Florida

VI. Franklin Dale Drake (1/19/1931) married Catherine Rutan who died

A. Jimmy Dale Drake (6/18/1949)

VII. Henry Aaron Drake (10/2/1933) married

1. Cary Drake

2. Patricia Drake

3. Don Drake

4. Trisha Drake

VIII. Thomas Fredrick Drake (8/12/1937) married Carol Mae Lee (11/2/1939)

A. Debra Lee Drake (3/17/1964)

B. Jamie Lynn Drake (12/6/1966)

**The descendants of  
John Albert Drake and Mayme Irene McGahan**

I. Martha Bernice Drake (11/14/1922) married Albert Vanlanot (6/24/1918)

A. William Henry Vanlanot (9/29/1945) married Clara Mae Johnson (6/24/1939)

1. Kimberly Gail Vanlanot (2/18/1961)
2. Wendy Kaye Vanlanot (3/21/1959)
3. Phillip Wayne Vanlanot (4/10/1971)
4. Gregory William Vanlanot (6/25/1974)

II. William Henry Drake (7/7/1924) killed in World War II, Battle of the Bulge, January 8, 1945

III. Edna May Drake (5/7/1926) married Loron P. Lee (12/29/1918)

A. Lester Dale Lee (10/3/1948)

B. Karen Sue Lee (6/16/1953) married David William Meyerscough (12/25/1952)

1. David Lee Meyerscough (3/1/1974)

C. Margaret Ann Lee (3/7/1955) married Johnny Ray Brown (11/28/1953)

IV. Dale Albert Drake (10/28/1928 to 9/6/1935) killed by car

V. Mary Margaret Drake (3/7/1932) married Max Theodore Cooper (2/5/1932)

A. Marcie Ann Cooper (8/28/1953) married Ronald Seaman (7/19/1949)

1. Amanda Irene Seaman (6/26/1974)

- B. Mark Theodore Cooper (12/16/1955)
- VI. Gerald Wayne Drake (2/24/1935) married Ina Rae Nees (4/10/1940)
  - A. Michael Wayne Drake (9/10/1957)
  - B. Bradley Rae Drake (5/2/1961)
- VII. Charles Roy Drake (6/15/1937) married Sharon Louise Ridey (7/17/1940)
  - A. Michelle Renee Drake (12/12/1962)

## Twenty

I could not count nor sequence the memories I have of my Grandfather, Roscoe Edward Drake. He and Grandma were a big part of my childhood. They lived three hundred feet to the north of us in a wonderland for children. Since Dad was a traveling man, I think I may have bonded more solidly with Grandpa than with Dad. Now, all I have of my grandparents are a few black and white photographs and some random impressions.

He stood five and half feet tall and was average weight. He always had a palsy in his hands, his right hand shaking more than his left. His hair was salt and pepper and very thick. He always washed his hands and face and brushed his hair before coming to the table. This, he said, because his father had taught him to do it. His summer wear varied little from summer to summer. His head was covered by a ruffled, sweat stained dress hat. He wore faded blue bib overalls over a green, long sleeved work shirt. In the side pocket of the overalls, he carried a pair of pliers. In the back, work gloves and a packet of Red Man chewing tobacco. He wore dark, ankle high work shoes. In winter there was a brown jacket, waist length, lined with sheep's skin. His hat was black, billed liked a baseball cap, and had ear flaps. I never saw him put the flaps down. As in summer he wore his bib overalls, but his feet were kept warm by gum boots and cloth boot liners. He did not lose the habit of wearing long underwear

until the 1960's when he moved in with us. Oh, yes, he always carried a pocket knife and used it to cut his apples into bite sized pieces. His dress, like the man himself, was as regular and predictable as the coming of green grass in the spring.

He had five acres of land, with the Town Branch constituting the boundary on the north. There was bottom land near the creek, and he always planted something there. It might have been sweet corn, potatoes or turnips. Grandpa horrified me one hot summer day when we working in the bottom. I may have asked him about pay. I'm not sure what prompted it, but he told me, "I went to work when I was nine years old. Got paid a dime a day." I couldn't imagine working an entire day for one ride at the carnival or two bottles of pop. Even more amazing was the fact that Grandpa wasn't asking for sympathy. He was just telling it like it was.

Behind the house was a huge pile of trash. Grandpa made his living as an independent trash collector. This was before municipalities assumed sole responsibility for ridding the community of its waste. He got rid of much of Charleston's refuse by filling up the hollow in back of his house. To this day, one hundred and fifty yards to the northeast of my parents' house and directly behind the house that was once occupied by Grandma and Grandpa lies an archaeological treasure chest. It is covered now with soil and green grass, but just below the surface lies waste typical of a small Midwestern town from the 1930's to the 1950's.

There was an old barn and a new barn on his property. There was a fenced area containing chicken coops. Grass never grew there, and Grandma always made her soap in the chicken yard over an open fire. There were hog wallows within the fenced area where he

dumped the trash. There was a shed he called the Paper House where he deposited rags and paper that he thought might be of value. The garage had cloth bags of damp and musty clothes and rags piled to the ceiling. Old steamer trunks contained everything from old clothes to *Life* magazines. In a lean-to grafted to the back of the garage was a workshop containing hoes, rakes, files, an anvil, a vice, mismatched wrench sets, scythes, clamps, nuts and bolts of every description and plenty of paraphernalia only an expert in turn-of-the-century tools could identify. There was no electric light in the shop. It was always dark, even on the hottest, brightest summer day. The floor was a fine, gray dust. There was barely enough room for a person to walk through, for things were stacked high on both sides of the walkway. The only work I can remember him doing in there was sharpening hoes, scythes and plow shears. His philosophy about gardening was that sharp hoes make for better work.

There was the smoke house for curing meat. Next to that was a shed containing lost of secret things. It was the one building that Grandma would not allow the grandchildren to inhabit. After she died when we were cleaning the estate, the door was flung open recklessly by Dad and his brothers. My cousins and older brothers were treated to graphically illustrated medical textbooks from around 1900. My Grandma was religious and prudish. These books must have been the why of our not being allowed to go in that shed. Under this shed was a root cellar where Grandma kept her canned goods.

Until around 1950 there was no indoor toilet. There were apples trees. One apple tree near the south side of the garage bore terrible sour green apples. Grandma insisted that we not pick from the tree. She advocated eating apples that had fallen to the ground.

