

Chronicles  
of the  
Family  
Baker  
by Lee C. Baker



# Table of Contents

1	THE MEDIEVAL BAKERS.....	1
2	THE BAKERS OF SISSINGHURST.....	20
3	THE BAKERS OF LONDON AND OXFORD .....	49
4	THE BAKERS AT HOTHFIELD .....	58
5	COMING OUT OF ENGLAND.....	70
6	THE DAYS AT MILFORD .....	85
7	EAST HAMPTON, L. I. ....	96
8	AMAGANSETT BY THE SEA.....	114
9	STATEN ISLAND AND NEW AMSTERDAM .....	127
10	THE ELIZABETH TOWN PIONEERS .....	138
11	THE BAKERS OF ELIZABETH TOWN AND WESTFIELD .....	171
12	THE NEIGHBORS AT NEWARK.....	198
13	THE NEIGHBORS AT RAHWAY .....	208
14	WHO IS JONATHAN BAKER? .....	219
15	THE JONATHAN I. BAKER CONFUSION .....	250
16	THE RETREAT TO THE CATSKILLS .....	260
17	LIFE IN THE CATSKILLS.....	270
18	THE ANTI-RENT WAR 1839-1845 .....	286
19	UPPER MOHAWK VALLEY AND FORT HERKIMER.....	319
20	THE GODDING HISTORY.....	330
21	RUBICON AND NEOSHO WISCONSIN IN 1850'S.....	343
22	KILBOURN CITY AND LYNDON STATION.....	372
23	SHEBOYGAN AND ON TO MINNESOTA .....	385
24	FREEBORN COUNTY .....	402
	EPILOG .....	410

# Preface

The work that follows was written by Lee C. Baker. Lee passed away before he was able to complete it for publication.

His notes include two, additional chapters which he had not committed to readable text. Since the book is in chronological order these unfinished, omitted chapters deal with the family's most recent history and their omission is not as serious a loss as it would have been had they covered the family history of earlier times.

We, Lee's immediate family, all feel very strongly that this work must be published. It contains a great deal of hard-earned, Baker family information which must be preserved.

# 1

## THE MEDIEVAL BAKERS

We turn to a period of time in County Kent, England in search of the history of the Family Baker. This era was much different than today. Periods of time were recorded by the reigns of their kings. We find Edward I the king from 1272 to 1307. His victories did much to strengthen the unity of England, but with the cost of heavy taxation. The later part of his reign brought about a baronial opposition to the burden of this taxation.<sup>1</sup>

Edward's death in 1307 brought his son, Edward II, to the throne. The victories of the father were replaced with the defeats of the son. His ineptitude as a soldier was demonstrated at Bannockburn in 1314 when Robert Bruce destroyed the English army with humiliating completeness. This battle assured Scottish independence for the next three centuries and condemned northern England to be a barren borderland ruled by warlords. The reign of Edward II ended when he was deposed and murdered at Berkeley Castle in 1327.<sup>2</sup>

Edward III, who became king, gave his people the triumphs they desired and he was much loved and honored as had been his grandfather, Edward I. The second half of his reign was a sadder story. The plague of Black Death struck England in 1348-9 killing roughly one-third of the population within ten years and radically

---

<sup>1</sup>. Parker, Michael St. John *Britain's Kings & Queens*. Pitkin Pictorials Ltd. 1988, p.13. ISBN 0 85372 450 4

<sup>2</sup>. *Ibid* p.14

altering society. He died a sad and degrading death at the age of sixty-five, old by medieval standards.<sup>3</sup>

It is during this time we find our first Thomas Baker. Villages and estates were built within walled enclosures for security and safety. There was a poor system of establishing property boundaries so people of means built huge walls of stone and brick to establish property lines and to aid in defense of their property. Many estates were established in obscure and difficult-to-reach locations to avoid raiders and reduce the danger of being seized or overthrown.

Our first, recorded fact was found in the KENT FINES during the reign of Edward III. It states:

*"Thomas Baker of Elham, plt., and Robert Venysoun and Johanna his wife defts., of 10 acr. land. 3 acr. pasture, and a moiety<sup>4</sup> of 1 mess<sup>5</sup>, and of 1 rood<sup>6</sup> of wood, with appurts., in Elham. Robert and Johanna admit it to be the Right of Thomas; and, for themselves and the heirs of Johanna, grant to him and to his heirs, and receive 100 marks<sup>7</sup> for the concession."*<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup>. *Ibid* p. 14

<sup>4</sup> Small or 1/2 portion.

<sup>5</sup>. abbreviation for messuage in Law; a dwelling house, out house, gardens, etc.

<sup>6</sup>. equals 1/4 acre.

<sup>7</sup>. silver coin Circa 1350 13s.4d. [s]=shilling, [d]=pence

<sup>8</sup> KENT FINES, TEMP. EDWARD III, Her Majesties Library, Canterbury, England p. 340

While Mavis, my wife, and I were in Canterbury we made the short journey down to Elham to visit the place where our



**Figure 1-1 St. Mary The Virgin Church, Elham, County Kent**

ancestors had lived over 600 years before. As we drove to the center of Elham we entered the town square, the heart of the village, by a little, one-way street. We found ourselves completely surrounded by buildings on four sides. There was a small, one-way street to exit the square. The entire square was cobblestone and paved surface for automobile parking. You could feel the security that the medieval residents must have had as they closed the gates that, no doubt, blocked the two entrances. About one-half of the south-

side of the square contained the large church. We parked our car and went straightway to the north tower entrance to the church. It was an exhilarating experience to enter through the doorway that Thomas Baker had entered through in the reign of Edward III. Immediately inside, to the left of the door in the north isle, was a huge treasury chest that had been hewn from a giant tree and equipped with a massive hinge and lock. It had been there since time immemorial.

Following is a reproduction of the will<sup>9</sup> of Thomas Baker of Elham. The fact that it is written in Latin in the scribe of an Old English writer makes it difficult to read. Copies of it were reviewed by Latin professors up and down the East Coast who were able to provide hardly more information than you and I can probably glean from its text. I think you will make out sons Thomas and John in several locations, but not much more. The will was sent to a professor in Florida who also had a Ph.D. in Medieval English. He responded with the following statement: "Even an excellent Latinist could not make head nor tails of this will without a sure command of Paleography and also a knowledge of the local history of the period, as the Bishop of Oxford appears to be named in the second and third last lines." He does, however, close his remarks with the following statement:

*"Quare (wherefore) \_\_\_\_\_ ego Aedwinus {?} filius Richardi I Edwin, son of Richard \_\_\_\_\_ Oxford dedi (I have given) concessi, (conceded), et hac cifra mea (with my cipher?) consignatum sigillo meo (confirmed with my seal). Thomae (to Thomas), \_\_\_\_\_, Johanni (to John)..... ."*

In closing, he states the will is not dated in the year 1370, in the Reign of Edward III! The County Record Office at Maidstone and the Library at Seven Oaks, in England, both show it dated in 1370. I believe we should accept that date as the proper date.

---

<sup>9</sup>. Will Thomas Baker Of Elham - Call# T.108-U1007 Seven Oaks Library, County Kent, United Kingdom.



**Figure 1-2 The 1370 Will of Thomas Baker of Elham**

The next information of that time frame is for a John Baker. He is the John Baker to whom King Edward III granted our heraldic coat of arms during his reign from 1327-1377. John had taken as his bride Mary Engham who was a descendant of the family of Allen Engham of the Parish of Woodchurch, County



**Figure 1-3 Canterbury Cathedral today, formerly Christ Church**

Kent, under King John, 1204-1216. These last two paragraphs, which are the beginning of the Baker lineage, establish the fact that they were more than of the yeoman class, with the children selecting mates from the privileged class of that time period. Edward III also created "The Knight of the Garter" in 1348 in recognition of people of distinction in England.<sup>10</sup>

With nothing more to verify the line of descent of these Medieval Bakers, we must consider this

"John" the son mentioned in the will of Thomas of Elham, which is in this chapter. The next important information relating to this time frame was collected by Benjamin Baker of Philadelphia. He had done research on his Baker ancestors years ago. We found

---

<sup>10</sup> Virkus, Frederick A. - THE COMPENDIUM OF AMERICAN GENEALOGY  
Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc. 1987, Vol. VI p-760

two legal-size, typed pages of his findings at the library at East Hampton, Long Island, New York. He passed away before he had his findings published. He stated that Thomas had been a Prior at Christchurch, Canterbury. This was clarified during our visit to the archives at Canterbury Cathedral, the modern name for Christchurch. There was no Thomas Baker as a Prior, but he had worked for the priory at the fulling mill described later in this chapter. Benjamin also never had the privilege of doing research in England or meeting with Nigel Nicolson who is mentioned later in this history.

The next document to support the pedigree of our ancestors was found in the New York City Public Library. In a volume, "The Forgotten Past", we found "THE BAKERS OF CRANBROOK", a family settled at Cranbrooke during the reign of Edward III. It lists:

Thomas Baker  
Richard Baker of Sissinghurst, Cranbrooke  
Richard Baker living temp. Henry VII  
Sir John Baker=Elizabeth daug. of T. Dinley



**Figure 1-4 : Sissinghurst Castle, just north of Cranbrook, County Kent**

On observation of this information one may make the determination that there were two Richard Bakers. However, these two listings are for the same Richard Baker. My correction is fully-documented in our findings at the County Record Office in Maidstone, County Kent, England by the Baker Coat Of Arms and Pedigrees, which lists 10 generations of Bakers, from the Thomas who purchased Sissinghurst Castle from Henry deBarham about 1490.<sup>11</sup>

We also have found from our research that the Bakers were in the Cranbrook area even earlier. The Bakers were recorded in this area as early as the period of the reign of King John, 1199-1216.<sup>12</sup> The land holdings of the Bakers at this early date were only small tracts. It was not until about 1490 that Thomas Baker, born about 1410, purchased Sissinghurst, as confirmed by Nigel Nicolson.<sup>13</sup>

John Baker first married Catherine Sackville, who died shortly thereafter without any children. Sir John's second marriage was to Elizabeth Dinley, daughter of Thomas Dinley. She was the widow of George Barrett and brought with her a son, which is confirmed by his will in a later chapter as well as in his pedigree referred to in Footnote #11 above.

The Bakers of Cranbrook in the forgotten past should have been:

Thomas Baker  
John Baker  
Thomas Baker (1st owner of Sissinghurst Castle)  
Richard Baker living temp. Henry VII  
Sir John Baker m-1st Catherine Sackville  
m-2nd Elizabeth Dinley Barrett

---

<sup>11</sup> COAT OF ARMS and PEDIGREES of ENGLISH FAMILIES - County  
Records Office, Maidstone, County Kent, England p. 216

<sup>12</sup> ARCHAEOLOGIA CANTIANA - Vol. LX

<sup>13</sup> Nicolson, Nigel - SISSINGHURST CASTLE, 1964 The National Trust, p.6

It does, however, continue with the proper entries for Sir John's children:

Sir Richard m-1st Catharine Tirrell

m-2nd Mary Gifford

John m- Catharine Scott daug. of Sir Reginald Scott

Elizabeth m- Sir Thomas Scott brot. of Reginald of  
Scott's Hall

Cicely m- Lord Thomas Dorset of Knole

Mary m- George Tufton of The Manor Of Hothfield

We will present more detail on these four children in future chapters.

To continue with a brief history of the perilousness our ancestors had to survive in medieval times, we return to the history of the Monarchs.