Of course, we did not follow her advice. We ate from the sour tree of life. There was a grape arbor, an asparagus patch with the stalks growing in a bunch near a pile of rocks. A huge shade tree stood just outside the back door. A swing was suspended from one of the low hanging branches. In the shade of that ancient tree I remember my great-grandmother Tipsword sitting on a kitchen chair with a quiet, pained expression on her wrinkled face. She spoke with me but only when I asked her questions. I remember banging my right foot on a large root as I swung. It hurt badly for several weeks afterward. Then there was Egghead Lange, Grandpa's hired man, who sat in the shade after digesting his noon meal, which he always took with Grandpa, a meal of pork steak, white bread, breaded tomatoes, white gravy, apple butter and coffee so hot it nearly burned its way through the white china cup in which it was served. Grandpa always sauced and blew his coffee. Grandma, without a nerve in her mouth, drank it right from the cup. A path leading from the shade of the tree past the grape arbor along the south fence of the chicken yard took you to the outhouse.

Grandma was a round woman whose dark hair was always pulled behind her head into a careless bun. She wore simple, long sleeved dresses. Her eyes were always weary. She rose early each morning to make a big breakfast for her husband cooking it on a wood burning stove styled like those in Norman Rockwell paintings. Grandpa, having completed no more than two years of formal schooling, did not trust his reading. Grandma read *The Charleston Courier* to him every evening from cover to cover after supper. He sat with his shoes off on the wine colored sofa they had in the front room listening intently to each word of Grandma's droning monologue.

As a six year old, the news bored me, but I marveled at my grandmother's stamina.

They heated their home with coal burning stoves, black monsters that towered above my head. They fed them bowling ball sized chunks of coal through a small door in the front. On cold days, when the red of heat showed through the black exterior, I liked to spit on the side of the stove. Then I stood watching and listening as the wetness sizzled and slowly disappeared.

She was infinitely patient with her grandchildren. I never feared having to bring some unusual item, like a cigar box, to school for a special project. Just name it to her, and she would stop whatever she was doing and able out the back door toward one of the out buildings where she would find it, whatever it was. She made jelly and bread sandwiches by the dozens for her grandchildren. The kitchen was always open. She made lye soap and churned butter in her kitchen. Their cow supplied the raw material.

Grandpa milked that cow every day. He fed the stray cats that hung around the barn by squirting warm milk directly from the Jersey's teat into their mouths. I hated the cats because they were wild and would not come close to me. Once I asked him what they were doing there. "They kill the rats and mice," he told me. No one knows how many dogs made their home under Grandpa's house. The pack of mixed breeds often resembling coon hounds were affectionate and approachable, but the cats were wild and aloof remaining perpetually just out of petting distance.

Grandpa never considered entering a hog calling contest. Calling his pigs was not a game to him. Standing near the gate that separated his trash pile from the rest of his property, he yelled in an

exquisite falsetto, "Hoy . . . hoy . . . hoy." Soon, the pigs waddled up the path snorting and waited for the old man to toss them their daily ration of hard field corn, still on the cob. When the hogs got out of their pen, all of us, kids included, were issued broom handles. The roundup lasted hours sometimes, and my brothers and I were always amazed at how hard it was for the pigs to find their way back into the enclosure when they had gotten out so easily.

In the dead of winter with the thermometer hovering around zero, pigs were sometimes born in the middle of the night. Grandpa would bring them into the kitchen and lay them on a pallet of burlap on the lid of the stove. I asked him once if he was trying to make sure they did not freeze. "No," he said, "I don't want the mother to eat them." The fact that a mother pig would eat its young was unsettling to me.

It was the mule teams that most defined my grandfather. He loved working teams and owned a good inventory of farm implements that could be powered by horses or mules. He owned a wagon, a one bottom plow, a harrow, a disc, a hay rake, manure spreader, a weed cutter and a corn planter. All were rusty but functional, and I rode with him on many occasions as he worked the small patches of ground for friends and neighbors all over the west end of town. Family gardens were as much a fact of life in those days as shrubbery is nowadays. He loved equestrian activities. He once boasted to his nephew, Les Drake, "I bought and sold the same team of mules five times." It seems nobody could work the animals but him. They would always bring the mules back. "The last fellow that bought them took that team of mules to Indiana. He never brought them back." Grandpa was famous for hitting mules between the eyes with a

baseball bat and knocking them cold when they got contrary. "They're smaller than horses," he explained, "but they work together. They lunge into their harness at the same time. Horses don't do that. First one jumps and then the other. Mules are a right smarter than that." He told me how his small team of mules had once pulled a load of railroad ties out of a bottom land field when two teams of horses had failed to do it. That had happened west of town near where his dad, Grandpa Henry, had once lived.

He told me once that his dad had bet a dollar on him. The bet was that Grandpa could ride a horse that had thrown everyone who ever tried to ride him. Grandpa was 15 at the time. He rode the outlaw horse to a standstill, he said. "I was bleeding from the nose and ears when the horse stopped bucking. That's the God's truth."

Grandpa once told my brother, Bob, that the most beautiful woman he had ever known lived in Danville, Illinois. Grandpa would travel by interurban rail to this town about forty miles north of Charleston where he courted this beautiful woman. She, however, was hesitant to introduce him to her family. Grandpa begged to meet the parents. "I don't care," he told her, "if they're black as the ace of spades." She took him home with her shortly thereafter. Her parents were Negro. Grandpa walked away from the beautiful young girl without a backward glance.

Grandpa made his living in the 1920's by digging wells with a drilling rig that was powered by horses or mules. Uncle Joe Greene was his partner. When I was a boy, many old timers who lived in the country near our town would point out wells that our grandfather had dug for them thirty years before. He charged one dollar a foot. If the customer dictated where he was to dig, the customer had to pay

whether water was found or not. If, however, the customer dug on Grandpa's recommendation, there would be no charge at all if water were not discovered. You see, Roscoe Drake was a water witch. He cut a peach branch with a fork in it. The branch was usually about two feet long. Then he walked the terrain waiting for the end of the branch to flipped downward. He *did* find water this way. Most of the time he could even tell how far down it was. My Dad tells a chilling story about the auger getting stuck. Dad was with his father driving the horse around in a circle so the blade of the auger could be driven into the ground. "They were 33 feet down," he said, "when everything stopped." Dad shook his head. "I still wake up in a cold sweat thinking about this," he said. Grandpa tied a rope around Dad's waist, gave him a crowbar and then lowered him the 33 feet down the 18 inch field tile they were lining the shaft with. "I dug a rock out with the crowbar," he said, "and held it between my feet when they pulled me up." Dad never liked tight places.