Edward, The Black Prince, the famous son of Edward III, died before his father, and it was a child of ten, Richard II, who succeeded to the throne in 1377. His reign began in confusion that deepened into crisis. The first great crisis was the Peasants Revolt in 1381. The aristocracy was as disordered as the peasantry. The later 1380's saw bitter fighting, but Richard seized power for himself in 1389. He ruled with arbitrary violence, intimidation, and terror. He lost support and was forced to submit the Crown to his cousin, Henry IV, in September of 1399 and was probably murdered at Pontefract Castle early in the year 1400.<sup>14</sup>

Henry IV's claim to the throne was debatable. It rested more with the impossibility of continuing with Richard II than any other consideration of right. The hopes expressed at his ascension for a period of order and rule of law were to be disappointed. In 1405

---

<sup>14</sup>. Parker, Michael St. John, *Britain's Kings & Queens*, Pitkin Pictorial Ltd.  
1988, p.15. ISBN 0 85372 450 4

the country was plagued with uprisings, particularly in Wales and the northlands. Although these battles were all won, the turbulence continued long after. Henry was beset by financial difficulties. No one regretted the end of his reign in 1413.<sup>15</sup>

Henry V, the late Medieval King, is unrivaled for his success and sheer ability. His greatest feat was the conquest of France in two great expeditions of 1415 and 1417-18. He married Catherine of Valois, daughter of the French King, Charles VI. This, he assumed, would assure the French throne to England. However, he died before the feeble Charles and his son, Henry VI, assumed the throne after his father's short reign of nine years.<sup>16</sup>

Henry VI, born in 1421, one year before his father's death, found England under control of Regents during his childhood. Although they were at first successful, the ambition of the nobility ran out of control as time went on. Henry, being a weak individual, suffered periods of nervous collapse. His pre-occupations were scholarship, music, architecture, and the worship of God. He founded Eton and King's College, Cambridge. Joan of Arc, in 1429, rallied the demoralized French and in 1435 Henry lost all his father's gains in France. At home, the War of Roses raged between Richard, Duke of York, and the Royal Lancastrian party. Henry was more a victim than actor in all this turmoil. Mad, imprisoned, deposed, and then restored to the throne, we find his reign running 1422-1461 and then again 1470-71. He was murdered in the Tower of London in 1471.<sup>17</sup>

Edward IV, son of Richard, Duke of York, who had made his bid for power was killed in the War of Roses in 1460. His son reversed the loss of the battle in 1461 and thereby won the throne. He survived the threat of the Lancashire side when they reinstated Henry VI for a short period of time in 1471. His title

---

<sup>15</sup>. *Ibid* p.16

<sup>16</sup>. *Ibid* p.17

<sup>17</sup>. *Ibid* p.17

was once more secure, but not untroubled - he died suddenly in 1483. We therefore find his reign running from 1461-70 and restored during 1471-1483. He had, because of all the turmoil during his reign, nominated his brother Richard of Gloucester as Protector of the Realm in the event of his early death. Edward could not have foreseen that his brother would seize the throne for himself. His own son, Edward V, together with his younger brother, Richard, Duke of York, were seized during the coup of Richard III and taken to the Tower of London. There is no undisputed evidence that the two princes were murdered on the orders of Richard. Bones found in 1674 were supposed to be their remains. However, it is now more likely that the remains found in the 1980's are, in fact, the evidence of their murders.<sup>18</sup>

Therefore, Richard III reigned from 1483-1485. Few kings of England have attracted more controversy. Some historians view him as a bloodstained monster. Yet, a few view him as a prototype of a Renaissance ruler. He had great abilities as he had shown governing the north of England during the troubled times of his young brother's reign. He weathered a revolt against his rule in 1483, but a second attempt led by Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, was successful and he fell in battle at Bosworth Field, in Leicestershire, and Henry Tudor was crowned King.<sup>19</sup>

Henry VII reigned 1485-1509. His claim to the throne was flimsy. He stood in the Lancastrian line by descent, but like the Yorkist before him, took the throne by force of arms and held it by strength and skill. Leadership of England had gone through thirty years of battle, murders, and executions and his marriage to Elizabeth of York, daughter of Edward IV, began the process of binding together the factions that had torn England apart since the death of Henry V. His government was prudent, managerial, efficient, and far removed from the military chivalry of the past

---

<sup>18</sup>. *Ibid* p.17

<sup>19</sup>. *Ibid* p.18

years. Henry VII was not a figure to attract popular attention, but he gave peace and security to England for twenty-four years.<sup>20</sup>

The events that have taken place during the history of the monarchs of England have given us some background on what had been transpiring during the movement from medieval time to the rule of the Tudors.

Christ Church (Canterbury Cathedral) was operating a fulling mill at Chartham about which a great deal of information exists. This mill was built, or more probably, rebuilt about 1438 during the Priorate of William Molash, who entered into agreement with two Pluckley millwrights, Richard and John Bochour, for the work of construction.<sup>21</sup> They made a covenant to build it:

*"well and sufficiently and profitably, in alle maner werks of carpentrie, bothe of the bayes, the whelis, the fullyng stokkes, the tayle of the myddel Watir Wey through the melle, and al maner tymber werke and goyng werke belonging thereto."*

A house already standing on the site required no reparation. The dimensions of the mill are carefully specified and show the substantial character of the woodwork and planks which were to be beech, both under and aboveground. Each *"fullyng-stokke,"* the wooden mallet which beat the cloth, was to be measured for *"iii doseyn cloth".{sic}*

The Prior provided timber for the contractor's saws, made up the earthworks, dams, and bays, and found *"almaner ironware that shall be nedefull. . . except her axes, her sawes, and alle other tooles bilonging to carpenter's craft. . ."* The job was calculated to

---

<sup>20</sup>. *Ibid* p.18

<sup>21</sup>. NOTES ON PETITIONS CONCERNING CANTERBURY MONASTIC HOUSES IN THE COURT OF CHANCERY, D&C Library, Canterbury p. 202



last ten months and Richard and John were to be remunerated with *"xxij marcs of lawful money of Inglan to be paid in instalments, viij marcs when the work began, viij 1marcs "when it is halfe yframed," vi marcs more when "the mille is redy for to fulle clooth as hit oweth for to do."* {sic} <sup>22</sup>

It was during the time of Prior John of Salisbury, towards the close of their five-year lease, a person named Pakker tenanted the mill with William att Wode, William Meller, and Robert Lacy. Economic competition between the citizens of Canterbury and the monastic houses with their privileged mills and markets was a source of bitter rivalry which sometimes found its way into the courts. The Prior of Christchurch himself presented a petition in Chancery relating to an assault upon the Convent's Fulling Mill at Chartham. The men in employment at the mill were very industrious craftsmen and the banging of their wooden hammers could be heard night after night until the clock struck twelve. On a dark, November evening a tumult broke in upon their peaceful labors which all but brought them to and end, forever.

We can but surmise what the offense was for which the workmen were so severely handled. Were they contravening the rules of the craft by working half the night, or did they suffer vicariously as servants of the Priory, at a time when the fulling trade in the city was at very low ebb? Certainly the mere fact of being in monastic employment was sometimes, in itself, a crime.

During Archbishop Morton's Chancellorship, Thomas Baker and other persons in the Prior of Christchurch's service were attacked in the Archbishop's franchise by a riotous armed mob, carried outside the liberty and imprisoned in the Westgate dungeons. Their assailants, it was alleged, received *"grete ayde, comfort and assistance of the grete officers and ministers of the cite, which bere grete grudge toward the Prior and his servants"*. {sic} <sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid* p. 202-203

<sup>23</sup>. NOTES OF PETITIONS CONCERENING CANTERBURY MONASTIC HOUSES IN

This Thomas Baker was, no doubt, the son of John and Mary Engham and the grandson of Thomas of Elham. It also establishes the fact that Thomas Baker was involved in the cloth industry which was to become a major industry at Cranbrook, the future site of the Baker Family.

Cranbrook, to the southwest of Canterbury, had a manor property that had been recorded as early as 1180 when it is mentioned in a Charter of the Cumbwell Priory near Goudhurst with the family deSaxinghurst listed as being taxed. Another mention of John deSaxenhurst (spelling fluctuated at the will of



**Figure 1-5: The Ancient West Gate in the walls of Canterbury**

the scribe) was taxed for expenses of the marriage of Henry III's sister in 1235. This John also owned, besides the main manor, the lesser estates of Copton and Stone, also in the Cranbrook parish, which remained linked with Sissinghurst, like minor satellites, until the early nineteenth century. The manor house was moated like its near neighbor, Bettenham, and three arms of the moat are still visible, two still filled with water and one a

raised grass walk. The fourth was probably filled when the 16<sup>th</sup>. century manor was built. This manor house, of which only a coping of an outside well remains, was, no doubt, a typical medieval house similar to Ightham Mote near Seven Oaks, a mixture of stone and timber, with a chapel and a great central hall around which the life of the manor revolved.<sup>24</sup>



**Figure 1-6 St. Dunstan's Church, Cranbrook, County Kent, England**

In the year 1305, July 1<sup>st</sup>. to July 4<sup>th</sup>., King Edward I was hosted at the great house at Milkhouse, the name of the village just outside the manor. The King's hosts were, more than likely, the deBarhams, a prominent family in Kent related to the Barhams of Teston, near Maidstone, who at that time owned the manor of Sissinghurst. Richard deBarham held the manor of Sissinghurst the finest house in the area by Knights Service to the Westgate at Canterbury.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup>. Nicolson, Nigel SISSINGHURST CASTLE *The National Trust* 1964 p. 4 & 5

<sup>25</sup>. *Ibid* p. 6

Could it have been Thomas Baker's imprisonment at the dungeon in Westgate at Canterbury because of his service to the Priory, which consummated in deBaraham's purchase of the manor at Milkhouse/Sissinghurst? The property had been held by the deSaxinhurst family for about a century from 1150 to 1250 and the deBarhams for more than two hundred years?

At any rate, the deBarhams decided to sell the property about 1490 or shortly before and retire to the manor of Teston near Maidstone. The buyer of the property was Thomas Baker, presumably the Thomas of Canterbury and the Westgate Dungeon.<sup>26</sup> We hear little more of him until we find his will written in 1493 and proven on his death in 1497. The will stated he desired *"To be buried in the Chirche of Saynte Donston in Cranebroke byfore the aulter of Saynte Nicholas. To the light of the Holy Trinite there fowden by me v(s). To the light of our Lady Pitie in the saide church xij(d)."*<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup>. Nicolson, Nigel SISSINGHURST CASTLE The National Trust 1964 p.6

<sup>27</sup>. NOTES ON THE TOPOGRAPHY OF CRANBROOK CHURCH IV-St. Nicholas  
(P.C.C., 16, Horne) p. 28



**Figure 1-7 The Nave, Saint Dunstan's Church, Cranbrook**

The property passed to his son, Richard, which indicated he was the eldest, rather than his other sons Thomas and John.

We also found the will of his wife Benedict Baker.

*Abstract of Will dated October 1, 1504.*

*"Benedict Baker, widow of Thomas Baker of Cranebroke, To be buried in the church there next my husband. Bequest to church. The residue to Alexander Courteopp and John Baker, executors. John Baker my son supervisor.*

*Witness's Johan Dany, Thomas Sheffe, Stephen Ackocke.*

*To Johan Baker my daughter in law, Johana Baker my sonne's daughter, my servant Alice Higham, John Baker my sonne's son, Thomas Baker my sonne's son, Elizabeth Baker, Kateryn Baker, James Baker, Robert Baker, Margaret Draner, Agnes Richards, Thomas Skorme, Sir John Hougeson, Sir Richard Dale, Benett Middilton, Marshall's wife to Geffery, Thomasin Verege, Benett Brekynden, Kateryn Courtoppe, Bennet Sampson, Johane Feirway, Ric. Cortoppe, Kateryn Brekynden, Benett Baker, my brother Thomas Middilton, Robert Hynkestede, Spencer's wife, Robert*

*Middilton's wife, Benett Atkocke, household goods, silver, jewels, etc."*

The will was proven May 6, 1505 by Alexander Courthopp, power reserve for John Baker.{sic} <sup>28</sup>

This rather puts to rest some of the recorded facts that the Bakers were upstarts that somehow acquired the wealth to purchase the manor of Sissinghurst. We are looking at a period in time when women had no position in society, yet Benedict is showing her position and making the decision regarding the division of her assets which include silver and jewels. Please remember that her husband died within seven years of the purchase of Sissinghurst and she died only seven years later. We also have presented earlier in this chapter the fact that the Bakers were acknowledged as being a family of distinction when Edward III granted the heraldic coat of arms to John Baker.

In consideration of the two wills it is not positive who their children were. We know they had three sons, Richard, Thomas, and John, but are James and Robert their sons or their grandsons, sons of Richard? Also, are Elizabeth and Kathryn their daughters? Of their son, Thomas, we find little recorded except that he had a daughter, Margaret, who married John Seedless and their son became the noted jurist, John Seedless (1584-1654).<sup>29</sup>

Richard Baker, the eldest son, who inherited Sissinghurst, had a wife Joan \_\_\_\_\_ and they had seven children: John, Thomas, Robert, James, and three daughters. Richard, however, died only seven years after his father, in 1504.

---

<sup>28</sup> *IN THE PROBATE REGISTRY*, Archdeaconry Court of Cranbury, Will Registry-No.9, folio 54

<sup>29</sup> *Nicolson, Nigel* SISSINGHURST CASTLE *The National Trust* 1964, p.13

The wills of Thomas and Richard tell us as much about the two men as of their circumstances. They were devout men. They cared deeply for their families. They were careful with their money and possessions and they would not spoil their children by over-indulging them. The sons had to make their own way and at a mature age share their inheritance equally. Neither will mentions Sissinghurst specifically. Richard's does, however, mention properties at Burwash in Sussex, at Cranbrook, and at Staplehurst. Again we see evidence that the family had acquired a substantial degree of wealth at this early date. His eldest son, John, was but sixteen years of age and was not to inherit the property until twenty-four years of age. His father "*does leave onto my sone John 10 pounds yearly to fynde hym at scole as well as the recompense of the landes in Stapelhurst by my fader assigned to hym as of my bequest to fynde him to his lerning in Court.*" He may have had his early education at Cranbrook school for Richard's will also contains a bequest to another John Baker, "*scolemaster in Cranbrook*".<sup>30</sup> This "John" is probably his Uncle John, grandson of Thomas and Benidick. We will leave this for you to research.

---

<sup>30</sup>. Baker, Rev. F.V. NOTES ON THE LIFE OF SIR JOHN BAKER OF SISSINGHURST, KENT Arch.Cant. Vol.XXXVIII 1926 p. 5

# 2

## THE BAKERS OF SISSINGHURST

Richard Baker died in 1504 leaving Sissinghurst to his eldest son, John, who was but sixteen years old. The property was to be managed by his executors until John reached the age of twenty-four. At this time, in 1509, Henry VIII came to the throne. You will remember that John's father's will had a bequest to find him to his "Learnings in Court". Historians have picked up on this bequest with the analogy that he "was bred for the law". On June 29, 1506, when John was eighteen years of age, we do find him at the Inner Temple in London, where a chamber was assigned to him under the Library. The Temple was the seat of training for those in the judicial system at that time. Students of law were housed there during their period of learning. So were those sitting on the Bench. Inadequacies of the Common Law were referred to the King's Council, which referred them to the Chancellor, who was the King's first minister. The Chancellor was popular with the great landowners because he protected them from "uses" and "trusts" so they were able to avoid feudal dues and burdens. He also stood well with the merchants as he enforced simple contracts and made them assignable, but also granted specific performance of contracts when damages were not adequate as a remedy. The Chancellor was the enemy of fraud and breach of confidence. This is a brief explanation of the order of law at this time and will help us understand the tremendous power in the hands of John Baker as his life began to unfold.

John Baker's lifelong association with the Temple began when he was Clerk of the Kitchen (June 22, 1515), called to the Bench (February 11, 1517), Attendant on the Reader (1520) and appointed Reader (April 25, 1521). On November 22, 1532 he was

20



appointed one of the Governors and in 1533, on All Souls' Day, was made Treasurer, but was excused if his duties as Recorder of London prevented him from serving.<sup>31</sup>

Between 1532 and 1557 Baker was appointed Governor of the Inn twelve times. On March 2, 1542 "William Ermestede, Master of the Temple, for a rent of 40 shillings per annum, all that Mansion House or messuage and the lodging adjoining the Church of the Temple, called the Master of the Temple's lodging, for 20 years, providing that if either Sir John Baker or William Ermestede should die within 20 years the lease should be void." Sir John Baker died in 1558, and as William Ermestede did not die until the following year, probably occupied this house as his London residence until the end of his life.<sup>32</sup>

John Baker married his first wife, Catherine, daughter of Richard Sackville of Withyham, Sussex. Catherine's brother, John Sackville, was married to Margaret, sister of Sir Thomas Bullen, the father of Queen Ann Boleyn. Here we see a relationship that may have had some influence on Baker's subsequent career. Of Catherine's sisters, Joan married John Parker of Willingdon, Mildred married Sir William FitzWilliam, Mary married Robert Roberts of Glassenbury in Cranbrook (thereby being a neighbor of the Bakers), Margaret married Sir Thomas Palmer, and Isabel was Prioress of Clerkenwell. His first wife died sometime before 1524. John Baker had been named executor in his father-in-law's will, but his wife's name was not mentioned. Sometime after 1525 he married, as his second wife, Elizabeth, widow of George Barrett and daughter and heiress of Thomas Dyneley, Lord of the manor of Wolverton, Hants. Elizabeth had a son, Edward Barrett, who afterward inherited his mother's property. John's two wives were therefore ladies claiming distinguished ancestry.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup>. Baker, Rev. F.V. *Notes on the Life of Sir John Baker of Sissinghurst, Kent*, Arch. Cant. Vol. xxxviii (1926) p.6

<sup>32</sup>. *ARCHAEOLOGIA CANTIANA* Vol.xxxviii (1926) p. 6

<sup>33</sup>. *Ibid* p.7

John Baker's name appeared in the Commission of Peace for Kent on July 8, 1515. He was twenty-seven years of age and a rising barrister. The appointment certainly showed that he was a man of recognized ability and influence. His first public appointment seems to have been that of Under-Sheriff of London on May 12, 1520, a post which he held until 1526 when he was appointed Recorder of London on November 17, 1526.<sup>34</sup>

The revolt against papal authority found expression during the reign of Edward I when the power of the church was decreased by the passage of two significant laws: one affecting religious bodies' rights to receive land grants without consent of the King and the other removing all secular matters from the jurisdiction of the church courts, which had been the controller of judicial matters. Another statute passed in 1351 under Edward III declared the English Church to be a national institute, though the papacy continued to hold great power over it. The beginning of the seizure of monastic properties took place during the reign of Henry VII and it reached its climax under Henry VIII. This movement against the Pope occurred at the same time religious dissent was going on in the rest of Europe and Martin Luther was posting his ninety-five theses on the door of the church at Wittenberg, Germany, which led to his excommunication at the Diet of Worms in 1521.

In the Parliament of 1529, held at the Blackfriars, in which the papal supremacy was repudiated, John Baker, "recordator", was one of the representatives for the City of London. In the following year, on the death of Cardinal Wolsey, John Baker was one of the commissioners for making inquiries in London concerning the possessions of the Cardinal. At the coronation of Queen Anne Boleyn in 1533, Hall's Chronicle relates that: "At the Cross in Cheapside Master Baker, the Recorder, made a speech, and presented the Queen with 1000 marks in the name of the City."<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup>. *Ibid* p.7

<sup>35</sup>. *Ibid* p.9

On July 10, 1536 Christopher Hales, the Attorney General, was appointed Master of the Rolls on the surrender of Thomas Cromwell and the King's Chief Secretary, John Baker, was appointed Attorney General during good conduct in all courts of record.<sup>36</sup>

You can now see that John Baker had gained the esteem of King Henry VIII and the story goes on. In 1540 John Baker was one of the commissioners to inquire into a heresy case at Calais, France where one Adam Damply had been preaching contrary to the Statute of the Six Articles set forth in 1539.

In July 1540 came the attainder and execution of Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex (July 28, 1540). Through his fall promotion again came to Mr. Attorney General Baker.

John Baker's high favor with Henry VIII now began to unfold. In July 1540 we find:

*" To John Baker Attorney-General, and Elizabeth his wife; grant fee of Delmynden in the parish of Cranbrook Kent, lands in Cranbrook, Benynden, Hedcorne, Stapelhurst and Frittenden, which premises were granted by Thomas Cromwell, late Earl of Essex, and Keeper of the Privy Seal, to John Baker and Elizabeth", by charter; 31 August Henry VIII, "and should be forfeited on account of Cromwell's heresies and treasons".*

In August 1540 John Baker is appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer:

*"In consideration of the faithful service which our beloved and faithful servant and counsellor, John Baker, Esquire, our Attorney-General, has shewn, We grant by the presents to the aforesaid John the office*

---

<sup>36</sup>. Arch. Cant. Vol.xxxviii (1926) p.10

*of Chancellor of our Exchequer, by the attainder of Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, for divers heresies and for high treason now dead: and we make and constitute John Baker our Chancellor of the Exchequer for the term of life in the same manner and form as Thomas Lovell, Knight, or any other lately holding the same office", King Henry VIII.<sup>37</sup>*

On appointment as Chancellor of the Exchequer John Baker received knighthood and on all subsequent occasions he was called Sir John Baker. It should also be noted that he also held the office of Under-Treasurer. The two offices were not always held together.<sup>38</sup>

Sir John Baker, as the King's attorney, appeared in many recorded actions in the dissolution of the Catholic Church. Three months after his appointment as Chancellor of the Exchequer, on November 11, 1540, we found Sir John Baker, late Attorney General, was to be "Chancellor of the Court of First Fruits and Tenths and Keeper of the Privy Seal of that Court". Perhaps, as this was a newly formed Court, it was thought to be a more important office.<sup>39</sup>

The King's Privy Council had two groups within its ranks: the Protestants under the new Archbishop of Canterbury and the Papists under the Bishop of Winchester. John Baker was listed by John Fox in "The Acts and Monuments" under the Papists probably because of the family's earlier Catholic faith. John Baker may have been supportive of the papacy, but in political matters supported the new Archbishopry of Canterbury.

---

<sup>37</sup>. *Ibid* p.10-11

<sup>38</sup>. *Ibid* p.11

<sup>39</sup>. *Ibid* p.12

In June 1544 a commission to sell Crown lands, leases, and wardships was appointed consisting of the following members:

Sir John Baker, Chancellor of the First Fruits and Tenths

Sir Robert Southwell, Master of Rolls.

Sir Edward North, Chancellor of the Augmentations.

Sir Thomas Moyle, one of the general surveyors.<sup>40</sup>

Sir John Baker served as Speaker of the House of Parliament under Henry VIII and many recordings of such are on record. At the end of the year 1546 the King was in failing health. In January 1547, under the will of Henry VIII, Sir John Baker was constituted one of the assistant trustees of the Crown during the minority of Edward VI and received a legacy of 200 pounds.<sup>41</sup>

King Henry VIII died on January 28, 1547. His seven marriages in an attempt to achieve a male heir left him with only Edward VI, a sickly child of ten. Edward was an intelligent child, but could be no more than a pawn in the hands of the magnets that were manipulating for the power and throne. The anarchy of the War of the Roses threatened again. The King's uncle, the Earl of Hertford (later Duke of Somerset) held power as Protector until his fall and execution in 1552 when he was succeeded by the Earl of Warwick (later Duke of Northumberland). The reigns of both men favored the "new" religious ideas that Henry VIII had kept at bay. Thus, the short reign of Edward VI saw the Reformation converted into Protestant phenomenon.<sup>42</sup>

Sir John Baker still maintained his position and titles. On January 28, 1548 Sir John the Exchequer prevailed as Speaker of Parliament. Sir John, as the ruling lawyer, was involved in many

---

<sup>40</sup>. *Ibid* P.15

<sup>41</sup>. *Ibid* p.17

<sup>42</sup>. Parker, Michael St. John *Britain's Kings & Queens Pitkin Pictorials* (1988) P.19-20

cases of record. When the Earl of Warwick raised a party in the Council against the Duke of Somerset, who had retired to Windsor with the young King in 1549, a splitting of the Privy Council occurred. Sir John Baker remained out of the controversy and retired to his new house at Sissinghurst. In Edward VI's diary it is noted that the Marechal St. Andre, French Ambassador, was received by Mr. Baker at his house at Cranbrook.<sup>43</sup>

In October, 1551 a letter was sent from the Privy Council to Sir John Baker to return immediately to the Court. In November, 1551 came the second arrest of the Duke of Somerset who was accused and tried by a Committee of the Council and executed on January 22, 1552 by the order of Warwick, now Duke of Northumberland. Parliament met again on the next day and sat until April 14<sup>th</sup>. under the speakership of Sir John Baker. This Parliament imposed the second Act Of Uniformity and the Second Prayer Book.<sup>44</sup>

On June 17, 1552 there is a letter from Privy Council to Sir Robert Bowes (Master of the Rolls) *"to delyver to Sir John Baker, knight, the use of the Inner Temple, a cuppe of syler and gylt and graven, with a cover, remaining in the custody of the sayd Master of Rolls"*. Thus, Sir John was again rewarded for his service to the Privy Council. The confiscation of chantry lands and church plate was carried out by orders in the Council and in 1552 we find Sir John Baker listed as a member of the commission for the collection of church stuff.{sic} <sup>45</sup>

A new parliament was called on March 1, 1553, for which great care was taken to return members in favor of the Duke of Northumberland. James Dyer, Esq. was elected Speaker. This Parliament lasted one month and was dissolved on March 31<sup>st</sup>..

---

<sup>43</sup>. ARCHAEOLOGIA CANTIANA, Vol.xxxviii p.20

<sup>44</sup>. *Ibid* p.20

<sup>45</sup>. *Ibid* p.20-21

The King's health was now failing. The Duke of Northumberland induced King Edward, being weak with sickness, to make a testament excluding his sisters Mary and Elizabeth from the throne and bequeathing the Crown to Lady Jane Grey, lately married to Northumberland's son. To this project Sir John Baker, with other chancellors, was an unwilling assenter. On June 12<sup>th</sup>. Sir John Baker, Sir Edward Montague, Chief Justice of Common Pleas, and Justice Bromley, the Attorney and Solicitor General, were ordered to appear at the Court at Greenwich. They were commanded to draw up a Book of Articles regarding the above which they refused to do. On June 14<sup>th</sup>. they were again commanded to attend. After much hesitation Sir Edward said, for his part, he would obey the King's command and so did Mr. Bromley. The King said to Sir John Baker, "*What say you? You never said a word today!*" Evidently Sir John Baker did not distinctly refuse and he did sign the document that was drawn up with the other counselors. This signing did proclaim Lady Jane Grey as Queen, but after the departure of Northumberland, he joined with the other counselors upon the death of Edward VI in 1533 in proclaiming Mary, the Duke's sister, Queen.<sup>46</sup>

Queen Mary was the daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon. She was declared a bastard child when Henry repudiated her mother and during Edward's reign came under pressure to conform to the Protestant faith. It is perhaps not surprising that when she came to the throne she devoted herself to the restoration of what she saw as the true religion.