One reason Grandpa was so poor during the Depression was that he fell sick for nearly two years with a disorder that no local doctor could diagnose. By the time Dad was in high school, Grandpa weighed less than 100 pounds and could not walk on his own. Then Dr. Iknayan, a doctor from Turkey, set up practice in Charleston and paid Grandpa a house call. Dr. Iknayan thought he had a parasite that was common in Turkey but not common in the United States. As Grandpa told it, the bugs came from well water that had been contaminated by hogs. The medicine would have to be sent for from Turkey. It would cost \$65.00 and takes several months. "I gave him the last \$65.00 I had in this world," the old man told me years later.

When the medicine came, the doctor told my Grandpa that he was afraid to inject him with it. It was strong medicine, according to the doctor, and the shock would likely kill him. "I told him," Grandpa said, "I was going to die anyway. Go ahead and give me the shot." The doctor injected Grandpa. "Within thirty minutes", Grandpa said, "I had passed a pot full of blood and bugs." The doctor had made a correct diagnosis. Within a month he was back on his feet. Soon thereafter, he began his trash collecting business.

In the spring of 1972, I got an unexpected phone call from my brother, Jeff. "Sorry to have to break the news to you, Mike," he said, "but Grandpa Drake died last night."

"Are you sure?" I asked.

Jeff laughed. "Everyone I have called has asked the same question. This time he's dead," my brother added. You see, Grandpa had died before--several times--and had come back to life too.



## Twenty-one

My Dad, Donald Franklin Drake, showed me where he was born some years ago. He pointed to a vacant field along a quiet country road in Paradise Township of Coles County, about four miles southwest of Mattoon, Illinois. The house no longer stood. Some time after that, he and Uncle Harold drove me to another vacant field south of Charleston near where Fox Ridge State Park is now located. They had lived there too. Again, no house was standing. Grandpa had been a tenant farmer like his father before him and had taken his small family all over Coles County in search of work in the early 1920's. There is one house they lived in that still stands. It is just a quarter mile past the Charleston Country Club on the Old State Road that once connected Mattoon with Charleston. At one time, Grandpa tended the grounds at the Country Club. He certainly was no member. His family was poor. Guess Dad always saw to it that his sons got a good Christmas because his had been so dismal. One year Uncle Howard got a small drum. Harold, a handkerchief. Dad got an orange from Santa Claus.

By age nineteen Dad had met Mom at a dance pavilion near Lake Mattoon, had courted her making the acquaintance of his future father-in-law, who ran a restaurant-tavern in Mattoon, and had gone to work for him. James Franklin Smith was a man of action. Dad learned this when he dropped Mother off after a dance one night.

With them in the car were two high school classmates from Charleston High School. They were musicians who had played the dance. They were also Negro. Dad say Grandpa Smith came to the car door, grabbed me, knocked me down and then kicked me for falling. "Oh, he apologized many times for that after we were married," Dad said.

Frank Smith lost his liquor license for hanging the coroner on the wall. A man had been hit by a car on the highway in front of Grandpa's tavern. The victim had been brought into the tavern and placed on tables where primitive first aid had been administered. But the man died, and the coroner told Grandpa he had killed the man when he moved him. That's when Grandpa hung the coroner on the wall by draping his collar over a coat hook. Shortly thereafter, his liquor license was revoked. Grandpa and Grandma Smith did not go to the wedding. Dad's mother and father did not attend either. The ceremony was performed by Reverend Hayes at the Parsonage for the First Christian Church in Charleston.

Mom worked at the Brown Shoe Factory in Charleston for a while. Dad worked there too and then got a job working at the Gamble Store located on the town square in Charleston where he sold and transported radios, washing machine, ice boxes and refrigerators. Mom stopped work when my oldest brother, Larry, was born.

Early in World War II, before Dad was in the service, he got job as a carpenter's helper in Vandalia, Illinois. It was a 60 mile commute from Charleston, one way, but the money was good. He left that to go to work for Lever Brothers selling Surf, Tide and Lifebuoy. Though he was 27 years old and had two children, he was drafted into the Navy in 1943. He did not like the idea of sailing. Water scared him, apparently, so he opted to be a five foot two inch

Marine. His drill sergeant asked if he were a fighter or a lover. Dad told him he was more of a lover than a fighter. As a result, Dad became a Marine Corps shoe cobbler, possibly because of his experience at the Brown Shoe Company and spent much of the War at a small Marine air base in Newport, Arkansas. Combat was not a part of his wartime experience. By the time he was transferred to Newport, I had been born. I was over six months old before meeting Dad. He shipped the whole family to Newport with the help of Grandpa and his '41 Dodge truck. The family spent more than a year living as a Marine family in Arkansas.

After the war, he returned to the house he had built on the small plot of land Grandpa had given him. Dad had built the house in 1940. That is why I grew up next to Grandma and Grandpa's house. Dad had been given a couple of lots out of the five acre plot Grandpa bought with money from the trash collection routes.

My Uncle Harold had spent over 30 months in the South Pacific with General MacArthur's forces traveling from New Guinea to the Philippines. Uncle Harold would not talk much about his wartime experiences though on one occasion I tried to coax some stories from him. He did take a trip to Japan with his son some thirty years after the war was done. Standing at the Hiroshima Monument, he told his son, Hal, "I don't feel a bit sorry."

He went back to work for Lever Brothers traveling much of the northern part of Illinois. Somewhere around 1952, Dad left the soap company and went to work selling roofing and siding products for Globe Roofing which was headquartered in Whiting, Indiana. Again, he traveled the northern part of Illinois selling to wholesale houses specializing in building products. By 1956 Dad and his

brother, Howard, had started a small business in Charleston called Security Roofing and Siding Company. Less than three years later, they had a falling out. Dad bought Howard's share. They did not speak for nearly 20 years after than even though Howard had taken over Grandpa's house and the two brothers lived next door to each other.

Dad then went to work for Eagle Lumber Dealer Supply Company in Danville, Illinois. Still, he traveled while leaving the running of the roofing and siding business to his two oldest sons, Larry and Bob. They were in their early twenties when they became partners in the company. Ten years later, the two brothers had a falling out. Bob left the company. Larry was in charge. It was for the best, as it turns out, since Bob went on to specialize in roofs. His two sons work with him now in that business. Larry, the oldest brother, controls what was started by our dad as Security Roofing and Siding. He has two sons are in the business with him. Dad has been retired for nearly fifteen years.

I got a teaching degree from Eastern Illinois University, located in Charleston, and came to work at Lyons Township High School in LaGrange, Illinois in the fall of 1967. I'll probably retire from there.

Jeff, Mom and Dad's fourth son, joined the Air Force soon after graduating from high school. When he returned to Charleston, he went to work for the local telephone company. After three years of that, he quit that job and opened an independent appliance store. That didn't do too well for him, and he got out of that to start a mobile home business working with our Brother Bob and Bob' wife, Anita. That fizzled after about ten years. When he got out of that, he bought

a tavern in Mattoon. He still owns and operated Broadway Joe's on Broadway in Mattoon.

My youngest brother, Steve, started his business career in restaurants. Then he moved into home construction. His business, located just west of Charleston, has become quite successful. I will always remember Steve as a boy of five or six years who wore Dad's business hat and carried his briefcase. Most small kids in that era wanted to play cowboys and Indians or cops and robbers. Steve has always wanted to be in business.

Grandpa Drake lived with Dad for years after Grandma died. he had a weak heart. Dad and Uncle Harold sat up with him many nights when his lungs congested and he lay motionless in his bed with a green oxygen tank nearby. More than once Dad could not get Grandpa's pulse. Dad would hold a mirror close to his father's lips looking for frosting from the old man's lips. Dad tried to wake him, but it was no good. The old man seemed dead. Dad called the family doctor named Montemayor to the house more than once telling the doctor that he thought Grandpa was dead. When the doctor showed up in the middle of the night, Grandpa would be conscious. This series of events did not make the doctor happy.

Then one day Grandpa drove his '52 Chevy to the doctor's office to get el dopo, a drug that helped the tremor in his hands. While he was there, Dr. Montemayor decided to give him a quick examination. As the doctor held his stethoscope to the old man's chest, Grandpa slipped from consciousness. The doctor tried everything he could to revive him, but was finally forced to call Dad and tell him, "Don, your father passed away in my office a while ago."

He instructed Dad to meet him at the Charleston Hospital where he had sent Grandpa's body.

At the hospital Dad encounter Dr. Montemayor leaning against corridor wall just outside a hospital room. The doctor was shaking his head and mumbling over and over, "He was dead, I tell you. He was dead."

In the room next to the befuddled doctor was my Grandfather. He was conscious and asking a nurse where his Red Man tobacco was. So, on more than one occasion, all signs of life left the man only to return, much to everyone's surprise, after a substantial passage of time. Well, a substantial amount of time has passed since Grandpa Drake died this last time. I guess I'm writing this book to bring him back for the benefit of those descendants who never had the pleasure of meeting him.

## Twenty-two

There is a post script to this. Shortly after I had decided I could go no farther in my search, I drifted to the Mormon Church library in Naperville, Illinois. It only took a half an hour to get there. Using the Mormon records, I found that I was actually following the trail of a distant relative who had already covered the territory, had already discovered what had eluded me for so long. I found that my Uncle Milton Drake, brother to my great great grandfather had had three wives. The first was Emaline Larrison, who was born in 1846. The second was Emaline Sanders, also born, 1846. The third, Ellen Tucker, born, 1846. Uncle Milton had no children with any of his wives.

The second major find were distant relatives who had descended from Elijah Drake's brother, Jefferson Drake. What follows is a listing of the children of Jefferson Drake, born 1809. Mormon records show that he had two wives, Elizabeth Flick (1809) and America Flick (1819, of Orange County, Indiana):

1. Elizabeth Drake, b. 1839 and married Linsey Parsons
2. Melinda Drake, b. 1841
3. Christopher Drake, b. 1843
4. William Drake, b. 1844 and married Ann Eliza Hooten
5. Matilda Drake, b. 1847 and married Walter Beatty

6. Catherine Drake, b. 1849 and married Reuben Cox
7. Minerva Drake, b. 1851 and married George Clements
8. Jonathon Drake, b. 1853 and married Sarah Bledsoe
9. Nancy Jane Drake, b. 1855 and married George H. Flick
10. Penelope Drake, b. 1857 and married John. W. De

Jarnatt

11. Afralona Drake, b. 1861
12. Henry Franklin Drake, b. 1866 and married Lola Adeline

Smith

A second wing of the family that my trip to the Mormon library recovered consisted of the children of Josephus Drake. Josephus was the youngest brother of Grandpa James Ervin Drake. The following is a listing of the children of Josephus Drake and his wife, Nancy Ellen Sanders, who was born in Lexington, Kentucky on July 28, 1851:

1. Osceola Drake, b. 9/20/1874 in Charleston, Illinois and married Mary Frances Ehrlich, herself born in 1874.
2. Unnamed son, b. 9/30/1876
3. Harland Arthur Drake, b. 1892 in Clay County, Indiana and married Thea Hansen, b. 1890 in Oslo, Norway.
  - a. Ruth Hansen Drake
  - b. Harland Arthur Drake, Jr., b. 1/19/1924 in L. A.
  - c. Eileen Drake
4. Letta Drake (twin), b. 6/17/1892 and married James Franklin Galey, b. 1892.

5. Lena Drake (twin), b. 6/17/1892 and married Clarence Edward Jones, b. 1892.

The most important part of this post script is a possible clue to going farther back in the lineage. The Mormon record shows some birth records from New Kent County, Virginia in St. Peter's Parish. Note that what I offer next is pure speculation, but it might lead to the origin of the last documented progenitor of this line of the Drake family. The birth records in St. Peter's Parish show that a William Drake was born to William and Sara Drake on February 16, 1734. Other Drake births in that parish near the same date were Thomas Drake, born 1738 to William and Sara Drake and Ann Drake, also born to William and Sara Drake. There was a Joel Drake, born on December 9, 1755 to William and Agnes Drake. Perhaps this Joel Drake was a half brother to William Drake, the father of Braxton Drake. These births, I reiterate, are not answers but might be leads which could be pursued.

One final note. A William Drake of Franklin County, Virginia applied for a Revolutionary War Pension. The Virginia State Archives might provide a clue as to whether this William Drake was Braxton's father or older brother. Most certainly, it was one or the other.

We took a vacation in August of 1995. On Sunday, August 6, we made our way from Gwinn Island Resort near Danville, Kentucky to Nicholasville. At last I would meet Clyde Bunch in the flesh. I had written him before we left to expect us. I called him from the Motel 8 where we had just checked in. He had been expecting our call, he said. An hour later, when we pulled into the intersection, we saw him sitting on his front steps waiting.