Under Queen Mary, Sir John Baker continued as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Under Treasurer of England and again was a member of the Privy Council. In the Parliament of 1553 he sat as a member for the borough of Bramber. On November 29, 1553 the bill for the unification, dissolution, or creation of new courts was committed to Sir John Baker after its second reading. In the reorganization of the revenue courts following on this, "Act (1 Mary st.2, c.10)", he lost the Chancellorship of First Fruits that had been established under

---

<sup>46</sup>. *Ibid* p.21-22

Henry VIII. This was a great financial loss to Sir John. An earlier letter from a non-supportive council member Wightman dated May 10, 1549 stated:

*"The Lord Admiral maketh nothing of the loss that the King's Majesty has by him in his Court of First Fruits and Tenths, where the revenue is abated, as I have heard say, by about ten thousand pounds a year."*<sup>47</sup>

Sir John started with little, a quarter share in his father's fairly modest legacy. At his death his estate was enormous. In various parts of Kent and Sussex he held over forty manors and a fortune in addition, which was not completely exhausted two hundred years later despite constant subdivision of the estate and the extravagance of his descendants. Most of this came to him by outwardly legal means. He had gained Henry VIII's affections at the moment the pickings of the Reformation were greatest. We have already seen how he profited by Thomas Cromwell's attainder in 1540. From the breakup of the Monastic lands in Sussex he gained the enormously valuable properties of New Priory at Hastings in 1538, *"to have to him and his heirs for ever"*. Further, religious manors at Pluckley, Biddenden, Staplehurst, and Hawkhurst came to him as a grant from Henry VIII in 1540-3. Six additional manors in the Weald were given to him by Queen Mary when they were forfeited by supporters of Wyatt's abortive rebellion in 1554. He also secured the property of the old chantry chapel at Milkhouse Street (now Sissinghurst village) for the paltry payment of £262. This included eight houses and over a hundred acres of land.<sup>48</sup>

In the Parliaments of 1554, 1555, and 1557 Sir John Baker was the last of the Knights of the Shire for the County of Kent. In the two Parliaments held in 1554 he and his two sons Richard and John II all sat, an achievement rarely equaled. John II also sat in 1555. The record shows a Thomas Baker representing

---

<sup>47</sup> Nicolson, Nigel *SISSINGHURST CASTLE* p. 15

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid* p. 15



Bramber that year. Historians have determined it is a clerical error in the name Thomas which was posted on the line immediately above for another personage as there are no other recorded facts for a Thomas Baker sitting for Bramber and John II had held that seat in 1554 and was no doubt returned to it in 1555.<sup>49</sup>

Queen Mary married King Philip of Spain in Winchester Cathedral in 1554. Her marriage was entirely her choice and it provoked riots among the Protestant gentry in Kent. The



**Figure 2-1 The George Inn, Cranbrook, County Kent, England**

Protestant bishops Ridley and Latimer were burnt at the stake in 1555 and Archbishop Cranmer in 1556. They were among some 300 Protestant victims. This was Mary's policy, in outline, if not in detail, and it earned her the title of "Bloody Mary".<sup>50</sup>

Sir John Baker, as her attorney in many of the cases, was also branded in his home County Kent as "Bloody Baker". Many of these cases were tried in the chambers at the George Inn at

<sup>49</sup>. Bindoff, S.T. *The HOUSE of COMMONS 1509-1558* p.368 Guildhall Library, London

<sup>50</sup>. Parker, Michael St. John *Britain's Kings & Queens* p.21

Cranbrook with Baker and Sir Thomas Moyle presiding as justices for Kent. John Fox states in "THE ACTS AND MONUMENTS" that the Mr. Richard Fletcher, Vicar of Cranbrook during Elizabeth's reign following Mary's , was the supplier of the recorded records of those hearings in the George Inn. Fox states that this no doubt accounts for the prominence given to the cases in which Sir John Baker took a small part, but they are not such as to justify a charge of such cruelty, or such title.<sup>51</sup>

Sir John attended the meetings of the Privy Council under Mary and on her travels through Kent in 1557 she was the guest of Sir John at Sissinghurst.<sup>52</sup> The last recorded date of his service to the Crown was August 11, 1558. Elizabeth I came to the Crown and Sir John died a few weeks after her accession. Whether he could have held his position under her first-class mind and rare capacity for judging men and events and her side of meanness and pragmatic view of the world that put her in a position rather outside her own time was never put to the test. However, in the length and variety of service he must be accounted the outstanding Member of the time.

Sir John Baker sat in every Parliament held between 1529 and 1558, eleven times as an elected Member in Commons and once as an assistant in Lords. The climax of his Membership was his Speakership of the Parliaments of 1545 and 1547. Although not the only Speaker of the century to serve twice - John Pollard did so under Mary and Sir John Puckering under Elizabeth - Sir John occupied the chair longer than either of them; he also outstripped his two precursors of the Parliament of 1529, Sir Thomas Audley and Humphrey Wingfield. His ability and industry carried him through his career. His freedom from political ambition and religious zeal allowed him to swing with the moods

---

<sup>51</sup>. *Arch. Cant. Vol.xxxviii p.23*

<sup>52</sup> *Nicolson, Nigel* *SISSINGHURST CASTLE* p. 22

of the monarchs and to retain his position. His capacity for working and mixing with disparate elements present in the House were all credits to his professional ability.<sup>53</sup>

It is impossible to say what affect Sir John's long tenure had on the Commons. His two speakerships certainly coincided with important developments there. Membership grew from 349 when he first became Speaker to 379 when he laid down the office. There was the removal to St. Stephen's Chapel, the rise of committees, and the regularizing of divisions. Whenever such changes originated it must have fallen to Baker to guide the House in its adaptation to them and here his continuity of long-time service may have been his greatest asset.<sup>54</sup>

#### Will of Sir John Baker (P.C.C., 224, Welles)

"The will of Sir John Baker of Cessinghurst, made 7 January 1557, Under-Treasure of England. To be buried at Cranbrook where my good wife Dame Elizabeth buried; my funeral to be without pomp or pride, but such as becometh my station. If I have done any person any injury or wrong I will that my executors make due satisfaction without delay. Masses to be said in Bedinden, East Kingsnorth, Staplehurst, Frettinden, Hawkhurst, Teston, West Farleigh. Since the death of my good father Richard Baker I have kept an obit in said church of Cranbrook on St. Laurence Even, at which time he died. A priest to say mass for 7 years at St. Nicholas Altar. I bequeathe seen standing cups of silver to Edward Barrett, of Alvethely in Essex, my son-in-law, to my daughters Catherine White, Mary Tufton, Ciceley Sackville, Elizabeth Scott, to John Baker, son and heir apparent of Richard Baker my son, and Thomas Baker, second son of said Richard. Anne daughter of Richard. My good sister

---

<sup>53</sup> Bindorf, S.T. *THE HOUSE of COMMONS 1509-1558* p. 368-369

<sup>54</sup>. *Ibid* p.368-369

Jone Reames, widow, and my nephew Stephen Reames. To Sir William Petre, knight, Sir Martin Bowes, knight, and Thomas Argall, gent., to each a ring of gold of the value of 40s. To my oldest son Richard Baker all my household stuff at Sissinghurst, and my blessing; "Above all things see thou serve God and thy soverayne, apply thy learning, to be curtosse and gentill to any bodye, be ayding and loving to thy naturall brother, John Baker, and to thy sisters, avoid brybery, extortion, corruption and dissimulation, and eschew idleness."

To his second son, John Baker, he gives 200 pounds ready money and all household stuff in the city London.

Executors: Richard Baker, John Baker, my brother William Culpepper of Wigsell, Sussex, John Tufton, son-in-law, and Thomas Argall, gent."

In a codicil he leaves to his sister-in-law, Lady Wilford, "10 pounds for her pains taken in my sickness. Will proven 30 Jan, 1559" {sic}<sup>55</sup>

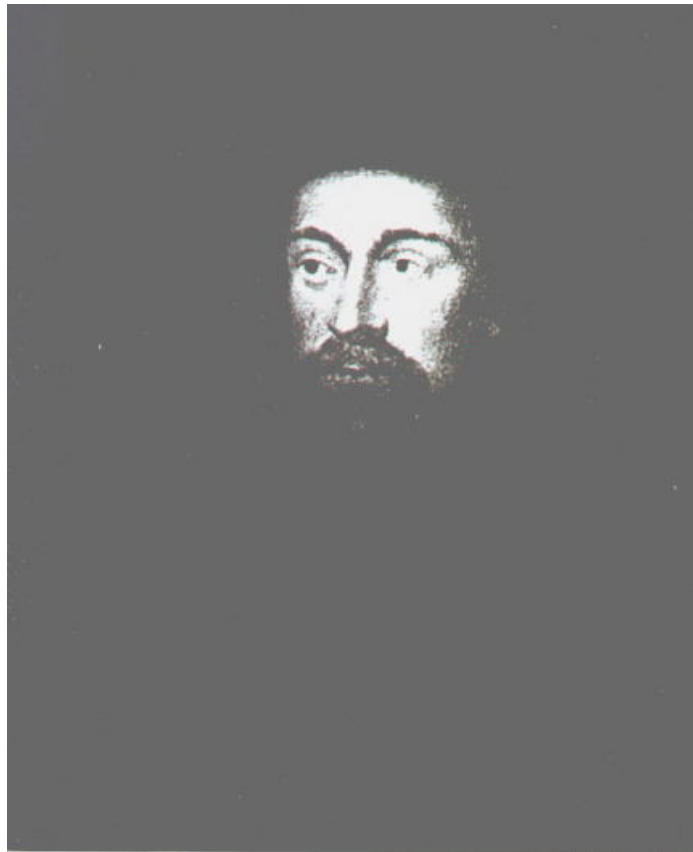
In September 1558 he added a codicil leaving to his eldest son the manor of Staplehurst which he had purchased from Sir Thomas Cawarden since making his will. The witness to this and the following were two physicians: John Clement, who was brought up by Sir Thomas More, and John Caius, the co-founder of Gonville and Caius College. On December 5, 1558 Sir John added a further codicil in which he made a bequest to his sister-in-law, one-time Prioress of Clerkwell. She was mentioned earlier in this chapter.

He died in London on December 23, 1558 and by January 8<sup>th</sup>. was buried with great pomp in the family vault at Saint Dunstan's Church in Cranbrook. Henry Machin, a funeral furnisher of London, recorded in his diary: "January 1559, was buried in Kent, Sir John Baker, Knight, with a standard and a

---

<sup>55</sup>. *Baker, F.V. Arch.Cant. xxxviii NOTES ON THE LIFE OF SIR JOHN BAKER OF SISSINGHURST, KENT p.25*

coat armour, pennon of arms, IIII banners of Saints and herse of wax, 7 dozen penselles, 10 dozen scutcheons, 12 torches, a hearald of arms, a great dole and a great dinner. Poor men had gowns, and their dinner. Also [which dates the funeral]; On 8 Jan, died at Gravesend, Lancaster, the herald of arms, on coming home from burying of Sir John Baker."<sup>56</sup>



1. Sir John Baker (c. 1488-1558), Chancellor of the Exchequer and Speaker of the House of Commons. Known posthumously as "Bloody Baker" for his alleged persecutions of the Protestants in the reign of Queen Mary, he inherited the Manor of Sissinghurst and was the true founder of his family's fortunes.

**Figure 2-2 Sir John Baker c.(1488-1558)**

Nicolson, Nigel Sissinghurst Castle p. 17

In a quick review of the personal life of Sir John Baker, our illustrious ancestor, we remember his first marriage to Catherine Sackville from which no children were born and her death after three short years of marriage. He then married Elizabeth Barrett who had already been orphaned and widowed with a son. This marriage was fruitful and Sir John and Lady Baker had two sons and four

daughters, all of whom survived and raised families of their own. A picture of the form of life at Sissinghurst in the second half of the sixteenth century can now be recited: a formidable and intensely busy father traveling back and forth to London by horse

<sup>56</sup>. *Ibid* p.24

or carriage through the deep clay of the roads of the Weald of Kent; a large group of young people who attract to the great house at Sissinghurst the sons and daughters of the Kent nobility; the friendships that form around the huge fireplaces at Sissinghurst, of which three survive in the long building that was there for at least three generations of Bakers before them.