After the greetings Clyde escorted us to his work room where he handed me a white hat box full of his Drake papers. "Take them to your motel room tonight and look through them. Keep whatever you want for as long as you want." I took the box not expecting to find much. Clyde then slipped into the front seat of the car with Boge and the children in the back and began our guided tour of Boonesborough and points of interest around the site of the old fort. I was steeped in Boonesborough history and Clyde and I had a lot to talk about as we toured the area. We capped things off with a fish meal at the Hall's Catfish House. Clyde said Queen Elizabeth II had eaten there when she came to the area to indulge her hobby of race horses.

In the motel room strewn with my two children and their vacation clothes I went over the letters and other documents that Clyde had given me. I soon discovered that he did have information in his box that I had written begging him to share with me. He had several letters from other persons with whom he had worked in trying to sort out the identity of Samuel Drake's father, this Samuel Drake being the father of Joseph, Ephraim, William, Nathaniel and Margaret. The only information I had came from Mrs. Gambill's work, and that was very unclear to me. The crux of the whole matter, as readers who have read this whole paper already know, was the question of whether Samuel Drake was the son of Joseph Drake, who married Rebecca Hambly, or the son of John Drake, who married Margaret Weldon. Finding John Drake's connection to the Sir Francis Drake line would give me a sense of closure since I had begun this effort by asking if we were in some way related. I was pretty sure that we were not in line for the honor, but I wanted to know who was.

Concerning the theory that Joseph Drake, son of the Reverend Bamfield Drake, was the father of a large contingent of Drakes in North America, Clyde had letters from James Barber, Curator of the Museum and Art Gallery in the city of Plymouth, England. Mr. Barber charts the family of Reverend Bamfield Drake showing that Joseph Drake, who married Rebecca Hambly, was Reverend Bamfield Drake's oldest son. The last lines on this chart are, "Descendants in the United States." As far as I can see, Mr. Barber writes this because he is told by correspondents in this country that they are descended from Joseph Drake, the husband of Rebecca Hambly. Thus, as far as I can determine, we have researchers in both the U. S. and England using each other's letters to beg the question. Mr. Barber in England tells us in good faith that there was a Joseph Drake who married Rebecca Hambly and that this same Joseph Drake was linked to the family of the great admiral. He takes for granted that there is documentation in the United States proving that Joseph Drake was the father of Samuel Drake. At the same time there were people in this country who were looking for a link between Joseph and Samuel. They were guilty of using this letter from Mr. Barber as evidence in that Mr. Barber wrote under Joseph Drake's name in his chart, "Descendants in the United States."

Clyde Bunch had been dubious from the beginning because to date no documents have been found to confirm that this Joseph Drake, who married Rebecca Hambly, was ever in Kentucky. There is some question as to whether or not he made it to Virginia. What we do have is a bogus monument planted near Nicholasville, Kentucky by persons unknown. This monument suggests that Joseph Drake is the father of Samuel since the monument, but not the body,

appears in the same burial ground as Samuel. The monument is obviously anachronistic. The photograph Clyde gave me showed that the stone was obviously completed closer to the Twentieth Century than to the Eighteenth Century. *Who* had the monument made is a mystery. The *why* is simpler. Somebody wanted the money. That's my opinion anyway.

I had asked Clyde by letter and phone who this John Drake, who had married Margaret Weldon, was. It was certain that Dr. Lewie South had predicated his claim to the fabulous fortune of Sir Francis Drake on the idea that Samuel Drake was the son of John and Margaret Weldon Drake. What was the tie-in? Did Clyde have Lady Elliott-Drake's book? How was this John Drake and Margaret Weldon Drake linked to Sir Francis Drake?

Well, Clyde never grasped the subtlety of my questions. He never answered them, even though he had the pertinent information in his box.

I found three charts tracing this elusive link between John and Margaret Weldon Drake to Sir Francis Drake and his fabulous fortune. One had been copied from Lady Elliott-Drake's book, *The Family and Heirs of Sir Francis Drake*. What follows is a summary of the link as condensed from the three sources: (I am not identifying the sources because I do not consider them documentation, only a way of clarifying for myself what the link was.)

I. Sir Francis Drake, the great admiral, leaves the estate to his youngest brother, Thomas Drake.

II. Thomas Drake has a son named Francis Drake.

III. This Francis Drake's children were

1. Sir Francis Drake
2. Mary Drake
3. Thomas Drake
4. Elizabeth Drake
5. John Drake of Ivybridge
6. Sarah Drake
7. William Drake
8. Joan Drake
9. Joseph Drake

IV. John Drake of Ivybridge (1624 - 1681) had five sons.

1. William Drake
2. John Drake who died young
3. John Drake
4. Francis Drake
5. Henry Drake

V. This Henry Drake had one son--John Drake who married Margaret Weldon, and this is the tie-in.

So, Joseph Drake, who married Rebecca Hambly, had a grandfather named Joseph Drake, who was the youngest brother of John Drake of Ivybridge, who was the grandfather of John Drake, husband of Margaret Weldon. Which of these two distant cousins was the father of Samuel Drake may forever remain an enigma, but

my money goes on John because the name Weldon was carried forward, and in the middle of the Eighteenth Century nothing was to be gained from a ruse.

characters of the novel, including himself, into the middle of the reign of terror. The idyllic, domestic life at Soho, pictured at the beginning of this chapter, is now brutally disturbed.

## Bibliography with Notes

Bakeless, John. *Daniel Boone*. New York: William Morrow & Company, 1939.

This book is probably the best known biography of Daniel Boone and tends to establish groundwork for what can be fully documented. Later biographies gave a more detailed accounting of the names of individuals who were involved in well known events.

Collins, Lewis. *History of Kentucky*. Lexington: Henry Clay Press, 1968.

This book was originally published by Lewis Collins in Maysville, Kentucky and J. A. and U. P. James in Cincinnati in 1847. It has great biographical sketches of early settlers along with unique descriptions of the various counties of the state. I used it because it had a description of the tree carvings of a group of long hunters, including J. Drake, in June, 1775.

Cook, Michael and Cook, Betty Cummings, Eds. *Fayette County, Kentucky Records*. Evansville, Indiana: Cook Publications, 1985.

Cook, Michael and Cook, Betty Cummings, Eds. *Fincastle & Kentucky Counties, Virginia/Kentucky, Records & History*. Evansville, Indiana: Cook Publications, 1987.

Cook, Michael and Cook, Betty Cummings, Eds. *Mercer County, Kentucky Records, Vol. I.* Evansville, Indiana: Cook Publications, 1987.

Mr. and Mrs. Cook have done tremendous amount of work in bringing the earliest records of Kentucky into print. Most of the information available concerns Samuel Drake and his sons, the long hunters, Joseph and Ephraim Drake.

Douglas, Rev. William. *The Douglas Register.* Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1966.

This book was originally published in Richmond, 1928. It is a detailed record of births, marriages and deaths as recorded by Rev. Douglas between the years 1750 and 1797. It mentions William and Mary Drake's wedding and first child.

Drake, Mrs. Wm. Preston, Wilson, Judge Samuel M., Ardery, Mrs. Wm. Breckenridge. *Kentucky in Retrospect, Noteworthy Personages and Events.* Frankfort, Kentucky: The Kentucky Historical Society, 1967.

This is the second edition of the book which was compiled originally in 1942 for the sesquicentennial of the state of Kentucky. It is a store house of information on early settlers of the Kentucky territory. My primary interest was the mention of Joseph and Margaret Drake.

Elliott, Lawrence. *The Long Hunter, a New Life of Daniel Boone.* New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1976.

This book reveals some details about the life of Boone that biographers had avoided prior to 1976. Mr. Elliott reveals to the general public, for example, that Rebecca, Daniel Boone's wife, had given birth to a child fathered by Boone's brother. Also, Boone had an Indian squaw during his captivity. I use the book primarily because Mr. Elliott mentions that a young man by the name of Drake had been killed in the same massacre as Boone's son, James.

Gambill, Nell McNish. *The Kith and Kin of Captain James Leeper and Susan Drake, his wife*. New York: The National Historical Society, 1946.

This book provides more genuine insight than any that I have seen into the family relationships of the Drakes who were among the earliest pioneers of the West. Also, though Mrs. Gambill does not make a strong point of it, the volume provides some light on the inheritance controversy.

Green, Karen Mauer. *The Kentucky Gazette, 1787-1800, Genealogical and Historical Abstracts*. Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1983.

Lofaro, Michael A. *The Life and Adventures of Daniel Boone*. Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1986.

The only biography of Daniel Boone to identify Joseph Drake as a leader of long hunters working in Kentucky territory contemporaneously with Daniel Boone. Drake is mentioned in connection with the story of Daniel Boone singing to himself in the forest when he is heard by the long hunters.

Petitt, Mildred T. *Our Drake Family History and the Descendants of Three Drakes Who Married Three Talberts*. Jerseyville, Illinois: 1962.

Petitt, Mildred T. *Ancestors and Descendants of James Drake of Devonshire, England and Nash County, North Carolina*. Jerseyville, Illinois: 1962-3.

Both of Mrs. Petitt's books are very thoroughly researched and provide a tremendous amount of information about the search for heirs of the Sir Francis Drake fortune.

Travis, William. *The History of Clay County, Indiana*. Chicago and New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1909.

The Federal Writers' Project of the Works Projects Administration for the State of Kentucky. *Kentucky, a Guide to the Bluegrass State*. New York: Hastings House, 1939.

This book provides the footnote that led me to Clyde Bunch and a treasure of knowledge about the Drake family who migrated to Kentucky in the earliest days.

Clark County, Kentucky, *Circuit Court Record Book*. June, 1827, pages 38-42.

This portion of the court record explains the court proceedings which provides insight into the life of Margaret Drake, widow of Joseph Drake, one of the few women to fend for herself in Kentucky prior to 1780.

United Association of Drake Heirs, Skeggs, Mrs. C. D., Secretary for the Tennessee Branch, Jean, C. P., Secretary for the Kentucky Branch. Letter from the United Association of Drake Heirs to its membership. Nashville, Tennessee and Louisville, Kentucky, 1914.

This letter is printed in its entirety to show the seriousness with which this and other factions of Drake families were pursuing the inheritance. Clyde Bunch provided a copy of this letter, faded and very difficult to transcribe.

Mormon Church Records. Micro Fiche Files for the State of Virginia, pages 9,246 -- 9,257.

Mormon Church Records. Micro Fiche Files for the State of Kentucky, pages 6,784 -- 6,798.

The Mormon records were really the key that unlocked the secret providing the documentation needed for linking Elijah Drake with his ancestors.

Genealogical Research System. Compact Discs *CD229: Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia Marriage Records*. Distributed by J & D Distributing of Orem, Utah, 1994.

Clyde provided me with a copy of the Drake marriages from this disc. In it we found the cluster of Drake marriages in Franklin County, Va. that led to William Drake of that county. Very valuable information was found here.

United States of America. *U. S. Census Index*, "1800 Kentucky," "1810 Kentucky," "1820 Kentucky," "1830 Kentucky," "1840

Kentucky," "1850 Kentucky," "1830 Indiana," "1840 Indiana,"  
"1850 Indiana," "1790 Virginia," "1800 Virginia."

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## Supplement

The following section is a supplement to the original book published by Heritage Books in 1996. Since the original publication of this book, the author has found more information and has clarified some erroneous information published in the first edition. This section gives readers the author's best guess as to who the original Drake to settle in Virginia in his family. One major error in the original is the name of the book. Going strictly on the pronunciation of the his great-grandfather's name by his grandfather, the author had mistakenly called his great grandfather Henry *Brasater* Drake. His middle name was actually spelled Bracher. So the name appearing in the title should be Henry *Bracher* Drake.



## **Michael Drake Looks at the Drake Family Originating in New Kent County, Virginia**

It just never ends, I say to myself, as I ponder avenues of discovering just one more name in one more generation. Everyone who has a serious interest in family history knows the feeling. When I first began a serious search for the names of ancestors, I believed that someone had surely already found most of the answers, and that all I had to do was find the right book. But the book didn't exist.

So here I sit with bits and pieces of seemingly unrelated documented facts trying to piece them together using common sense and calculated hunches. I have concluded that the best candidate for the progenitor of the Drake family whose names were recorded in *The Parish Register of St. Peters, New Kent County, Va.* was Thomas Drake, who came into Virginia from England sometime prior to 23 April 1681. First, I will present the facts that have a bearing on my conclusion. Second, I will explain my reasoning.