One by one the children married and established their own families in the manors of Knole, Scott's Hall, and Hothfield in Kent and Sussex. The aging and controversial father and the sick mother were left behind by those same great fires to contemplate the twists of fortune that had made him one of the most powerful men in the land. For about the last eight years of his life Sir John was a widower for the second time and his children were all away creating their own careers and families. He must have increasingly preferred his comfortable house in the Temple to the cold and loneliness of the Weald and his last days were there in his Master of Temple lodging in London where he died at the age of seventy in a place where he had been Governor for a good part of his life.

Two of Sir John's children produced remarkable families of their own. From Cicily, Countess of Dorset, stemmed a new generation of their own. She married Thomas Sackville of Knole, at Seven Oaks, who was the son of Sir Richard Sackville and Winifred the daughter of Sir John Bruges, the Lord Mayor of London. Thomas died in 1608 and Cicely was left the Matron of Knole. A history of this family is well-documented for those interested. This line also is keenly important to this history of the Baker Family. Victoria Sackville-West, "Vita", is the mother of Nigel Nicolson and it was she and her husband Harold who restored Sissinghurst Castle and planned and planted the famous gardens.

Sir John's younger son, also John, was the father of Sir Richard Baker, author of the popular "Chronicles of the Kings of England", which went into nine editions before 1696 and of Thomas, the direct ancestor of Sir Joshua Reynolds. We shall

hear a great deal more of Sir Richard The Chronicler in the chapters ahead, as this is our line of descent.

The manor of Sissinghurst passed to Sir John's eldest son, also named Richard. He made little attempt to emulate the heights of his father's career, but it began on similar lines. He was admitted to the Inner Temple, as was his younger brother John. Richard became Justice of the Peace for Kent and entered the House of Commons in 1554, as did John. There is no suggestion that Richard shared his father's Catholic sympathies. He did remove the great house Sir John had built behind the long, front range of buildings and replaced it with a fine Elizabethan house as well as the great tower behind the front courtyard.

Queen Elizabeth I made a tour of Kent in August of 1573. Burghley writes to the Earl of Shrewsbury of this journey. She came to Sissinghurst from Knole after staying there with Cicely Baker Sackville. She stayed the 15<sup>th</sup>.-17<sup>th</sup>. of August at Sissinghurst. On her visit to Cranbrook, three miles from Sissinghurst, the people welcomed her with immense enthusiasm laying a strip of their famous broadcloth for her to step on as she descended from her carriage at the George Inn. Her arrival at the base of the tower at Sissinghurst must have been a moment which Richard and his wife Catherine had long anticipated with mingled dread and pride. They presented her with a silver gilt cup weighing 117 ounces. On the top of the cover was a lion holding the Queen's arms. The Queen departed Sissinghurst with her entourage, accompanied by Richard, and continued on to Hothfield where Richard's sister, the recently widowed Mary Baker Tufton was chatelaine. After this stay the Queen's party and Richard moved on to Dover. It was there she knighted Richard for his pains.<sup>57</sup>

From this date on he is referred to as Sir Richard Baker and researchers need to be careful as his nephew also becomes Sir Richard Baker a few years later. For the descent of this Sir Richard Baker of Sissinghurst please see the chart below.

---

<sup>57</sup>. Nicolson, Nigel SISSINGHURST CASTLE p.26





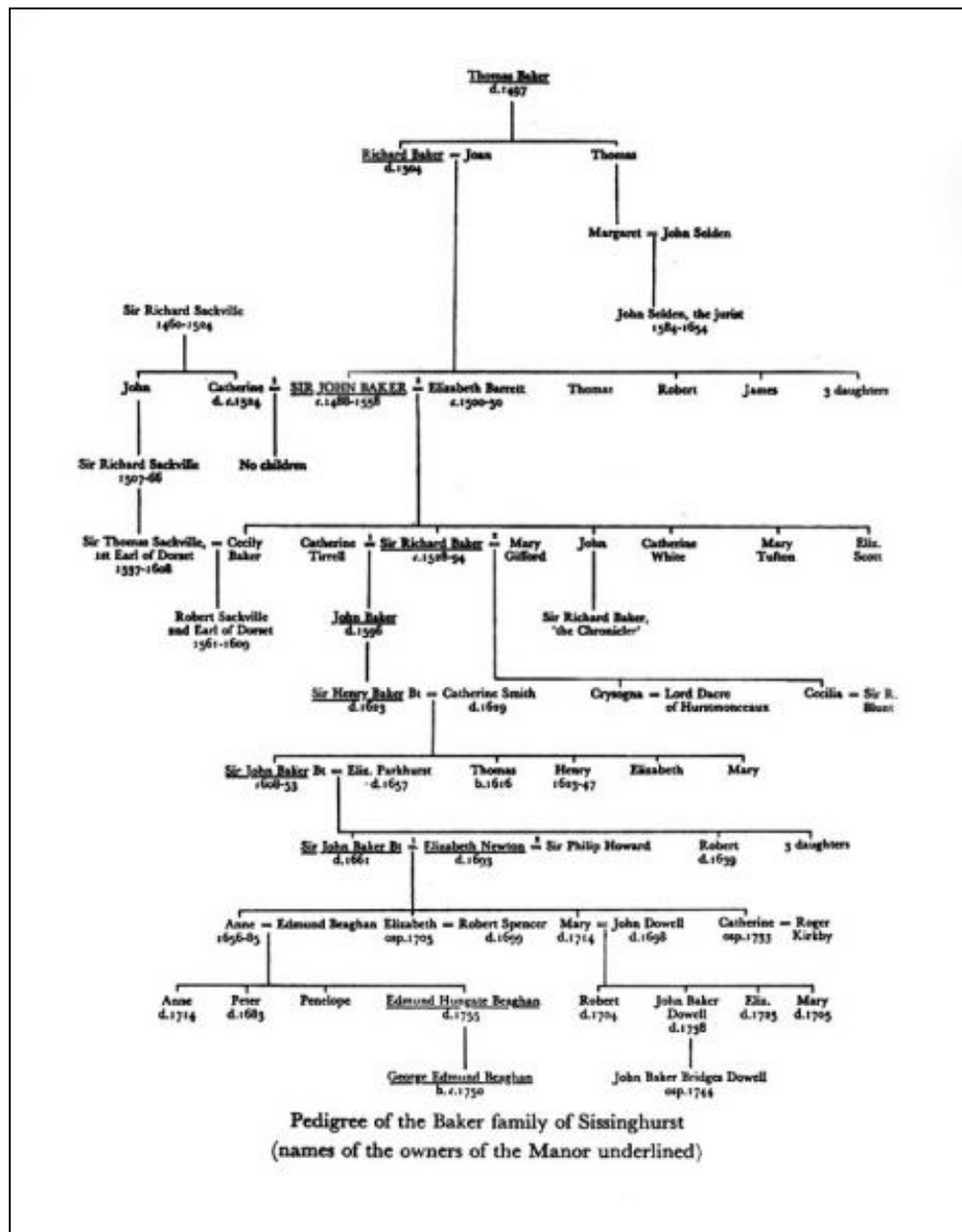
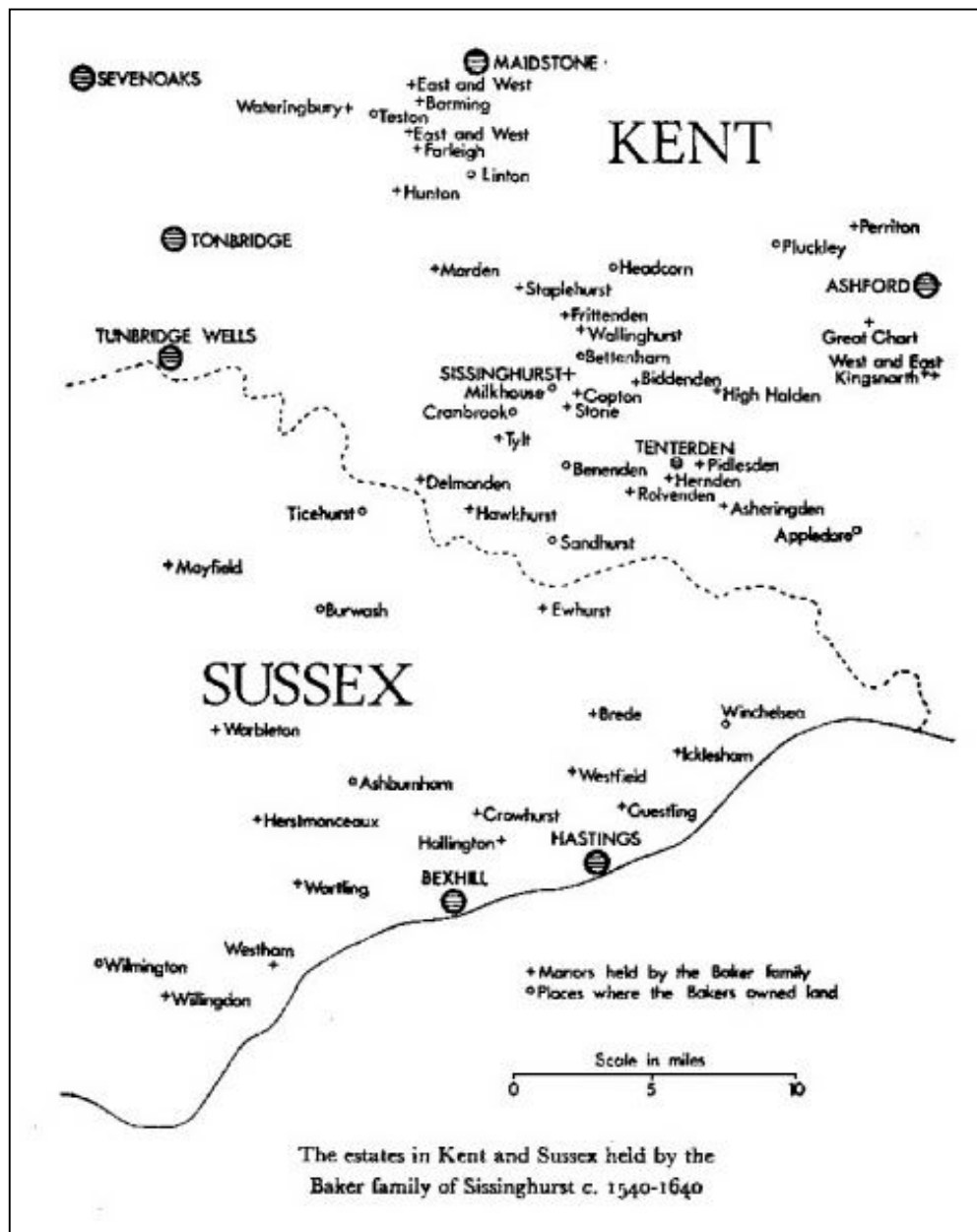


Figure 2-3 Pedigree of the Bakers - Nicolson, Nigel- Sissinghurst Castle p. 13

The next sixty years of this line can be passed over rapidly. There are few personal records regarding these Bakers. The births, marriages, and deaths are there, but tell us little. The same lands and manors they inherit pass on dutifully from father to son. Sissinghurst passed down through the generations until the direct line of descent ends in 1661.

At this time the manor was held by another Sir John Baker Bt (Baronet), the fourth John Baker to own the estate. When he died in 1661 he left behind a widow and four daughters: Anne,



**Figure 2-4 The Baker manors and properties in Kent and Sussex as amassed by Sir John Baker and his family.**

Nicolson, Nigel- Sissinghurst Castle p. 14

Elizabeth, Mary, and Catherine, but no son. The estate was divided between the daughters, who each married a holder of estates in other parts of the country. Sissinghurst was occupied

by his wife, Lady Baker, presumably with her second husband, Sir Philip Howard, until her death in 1693 and then temporarily by one or the other of her sons-in-law, their children, or tenants.<sup>58</sup>

Eventually, the property ended up in the hands of Edmund

*Inscription on the Baker monument in Cranbrook church*

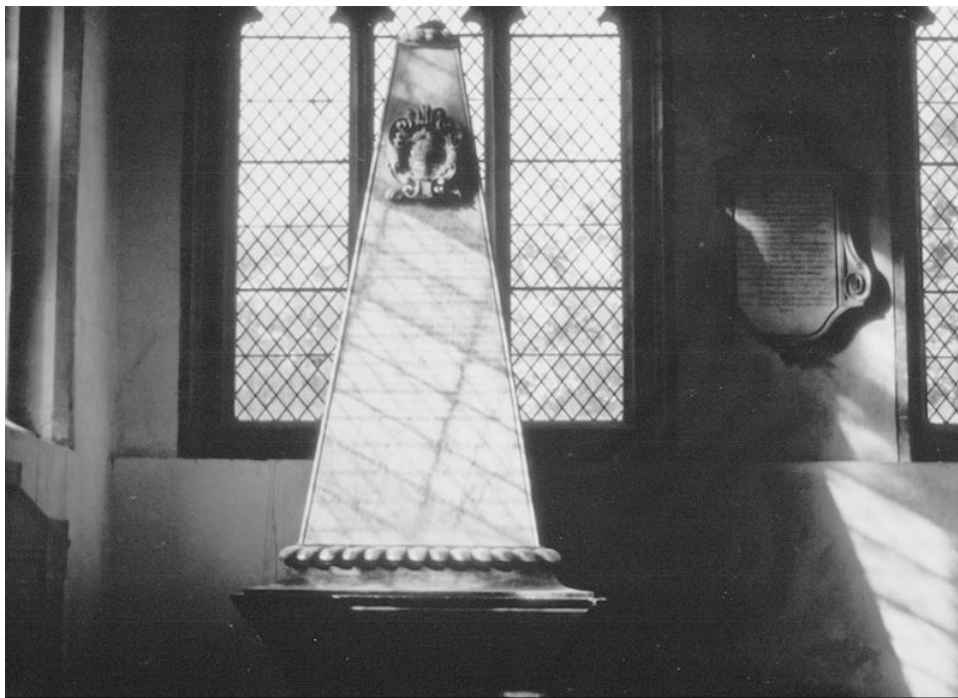
Near this Pile of Marble,  
in a vault,  
Lie entombed the Remains of the BAKERS  
of Sissingherst, in this Parish:  
A Family considerable for Rank and Fortune,  
Through a Succession of Several Generations  
From the Time of their first settlement here  
in the Person of THOMAS BAKER Esqr. or RICHARD his Son  
About the latter end of the Reign of King Henry 7th.  
The said RICHARD was Father to Sr. JOHN BAKER Knt  
Who was bred to the Law,  
And became eminent, as for his abilities in that Profession  
So for his Promotion to divers high Posts of Trust and Honour  
In the Service of the Crown and State;  
Being in Several Parts of his Life,  
Recorder of LONDON, Attorney General, Chancellor of the Exchequer  
And Privy Counsellor, to King Henry 8th, King Edward 6th  
and Queen Mary.  
He deceased soon after the Accession of Queen Elizabeth  
And is with great probability supposed to have been Deposited here  
with a numerous Race of Descendants and Allies  
of whom take a Catalogue  
In the following order on the other side of this Tomb  
According to the date of their respective Interments  
  
JOHN BAKER DOWELL Esqr. of OVER in the County of  
GLOUCESTER son of the before mentioned JOHN and MARY  
(Himself and Son being now the only Surviving Branches of this  
Family derived from the last Sr. JOHN BAKER)  
To preserve the Memory of his Ancestors and Relations  
Erected this Monument A.D. 1736

Figure 02-05: Inscription on Baker Monument-St. Dunstan's Church1

<sup>58</sup>24. Nicolson, Nigel *SISSINGHURST CASTLE* p.28

Beagham, a line descendant of Sir John Baker. The property was occupied by the Beaghams in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, but its condition had deteriorated to a *"park in ruins and a house in ten times worse ruins"* as stated by Horace Walpole in 1752.

From a sense of duty, the sole survivor of another branch of the family, the Dowells in Gloucestershire, erected in the Cranbrook Church the elegant marble pyramid on which is recorded, with valedictory overtures, the lineage of the Baker family. The inscription here stated:



**Figure 2-6 Baker Monument at St. Dunstan's Church, Cranbrook**

It is odd that John Baker Dowel, should declare himself and his son as the *"only surviving branches"* of Sir John Baker's family, when another branch, the Beaghams, was living in the ancestral house only two miles from the church where the memorial was erected. Two years later John Baker Dowel was dead and his son John Baker Bridges Dowel died without issue six years after his father.

In 1756 there was a 9,000 pound mortgage on Sissinghurst Castle. Sissinghurst became a prison for reportedly up to 1,750 French prisoners. Much devastation of property took place before the end of the war in 1763. The Beagham family still owned the property and filed for damages to it.

*a. 2,092 foot of glass plus winder frams gon and many winders stopped up with bricks and mortor and mud- 100 Pounds.*

*b. In the Long Gallery 200 yards of wainscott with rich entablature carved, a marble chimney piece broke down and woodwork greatly damaged- 50 Pounds.*

*c. Great damage to the best garden by the wall, fruit and other trees all destroyed not even a rump or shrub left- 20 Pounds.*

With the 9,000 pound mortgage still intact, the Beaghams searched for someone to buy the property. In 1764 Edward Louisa Mann purchased the mansion and 1,402 acres for the price of 12,982 pounds. Edmund Beagham had died intestate and it required an Act of Parliament and the payoff of the 9,000 pound mortgage for the sale to take place.<sup>59</sup>

None of the Manns ever lived on the property. The property was rarely lived in after the prisoners. The Great Barn, which had served as a hospital, the Tudor front range of buildings, the octagonal towers, Sir Richard's Priest's House and the South Cottage, along with some of the garden walls, still remained. Sir Horace Mann died in 1814 without male issue and the estate passed to James Cornwallis, a nephew by marriage. He changed his name to Mann of Linton. He did the minimum restoration to keep the house in repair and restored the turret tops of the towers, crowning the turret tops with weather vanes that to this day carry his initials M.C. (Mann Cornwallis).

---

<sup>59</sup>. Mann-Cornwallis Archives, County Records Hall Maidstone, Kent

Throughout the nineteenth century Sissinghurst was regarded as the most important farm in the entire Weald Estates. In 1855 George Neve was teneting the farm of both the Castle and also Bettenham farms, a total of 767 acres. The Manns built Neve, a large Victorian house in 1855, which sits to the right of the approach to Sissinghurst Castle today. The property passed down through the Corwallis line until they decided to sell it in 1903. The property was held by Barton Chessman until 1926 when he sold it to William Wilmshurst whose son and heir put it up for sale in 1928. The sale catalog described the property with a Victorian farmhouse and picturesque ruins on the grounds, with a bailiff's house, six cottages, a brewing house easily converted into a cottage, and stabling for twelve horses. For two years there were no takers.<sup>60</sup>

On April 4, 1930, Vita Sackville-West, a direct descendant in the thirteenth generation of Cecily Baker and Thomas Sackvill of Knole, visited Sissinghurst for the first time accompanied by her young son Nigel. She went there out of more than curiosity as she and her husband, Harold Nicolson, were looking for a house in Kent where they could make a new garden, since their house, Long Barn, Seven Oaks Weald, two miles from Knole, was threatened by a proposed building of chicken houses in the fields surrounding their property. The property caught instantly at her heart; she fell in love with it at first sight. She wrote of her feelings, *"It was a Sleeping Beauty's Castle; but a castle running away into sordidness and squalor; a garden crying out for rescue. It was easy to foresee, even then, what a struggle we should have to redeem it."*<sup>61</sup> And redeem it they did! Thanks to Vita and her husband Harold and sons Harold and Nigel, the Baker Estate of Sissinghurst shall live on forever.

A full accounting of Sissinghurst Castle can be found in Nigel Nicolson's illustrated history of Sissinghurst Castle. His mother, Vita, died at Sissinghurst in June 1962 in the first floor

---

<sup>60</sup>. Nicolson, Nigel SISSINGHURST CASTLE p.44

<sup>61</sup> Nicolson, Nigel, SISSINGHURST CASTLE p. 45

bedroom of the Priest's House. She left the Castle and a large part of the estate to her son Nigel, excepting the South Cottage which was bequeathed to her husband Harold for his lifetime. He died there in May 1968. Nigel transformed the South Wing of the entrance range to his private quarters for his family and opened negotiations with the National Trust to take over the Castle and part of the estate in part-payment of the estate duty. The negotiations were concluded in April 1967 and Sissinghurst now belongs to the National Trust and is open to the public daily from April until October. Nigel Nicolson still lives there and oversees the property on the Trust's behalf.<sup>62</sup>

There is another wonderful book on Sissinghurst Castle Gardens. The title of this 136 page book is 'SISSINGHURST PORTRAIT OF A GARDEN', by Jane Brown. The book is filled with beautiful, color photographs of property and gardens taken by John Miller. Pages 9 through 19 also relate to the history of the Baker Family. We purchased this book in England, but if it is available in the States I urge you to purchase this as a companion to this "Chronicles of The Family Baker".



**Figure 02-07: Lee at Nigel Nicolson's door at Sissinghurst in 1990**

---

<sup>62</sup>. *Ibid* p.47

Mavis and I are grateful to Nigel for our visitation with him on September 15, 1990 in his private quarters and his generosity in allowing us to use his published works on the history of Sissinghurst Castle which were used to supplement this history of our ancestors. We had returned to England eleven months after our visit in 1989 to tie up the few loose ends in the Baker history that had not been found during that trip.

Our first visit to Sissinghurst was on a rainy, cold, late afternoon in October of 1989. Our research had told us our family was "The Bakers of Cranbrook" and they had an estate and manor at Sissinghurst. The tour books said Sissinghurst was a garden. Were there any buildings left? Would the grounds be open? The guidebook said it closed beginning in early October. We hurried down the road in the mist and, yes, it was open! We turned onto a little, narrow road and suddenly there appeared a tower in the distance. Yes, there were going to be buildings! Pulling off onto the grass to meet a car coming out we hurried on to park behind high hedges that blocked all views of the site. Putting on our raincoats and grabbing the cameras we hurried out of the car for the first viewing of Sissinghurst Castle. After a couple quick photo shots we went on to the Ticket Office. We were informed, "We are sorry! We will be closing in thirty minutes." We asked, "Will you be open tomorrow?" The answer was, "Yes! Tomorrow is the last open day for this year." We purchased our yearly membership to the National Trust which gave us free admission to all Trust properties for a year and purchased seven guide books of Sissinghurst for family members back home. The ladies at the ticket office told us the Gift Shop would be open for another thirty minutes after closing. We walked down to the central arch in the long, Tudor, front range of buildings to a "Sorry Closed" sign. But there, in the upper right corner of the arch, was the coat of arms of the Bakers, the same coat of arms we had at home on a decanter and set of glasses. Mavis had purchased this set for me and we often wondered if the coat of arms was really OUR coat of arms. Above us the same three swans were looking down at us. I gazed in wonderment at the arch and coat of arms and said a



little, silent prayer. After more than six years of searching, here we stood at the door of the ancestral home!!

We went to the left of the castle and walked along the moat looking back at the rest of the houses and gardens. I stopped to take a picture through the trees of the twin, octagonal towers. The rain was raw and nasty and we went back to the Gift Shop to warm ourselves. On the way stood the Great Barn we had not even noticed before. I took a picture with Mavis standing in front of it.



**Figure 02-08: Mavis at the 11th. century Great Barn at Sissinghurst**

The girls in the Gift Shop were all busy with their closing so we looked at a few of the printed items and bid the girls adio and told them we would see them the next day. We drove back to our Kempton Manor lodging at Hothfield, but instead of going to dinner we freshened up and took our newfound brochures and literature to the bar area where we read them and ate bar food that night. The staff was delighted that our search had been so fruitful.

The next day dawned bright and beautiful. We again headed our car south and arrived at Sissinghurst with the weather a complete contrast to the evening before. We stopped to retake the pictures taken in the rain the previous day. We went straight to the Tudor arch and Mavis photographed me at Sir John Baker's front door with the Baker coat of arms above it.



**Figure 02-09: Lee at Sissinghurst Gate under the Baker Coat of Arms**

We were informed that the left end of the long Tudor House was a stable in Sir John's day and the right range was the servants' quarters. The stable is now a library and the right range is Nigel Nicolson's private quarters, not open to the public. We viewed the long library and wondered if Nigel was in residence. The staff did not know. We went through the front courtyard and entered the octagonal, twin towers. On one floor we found the writing room of Vita Sackville-West with her writing desk and furnishings. On another floor we found prints on the wall of how

the castle looked at various periods of time and a scale model of the grand, Elizabethan manor that had been built by Sir Richard Baker, Sir John's son, who inherited Sissinghurst from his father. We climbed to the top to the upper-level observation area for a panoramic view of the garden, buildings, and surrounding area. I took pictures of the full, 360-degree view. We returned to the ground-level and toured the great gardens within the enclosed

grounds, still with moats on two sides with beautiful vistas through doorways and arches of the garden walls. Mavis photographed me resting on a bench and I captured her seated at the door of the South Cottage. History tells us that Sissinghurst was an estate enclosed within a wall that was seven miles in circumference and there we were, centuries later, within the smaller, walled and moat-surrounded grounds. Although the long Tudor House and the Great Barn are all that remain of Sir John Baker's buildings, we were treading on the same soil that our ancestors walked upon since the year 1490, before Columbus discovered America.