The will of William Drake, who died in Franklin County, Virginia, 1792, names as his sons William, who inherited the bulk of the estate, Carter, Braxton, and Turner.

St. Peter's parish register shows the following Drake births: William Drake, son of William and Sarah Drake, was born 11 November 1734. Thomas Drake, son of William and Sarah Drake, was born 8 October 1736. Ann Drake, the daughter of William and Sarah Drake, was born 17 October 1738.

Carter Braxton was born 16 September 1736 in King and Queen County, Virginia, a county formed from New Kent County in 1691, which still remains adjacent to New Kent. Carter Braxton's parents were George Braxton and Mary Carter Braxton. His mother died the day after giving birth to Carter and a twin brother. The twin infant was never named because he died 20 September 1736, four days after he was born. Carter Braxton was a major landowner, active in politics, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

The St. Peter's parish register contains the following two entries:

*1755 Francis Izard Daughter of Geo. & Tabitha Wilkinson born Dec' 23, baptized Jan'r 23.*

*1753 Mary Daughter of Izard & Mary Wilkinson born Dec'r 1st.*

*The Douglas Register*, documents the following:

Martin, a son of William and Mary Watts Drake, was born in Goochland Count, Virginia on 3 March 1761.

Anna, daughter of William and Mary Watts Drake, was born on 7 April 1763.

Thomas Drake was born to Thomas and Lucy Drake in Cumberland County, and was baptized 10 January 1762.

The following are records of land transfers in Virginia:

*MRS. FRANCES IZORD, 1036 A., 5P., Henrico Co., Varina Par; on S. side of Chichahominy maine Sw., 23 Apr. 1681, p. 86. Beg. Upon Uffenum brooke; crossing Widdows runn, &c. Trans. Of 21 pers: Jno. Starling, Tho. Ware, Eliz. Fisher, Tho. Meeler, Rich. Brooke, Eliz. Brock, Geo. Alees, Geo. Base, Rebecca Niccols, Fra. Little, Eliz. Rogers, Tho. Stanly, Robt. Spinlugg, Jno. Oakely, Wm. Rogers, Tho. Boeman, Nath. Jones, Nedd \_\_\_\_\_, Gunny \_\_\_\_\_, Tho. Worly; Pegg a Negro.*

*MR. HENRY TURNER, 712 A., 1 R., 24 P., Henrico Co., Varina Par., S. side Chichahominy Sw., 23 Apr. 1681, p. 86. Beg. At Mrs. Izard's line; to Whimsicull runn; &c. Trans. Of 15 pers: Tho. Auborne, Tho. Drake, Rich. Norden, Seth. Rouch (Roach), Izrael Pye, Hum. Strange, Mary Beven, Wm. Lawrence, Cha. Hooke, Jno. Evans, Tho. Fead, An. Balding, Wm. Green, Wm. Milson; Jno. a Negro.*

The following surnames taken from the above land transfer records appear on the index of St. Peter's parish register: Izard (Izord), Turner, Ware, Brock, Rogers, Stanly, Oakley (Oakely),

Drake, Norden, Strange, Hooke, Evans, and Green. There are several entries for Henry Turner. As was shown above, Izard was shown as given names for two persons with the surname of Wilkinson.

The register of St. Peter's Parish documents the following facts:

Sarah Turner, daughter of William Turner, was baptized 21 February 1702 or 3.

Anne Turner, daughter of Henry Turner, was baptized 18 March 1709.

Anne Turner, daughter of James and Judith Turner, was baptized on in the year 1712.

Sarah Turner, daughter of James Turner, was baptized 18 February 1710.

A land transfer in 1691 must also be noted. *GILBERT ELAM, SENR., GILBERT ELAM, JUNR., & EDWARD WARD, 2015 acs., Henrico Co., in Varina Par; on Fallen (or Faller) Cr. Main br; 28 April. 1691, p. 147. Trans. Of 41 pers: Jno. Drake, Hannah Smith, Geo Dodson, Jno. Jenings, Antho. Hick, Wm. Stark, Jno Potter, Robert Frost, Mary Simpson, Jno. Knowles, Abra. Flood, Jno. Gardner, James White, Th. Wats, Tho. Elliot, Teague Collaine, Ino. Lawrence, Anne Doughty, James Harris, Jno. Porter, Tho. Livesay, Jno. Waltasse, Jno. Redcliffe, Sarah*

*Meares, W. Thomas, Jno. Ellison, Wml Wetherford, James Amys , Jno. Richardson, James Turner, Jno. Whitby, Wm. Ellis, Eliza. Revis, Dorothy Turner, Hester James, Rich. Whitby, Edwd. Wood, Danl., Bess, Tawney, Negroes.*

The surnames appearing in both the register of St. Peter's Parish and the above land transfer are as follows: Drake, Smith, Jenings, Simpson, Gardner, White, Elliot, Harris, Porter, Thomas, Ellison, Wetherford, Ellis, Wood, and Turner.

The register of St. Peter's Parish shows that Joel Drake was born to William and Agnes Drake on 12 December 1755. Mary Drake, daughter of William and Agnes Drake, was born 13 November 1753. Court records show that Joel Drake was bound over to James Drake of Powhatan County in 1771. From the register of St. Peter's we learn that William Drake died on 24 October 1770, and was near the age of 63 making his birth year approximately 1707.

John Drake of Franklin County, Virginia lived near William Drake and wife Mary Watts Drake. The two men traded land in that county prior to William's death in 1792. John Drake was father to William Drake, Clayton Drake, and Allen Drake. This William Drake, son to John Drake of Franklin County, Virginia, enlisted on 6 April 1777, in Captain Perkin's Company of the 7th Virginia Regiment, Colonel Samuel Haws commanding, and served until May, 1780. He was discharged at Camden, South Carolina. In a deposition given by Allen Drake, William's brother, William's birth

date is estimated at about 1755. William was married in June, 1783, in Chesterfield County, Virginia. His wife was Anna or Nancy Chappell, who was 60 years old in 1827. Anna Chappell was born to Abraham Chappell and Ann Drake Chappell. Abraham Chappell's parents were Robert and Eliza Chappell. Abraham Chappell was born 6 May 1729 in Bristol Parish, Prince George County, Virginia.

Thus ends the facts I have considered in proffering my opinions about the origin of the Drakes in New Kent, County, Virginia.

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So where do these facts take us, and how? As I stated at the beginning, I believe the strongest candidate for the progenitor of the family was Thomas Drake. He is not, however, the only strong candidate.