Mavis and I had not stopped for lunch so we went to the restaurant near the Great Barn. We sat eating our lunch and drinking our tea while gazing upon the long, Tudor house, almost in disbelief. Little did we anticipate that our genealogical search would ever lead us to such a thrilling moment.

Figure 02-10: The Baker Coat of Arms



# 3

## THE BAKERS OF LONDON AND OXFORD

John Baker, son of Sir John Baker, will be designated as John II for sake of clarity as he is defined in S. T. Bindoff's "The Houses of Commons and Parliament 1509-1558". Some historians feel that John II may have been Sir John's eldest son, rather than Richard. This may only be because of his action in 1539 when he freed his lands in Kent from gavelkind which would allow the passing of his main lands to Richard, who could have been his second son. We will never know if there is any validity to this assumption.

John II was born in 1531 at Sissinghurst and spent his youth there. He was given special admission to the Inner Temple, his father's Inn, where he was Groom of the Chamber, and admitted to study on January 29, 1553. We found no additional information on his attendance. There he studied law. He was entered as educated at The Inner Temple and he entered the legal profession. He did sit in Parliament for Horsham in 1554 and for Bramber in 1555 as mentioned in a previous chapter.<sup>63</sup>

John II married Catherine, daughter of Sir Reginald Scott, of Scott's Hall near Ashford. You will remember that his sister Elizabeth had also married a son from the same family. The children of this marriage are not fully known. We know he had two sons. That the eldest was Richard and the second was

---

<sup>63</sup> Bindoff, S.T., THE HOUSE OF COMMONS & PARLIAMENT 1509-1558 p. 369 Guildhall Library, London

Thomas can be established from his will. Catherine died in later years and he married Martha \_\_\_\_\_, a widow.<sup>64</sup>

We found no record of his residence in London, but we are confident that it was the manor at Highgate, as we found his eldest son living there as a young, married man at age twenty-five. We must assume the son had inherited the property from his father, as few young men would have the capability of owning a manor except by inheritance.

Sir John Baker was at pains to also provide for his son John II. When, in November, 1552, he purchased three manors in Kent from Sir Edward North and others, he remaindered them to John II. This is a very important to our history as Sir John does not specifically list properties to John II in his will, but the evidence is now established that he gave manors in Kent to this son. He does, in his testament of 1558, give 200 pounds and his household goods in London to John II and also exhorts Richard, to whom he left Sissinghurst, "*to be aiding and loving to thy natural brother John.*" John II, despite being the son of such a prominent personage as Sir John Baker, left no great mark at court or politics. The most memorable recording is that he was the father of a son, Richard, who authored the well-known "CHRONICLES OF THE KINGS OF ENGLAND". That he was no spendthrift appears from the provisions in his will. He directed in this document that his second wife, Martha Baker, was to have all the plate and jewels which she had received "*as executrix to her late husband*" and all movables at Frittenden, Kent, and that Thomas Baker should receive the reversion of lands at Bodium, Sussex.<sup>65</sup>

#### Figure 03-01: Bodium Castle

---

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid* p. 369

<sup>65</sup> Bindoff, S.T. *The House of Commons & PARLIAMENT 1509-1558*  
p. 370 Guildhall Library, London

John II died between the making of his will on October 14, 1604 and the proving of the will on April 14, 1606. His will directed son Richard to pay his younger son Thomas 3,000 pounds with which to buy land and also the reversion of the lands at Bodium. It is more than likely that this was done because he had already given to son Richard the three manors in Kent, which he had received from his father, Sir John Baker, and probably also the manor at Highgate. Much of his legacy passed to his two sons, Richard and Thomas, and had originated from his inheritance from Sir John Baker. Recorded history makes much of Sir John's passing Sissinghurst to his son Richard and maybe not treating John II as well. In-depth research puts this to rest as John II was also given a great amount of property. Another reason history relates more to events that occur at Sissinghurst and the lineage of son Richard, who inherited Sissinghurst, is that little was known in England's history about John II's family, except that he fathered Sir Richard The Chronicler as is evident if you refer to the pedigree of the Bakers as found in Chapter Two of this history.

The history of the great-grandsons of John II, fathered by his sons Richard and Thomas, who came to America, never made the history books in England, but as you read on the history of the gentlemen of England will continue through their offspring in the colonization of the United States. Before we can get to that point we have two generations in England to bring up to date.

Richard Baker (1568-1645), religious and historical writer, was born around 1568 in London, probably at his father's estate, Highgate Manor. His father, John Baker II, was the son of Sir John Baker, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. His mother was Catherine, the daughter of Sir Reginald Scott of Scott's Hall, Brabourne. In 1584 he entered Hertford College, Oxford, then called Hart Hall. He and Sir Henry Wotton occupied the same rooms together in Hart Hall. After he had spent three years in this place studying Logic and Philosophy he went to one of the Inns of the Court and then completed his education by traveling abroad, going as far as Poland. Nothing was omitted by his parents to make him an accomplished person. On July 4, 1594, after the

celebration of a solemn act, he was, along with other persons of quality, created Master of Arts at Oxford.<sup>66</sup>

In May of 1603 he received the honor of Knighthood by King James I at Theobalds. At that time he was then residing at Highgate, near London, and was esteemed a most complete and learned person.<sup>67</sup>

From this date on he will be referred to as Sir Richard Baker and care must be taken not to confuse him with the other Sir Richard Baker, son of Sir John Baker, referred to in Chapter Two. History books document him as residing at Highgate Manor at this time and I believe we can assume that his aging, widowed father, John II, was in failing health and he had gone there to care for him. This is also substantiated by the dates, mentioned earlier, of his father making his will and his death in the period of 1604-1606.

By 1620 he had moved to Oxford as his father's estate was now settled. He was appointed High Sheriff of Oxfordshire, being possessed of the manor of Middle Aston and other estates in that county. He was also Justice of the Peace for the same. At this time he married Margaret, daughter of Sir George Mainwaring of Ightfield in Shropshire. This marriage caused him a great deal of trouble and involved him in intricate difficulties. He had good-naturedly, but unwisely, engaged himself to pay some of the debts of his wife's family. Because of this and his in-laws' entangled financial problems he fell victim to a long series of pecuniary misfortunes. In 1625 he was reported to be debtor to the Crown and his property in Oxfordshire was seized by the government. Reduced to poverty by such actions he was forced to seek shelter in Fleet Prison about 1635. There he composed many books and so reaped in his old age the benefit of his learning, when his

---

<sup>66</sup> *BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNIA*, Vol. VI - p. 516 Guildhall Library, London

<sup>67</sup> *BIOGRAHIA BRITANNIA*, Vol. VI p.516 Guildhall Library London



considerable estates, through suretyship, were very much impaired.<sup>68</sup>

On October 17, 1635 Sir Francis Cottington desired of the exchequer authorities 'particulars' of the forfeited land and tenements which were still 'in the King's hands'. Fuller writes that he had often heard Baker complain of the forfeiture of his estates. Utterly destitute, Sir Richard Baker had, about 1635, to take refuge in the Fleet Prison, as stated above. "The storm of Baker's estate", says Fuller, "forced him to flye for shelter to his studies and devotions." It was after Baker had taken up residence in the Fleet that he began his literary work. His earliest published work, written in one month when he was sixty-eight years old was entitled "Cato Variegatus (or "Catoes Morall Distichs") Translated and Paraphrased with variations of Expressing in English Verse, by Sir Richard Baker, Knight, London, 1636". It gives for each of Cato's Latin distiches five, different, English couplets of very mediocre quality and is only interesting as the work of the old man's enforced leisure. In 1637 Baker's "Meditations on the Lord's Prayer" was published. In 1638 he issued a translation of "New Epistles by Moonsieur D'Balzac" and in 1639 he began a series of pious meditations of the Psalms. The first book of the series bore the title of "Meditations and Disquisitions upon the Seven Psalms of David", commonly called the Penitentiall Psalms, 1639. It was dedicated to Mary, Countess of Dorsey, and to it were appended meditations "upon the three last psalms of David" with a separate dedication to the Earl of Manchester. In 1640 there appeared a similar treatise "upon seven conciliatory psalms of David, namely, the 23<sup>rd</sup>., the 27<sup>th</sup>., the 30<sup>th</sup>., the 34<sup>th</sup>., the 84<sup>th</sup>., the 103<sup>rd</sup>., the 116<sup>th</sup>." with a dedication to Lord Craven, who is there thanked by the author for "the remission of great debt". The last work of the series, "Upon the First Psalm of David", was also issued in 1640 with a dedication to Lord Coventry. These meditations on the Psalms were collected and edited with an introduction by Dr. A. B. Grosart in 1882. In 1641 Baker published a reasonable "Apology for Laymen's Writing in Divinity", with a short "Meditation upon the Fall of Lucifer," which was dedicated to cousin, "Sir John

---

<sup>68</sup> CAL. STATE PAPERS-DOM. 1628-29, p.383

Baker, of Sissinghurst, baronet, son of Sir Henry Baker, first baronet". In 1642 he issued "Motives for Prayer upon the seven curious plates treating of the creation of the world dedicated to the "wife of Sir John Baker". A translation of Malvezzi's "Discourses Upon Cornelius Tacitus" was executed by Baker in 1642 under the direction of a bookseller named Whittaker.<sup>69</sup>

Baker's principal work was "The Chronicles of the Kings of England from the time of the Romans' Government unto the Death of King James" - 1641. The author describes the book as having been *"collected with so great care and diligence, that if all other of our chronicles are lost, this only would be sufficient to inform posterity of all passages memorable, or worthy to be known."* The dedication was addressed to Charles, Prince of Wales, and Sir Henry Wotton contributed a commendatory epistle to the author. The Chronicles were translated into Dutch and went on to nine editions, the last in 1696. Baker's "Chronicles" was long popular with country gentlemen. Addison, in the "Spectator" (Nos. 269 and 329), represents Sir Roger de Coverley as frequently reading and quoting the "Chronicles" which always lay in his hall window.<sup>70</sup>

Sir Richard Baker, The Chronicler, died on 18 February 1644-5, and the next day was buried in the center of the fourth aisle of the Church Saint Brides, Fleet Street, London. He was a person tall and comely, of good disposition and admirable discourse, religious and well read in various faculties, especially in divinity and history. By his wife Margaret, above mentioned, he had issue, Thomas, Arthur, Cicelia, Anne, and Margaret.<sup>71</sup>

After reading and recording many pages of Lodges' "Illustrate of English History" and the "Biographia Britannia" at Guildhall Library, located in Aldermanbury, London EC2P 2EJ,

---

<sup>69</sup> Wood's *Athence Oxon*, by Bliss

<sup>70</sup> *Grangers Historical Biography* - See: *Sir Richard Baker The Chronicler*

<sup>71</sup> BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNIA VI p. 516 *Guildhall Library, London*

our visit there brought forth great exaltation. Here, we now had found the children of Sir Richard and Margaret. The children of their two sons, Thomas and Arthur, are an important part in the future chapters regarding the Baker family in America.

His three daughters were necessarily dowerless because of their father's fate and were forced to join the ranks of the commoners. One married Bury, a seedsman at the Frying Pan in Newgate Street and another married one Smith of Pasternoster Row. We found no evidence of the third daughter's husband's name.

Sir Richard had among his many writings his own life story. It fell into the hands of son-in-law Smith, who is credited with having burned his father-in-law's autobiography thinking he was destroying Sir Richard's life, as well. Historians now call it "an autobiography of those days which we now should highly prize". What a loss this was to not have the life story of such a noted author and son of such an important family in the history of England.<sup>72</sup>

Sir John Baker had not only willed manors in Kent to John II, his father, but had also left a legacy to grandson Richard. We can only assume the sons of Sir Richard left London during their father's hardship and established themselves on property he had passed on to them before his holdings in Oxfordshire were seized by the Crown. Arthur presumably went to the area of his uncle's inheritance at Bodium. We know of three of Arthur's children. He had sons, John and Joseph, and a daughter, Margaret, which we shall also hear more about later as John and Joseph will eventually go to the American Colony. Sir Richard's son, Thomas, went to Baker's Mead, the religious manor at Pluckley, which was related to in an earlier chapter as being willed to John II by Sir John Baker. Both sons, Arthur and Thomas, were then living at fine estates, both of which originated from great-grandfather Sir John Baker's former properties. This Pluckley manor is about

---

<sup>72</sup> *Biography of Sir Richard Baker, Call KE/G11*  
*Oxford City Library, Oxfordshire*

three miles from the family of Mary Baker Tufton, who resided at the manor of Hothfield. Mary was the sister of their grandfather, John II. The next chapter will relate to the life and family of Sir Richard The Chronicler's son Thomas.