For family historians, unusual names are assets. William Drake and his wife Mary of Franklin County, Virginia give three of their sons unusual names. The names Carter and Braxton are pretty obvious, to me, anyway. They name the boys after a well-known, local politician, Carter Braxton, signer of the Declaration of Independence. There appears to be no family connection between the Drakes of New Kent County and Carter Braxton. Since there is no direct, documented connection between the Drakes of Franklin County, Virginia and the Drakes of New Kent, the Carter Braxton name connection is good enough for me. There is no doubt in my

mind that the William Drake born in New Kent County, Virginia in 1734 was the same William Drake who died in Franklin County, Virginia in 1792.

William Drake, born in New Kent in 1734, has a brother Thomas who was born in 1736. Thomas and William Drake are on the same page when the births of their children, Martin, Anna, and Thomas are listed in *The Douglas Register*. Very likely, this William and Thomas of *The Douglas Register* were the same William and Thomas Drake born in New Kent. It is also likely that their sister Ann Drake, born in New Kent in 1738, married Abraham Chappell.

Why did William and Mary Drake name a son Turner? There is a chance that Turner was the maiden name of William's mother, Sarah Drake. She was probably the daughter of James Turner. Sarah Turner was born in New Kent County in 1710.

Thomas Drake was transported to Virginia from England at the expense of Henry Turner. Henry Turner was awarded land in Varina Parish of Henrico County, Virginia for paying for the transport of Thomas Drake. One might conclude that, because the land was located in Henrico County, the indentured parties would go where the land was. But we know that Henry Turner, William Turner, and James Turner were living in St. Peter's Parish of New Kent County in the early 1700's. I argue that Thomas Drake, along with most of the other indentured persons with whom he sailed in 1680 or 81, went to work on established plantations in New Kent County rather than to the newly granted, uncleared ground owned by Henry Turner in Henrico. Many of the surnames are in New Kent County 50 years

after they came to Virginia. That the children of Thomas Drake would know and associate with the children of family to which Thomas had been bound is a distinct possibility.

Giving William and Sarah Drake the birth dates of 1707 and 1710 respectively would make them 27 and 24 years old when their son was born in 1734. Sarah Turner had a sister named Anna. William and Sarah Drake named a daughter Ann. Is there a connection? There might be.

Another reason to assume that Thomas Drake is the strongest candidate is the name itself. William and Sarah name a son Thomas. Add to this the fact that William and Mary Drake name a son Turner. Add the fact that Henry Turner transported a Thomas Drake to Virginia. Add then the fact that a Sarah Turner was born in New Kent County at a time convenient to make her the wife of William Drake of that same county, and then you will have the sum total of my reasons for making Thomas Drake, immigrant to Virginia in 1681, the best possibility as starter of the line there.

We cannot stop here, however. John Drake, emigrant to Virginia in April, 1691, could also be the direct ancestor of the Drakes in New Kent. It must be assumed that the parish register of St. Peter's Parish is incomplete, at best. There is evidence that strongly suggests that William and Sarah Drake had more than the three children, William, Thomas, and Ann, whose names are recorded in the parish register.

The John Drake of Franklin County in the 1790's could have been a brother to William Drake who died in that same county in 1792. Given the fact that John's son William was born around 1755, it is fair to assume that John was older than William whose first child was born in 1761. That the two Drakes in Franklin were related can hardly be doubted when considering the migration routes of their children. Braxton and Carter moved west through Kentucky living for time in Casey County, Barren County, and Hardin County before crossing the Ohio River into Indiana. Braxton lived for a time in Orange County, Indiana before ending up in Pike County. Some of his children, including Elija, moved on to Jackson Township, Clay County, Indiana.

Clayton Drake, son of John Drake of Franklin County, Virginia migrated west to Barren County, Kentucky with his wife Sarah Meador and their son Greenberry Drake. Clayton had disappeared from the records by the 1810 Census leaving Sary as the head of household in that county. Greenberry married Nancy Lane in 1811, and resided in Barren County before moving on to Meade County, Indiana in time for the 1830 Census. By 1840 Greenberry was a resident of Jackson Township, Clay County, Indiana.

Greenberry followed his Uncle Allen Drake, who was the son of John Drake of Franklin County, Virginia. Allen Drake was in Barren County, Kentucky by 1801, and remained there through 1812. From 1815 to 1829, Allen lived in Hardin County. He was in Meade County, Kentucky from 1824 through 1837. Greenberry was never far away from Uncle Allen.

Tarlton Drake lived out his life in Barren County, Kentucky. Tarlton was the son of the elusive James Drake of Powhatan County, Virginia. Descendants of this James Drake and his wife Molly of Powhatan County, Virginia have been searching for his father and mother for years. As has been mentioned, Joel Drake was bound over to James Drake in 1771, shortly after the death of William Drake in New Kent County, Virginia. Joel, of course, was born in New Kent in 1755 and was on tax records in Powhatan County, Virginia in the 1780's. Eventually, Joel moved west to Kentucky. James Drake bought land from John Watts in Powhatan County. John Watts was the father-in-law of William Drake of Franklin County, Virginia. Watts names his daughter Mary, wife of William Drake, in his will. DAR records show James Drake as veteran of the Revolutionary War. The membership application shows the following as children of James Drake of Powhatan County, Virginia: Thomas Drake, Samuel Drake, Lavinia Drake, Nancy Drake, Sir Francis Drake, Joseph Drake, William Drake, Delphia Drake, Tarlton Drake, Sally Drake, Martha Drake, and James Drake, Junior.

The information we have concerning John Drake of Franklin County, Virginia and James Drake of Powhatan County, Virginia suggests that these two men were also the sons of William and Sarah Drake of New Kent County. If they are brothers, the candidacy of John Drake for progenitor of the New Kent Drakes becomes stronger. The given names of John and James come into play. Remember, John Drake was transported into Virginia along with

James Turner in 1690 or 91. A Sarah Turner, remember, was born the daughter of James Turner in 1710.

Both Thomas and John Drake could be the beginning of the line in New Kent County. Neither could be. The evidence to prove to a certainty just is not available. As I look at the facts at hand and try to piece the puzzle together, Thomas Drake, who arrived in Virginia in 1681, and John Drake, who arrived in 1691, as the two most likely to have begun the Drake line in New Kent County. I will let it alone until more information materializes or someone makes a more logical conclusion with the information we have. If anyone out there has a different idea, I would love to hear it.

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