Figure 03 -02: Bodium Castle in Sussex, view from the front.



# 4

## THE BAKERS AT HOTHFIELD

Research at East Hampton, Long Island, told us that Thomas Baker, the emigrant from whom we descend, had been born at Hothfield, a small community near Ashford, County Kent, England. After our visit to the County Record Office at Maidstone we had a wealth of information on Saint Margaret's Church at Hothfield and our ancestry.

On July 10, 1614, Tamsan, wife of Thomas Baker was buried. We also found her listed as Thomasin. We will leave it to you to chose her name, although recorded in East Hampton it had been enumerated as Thomasin. It is evident Thomas Baker had been left a young widower. However, on November 30, 1615 we find recorded his second marriage to Frances Downe. These are our direct ancestors. We next found the baptismal records of St. Margaret's Church:

A daughter Fraunces, 9 February 1616

11 October 1618, Thomas, son of Thomas Baker

7 May, 1620 Susan, daughter of Thomas Baker

7 April, 1622, Richard, son of Thomas Baker

1 January, 1623, Henry son of Thos Baker <sup>73</sup>

We have a transcript of the baptismal record of the son Thomas above, which was signed by Alan Joslin, Rector of Hothfield, County Kent, England, dated 10 February 1975. This was found at the East Hampton (Long Island) Public Library and confirms earlier research that our presumed ancestor had come

---

<sup>73</sup> *Church Records Saint Margaret's Church, Hothfield, County Kent, England*

from Hothfield. Our first archives visit in England created great excitement since the information we found agreed with East Hampton library records.<sup>74</sup>

We discovered many John, Richard, and Thomas Bakers as we searched on. However, searching the archives at all the locations in England listed in the Introduction to this history, we were able to establish the rather complicated family of our ancestors. The above documents in hand, we proceeded to the village of Hothfield to see if there was still a Church of St. Margaret. On a rainy day in October of 1989 we drove to the little village of Hothfield, County Kent, but saw no church tower or steeple. We made inquiry at a little shop regarding a church in the village. We were directed down several streets to a brick wall at which we were told to turn right onto THE STREET which, if followed, would lead us along the wall to the church. Following those instructions we reached the brick wall and turned right. As we drove along the wall we did not know it was the ancient wall that surrounded the manor of Hothfield. A stone church with a Norman tower came into view. Arriving at the front door we stopped wondering if it was still in use or if services were held. The graveyard was filled with ancient stones. There stood the church I had read about back in New York - a bulwark of stone that had been there for centuries and was ready to survive many more.

Figure 04-01: Saint Margaret's Church, Hothfield, County Kent

We decided to drive through even greater brick walls now on both sides of the road. At an opening in the wall I turned in to see what might be there. Just ahead was a man working in his rose garden in front of his ancient, brick home. I stopped and asked him if the church might be having services on Sunday. He said yes, but after explaining our reason for being there he said go back to #2, The Street, to the house with the blue door.

---

<sup>74</sup> *Baptismal Transcript of Thomas Baker, Call JH-110 East Hampton Library*

He said the Vicar lived there and could give us all the information on the church.

I drove back and stopped at the blue door. I parked to see if anyone was home. Mavis stayed in the car. I was invited in and met Vicar and Mrs. Charles Fox, an elderly couple who were keenly interested that we were from America and were there searching for our Baker ancestors. He asked me if I was aware that Mary Baker had married Lord Tufton and was buried in the churchyard. I told him that I had not reached that point in our research. Mr. Fox insisted he would take us to the church, but at that moment he did not have the key. There was a rap on the door and a lady entered to return the key. She, as a child, had been sent to Hothfield to live during the bombing of London in World War II. She had returned to retrace her childhood. Vicar Fox put on his woolen cap and we were on our way to visit the church. A light mist started to fall as we arrived at the church door. There we were standing in the very church our grandsire and family had worshipped in centuries before. We stood in awe at the baptismal font where Thomas Baker had been baptized on October 11, 1618.

Figure 04-02: Baptismal Font, Saint Margaret's Church, Hothfield, County Kent

We were spellbound as we walked about the church. The ancient organ, on which the Lost Chord was composed, the beautiful art glass windows and the altar at which Thomas married Francis Downe brought all the information that we had researched at the library in East Hampton into reality. We asked the Vicar if services were held in the church. He said there would be a service the following day at 11 A.M. and we told him we would be there. He then took us into the graveyard and we walked the entire area, stopping especially at the grave of Mary Baker Tufton. The rain was now heavier and we thanked him as we left him at his home and assured him we would see him the following day.



We then drove the three miles to Ashford and located the Church of Saint Mary where Alice Dayton, the future wife of Thomas Baker, the emigrant, had been baptized on May 20, 1619. This was a large city church, not open, but the sign in front informed us there would be services the next day at 10 A.M. We decided we would be there and leave after the sermon to get back to St. Margaret's service at 11 A.M.

Sunday morning arrived and we found breakfast service at our Kempton Arms lodging very slow. We arrived late, as the bell was ringing at Saint Mary's Church in Ashford. I noticed as we entered that the Baptismal Font was at the head of the right aisle in the nave, so we chose seats in that area. This too was the original font at which our grandame was baptized in 1619.

At the end of the sermon we stopped at the narthex door and viewed the altar and noticed the date 1639 on the ceiling. We purchased a history of the church as we left which informed us the church had been restored in 1639. We thanked the ushers and rushed back to Hothfield.

Figure 04-03: Altar view Saint Mary's Church, Ashford, County Kent

This day was a beautiful, sunny one. As we drove up The Street we saw the Foxes going through a gate in the brick wall. We parked on the road near the church and waited for them as they crossed the sheep meadow where the church grounds are located. We were introduced to their daughter and infant grandson in a pram. The Vicar then led us to the side door where we met the Father. Vicar Fox then seated Mavis and me in the second row on the left. We would have preferred having someone in front of us to assist us with the order of service. The total count of parishioners was 32, with the Vicar Fox, The Pastor, and myself the only males present. The most inspirational moment of my life was to have communion at the altar at which our grandsire and grandame were married 391 years before, almost on exactly the same day. I wept. What a day this has been with more yet to come!!

Figure 04-04: The Foxes and the Altar, Saint Margaret's Church, Hothfield, County Kent

We thanked the Foxes and the Father for their assistance and rushed on fifteen miles south to revisit Sissinghurst Castle on that beautiful, sunny, October day. Mavis retook the picture of the ancient, front view of Sissinghurst Castle with me standing at the gate to the Castle with the Baker Coat of Arms just above. We walked through, turned left, and entered the long, left wing of the building. A guide informed us that this was the stable in former days and that the right side was the servants' quarters. Now the stable is a library with many displays and the right wing is the private residence of Nigel Nicholson, who had turned the property over to the National Trust. His quarters were not open to the public. How I wondered if he was in residence today!

We went on to the octagonal towers and visited his mother's (Vita Sackville-West's) private writing room with her own desk and furniture in place. We also observed at the next level a model of what the Castle looked like in the late 1500's. Sir John Baker had torn down the Medieval house of the DeBarhams and built his own Tudor house behind the long range building and his son, Sir Richard Baker, had done the same, but building an Elizabethan manor. All that remains of these last houses are the Priest's House and the South Cottage and the now garden walls which were probably segments of other homes.

Figure 04-05: Elizabethan Model of Sissinghurst Castle, Late 1580's

We continued climbing the stairs to the top of the towers. The views of the gardens below were beautiful and we had a grand view of the countryside lands that had been part of the estate of Sissinghurst. The area had been enclosed by a brick wall that had a circumference of over seven miles. All that remained from the early days of Sir John Baker were the long, front Tudor house with the entrance arch and the Great Barn. Words cannot express the feeling of walking on the same ground and through the same

arch that our ancestors had passed through since the year 1490, before Columbus had even discovered America!

Figure 04-06: Sissinghurst Gardens from the Tower, County Kent

Mavis and I had not had lunch so we went to the restaurant near the Great Barn. We sat eating our lunch and drinking our tea while gazing out upon the long, Tudor house almost in disbelief. Little did we anticipate that our genealogical search would ever lead us to such a thrilling moment.

As I stated earlier, there is an ancient house at Pluckley known to this day as Baker's Mead, meaning Baker's Meadow. Our first encounter with this property was purely by chance. It is almost as if we were guided by some unknown force. On one of our drives from Hothfield to Sissinghurst we decided that instead of going by our normal route, the main highway to Ashford and then south to Sissinghurst and Cranbrook, we would enjoy the English countryside by using back roads in an attempt to go south-by-southeast and end up near Sissinghurst. After driving a short distance we ended up at Pluckley. We visited the ancient church and then returned to our rented car. Just down the road I happened to see a small wooden sign at a drive which went through a high hedge. The sign read "Baker's Mead". At the end of the hedge stood a quaint, little oast barn that had been converted to a cottage. We made an abrupt u-turn, as I told Mavis I had to see what was behind that hedge. I, in my excitement, stopped the car on the right side of the road to photograph the cottage. An oncoming car alerted me that I was stopped on the wrong side of the road and I hurried back to a wider spot along the road near the oast cottage and parked the car. A gentleman came out of the cottage, having seen me on the wrong side of the road, and asked if he could help us. I explained our interest in the Baker's Mead property and asked if he knew anything about it. He said he was just sitting his daughter's cat and cottage and could not help us. I left Mavis with him and walked back to the drive through the hedge. There stood an old, brick manor house. I went to the door and knocked since there was a car parked in

front of the house. A young man answered the heavy, oak door. He said he was not the owner and he was just sitting the house for them. He did, however, know that the house was over 400 years old.

A phone rang and he excused himself to answer it. The rain began to fall as I stood waiting and I took one step inside to get out of the rain, hoping to see more of the house from that vantage. A stone floor, a table, and a leaded glass window were all I could see. He returned and apologized for not being able to provide information. We found the British much more courteous when asked for information by strangers than Americans would be. I thanked him and we continued on our way, feeling that this too was probably part of our history. This happened in October, 1989.

Figure 04-07: Baker's Mead at Pluckley, County Kent, England

In 1990 we return to England to finish our research. We again visited Baker's Mead. The day was bright and sunny and we planned to retake our pictures of the manor and hoped to find the owners at home. We were in luck! A gentleman was working his flowerbeds at the Mead. I introduced myself and explained our interest in his home. He introduced himself as Mr. Williamson. He invited me to come with him to his house to meet his wife, an historian, who could tell me about the house. I went to the car to get Mavis and we met the most congenial couple. Mrs. Williamson related that they had purchased the house some years ago and that it had been owned by the Bakers many years ago. They had done much restoration and discovered the great hearth, which had been walled over. She said, "Please, let us show you the house!" We started in the front entry room which I had glimpsed the year before. They explained this was the stable in ancient days. We then entered the beamed great room with the high fireplace they had found behind a wall. As I stood there, I tried to visualize Thomas and Frances and the five children gathered around the great fire, thinking back to the history of Sir John

Baker and Elizabeth and their children gathered before the great fireplace at the manor of Sissinghurst generations before.

Figure 04-08: The Great Fireplace at Baker's Mead, Pluckley, County Kent

The kitchen-dining area was the full width of the house. On the back wall was another fireplace with a beehive oven along its left side.

Figure 04-09: The Kitchen Fireplace and Beehive Oven at Baker's Mead

We then entered a large room at the right, basically projecting into the front yard of the home. On the far wall was a stone sink that was the width of the room. Mrs. Williamson explained that this manor was located in a large meadow. The property had been owned by the Bakers of Sissinghurst for many generations and many cows had been maintained here. This room was the creamery where the milk was processed and butter and cheese were made.

We then went through an old, ancient, carved-oak door and up a stairway to the sleeping rooms. She had one room filled with flowers since her mother was coming to visit. Before we left she said she had the full history of the house which she would fax to us, but today she would give us a written history of Pluckley which we could take to a library and photocopy before returning it. We exited through a back door and viewed the house from the rear. We thanked the Williamsons for the privilege of seeing an ancient home not open to the public and one of great importance to us. We assured them we would return the book of Pluckley history in a few days. Again, another exhilarating day had been experienced.

Figure 04-10: Mrs. Williamson and Mavis in the back yard at Baker's Mead

A "History of Pluckley-Surrenden in the Hundred of Calehill" supplied us with more information on the manor, today called Baker's Mead. The early history of Pluckley relates back to the Domesday Book of 1086. More recent records support the fact that much of the land surrounding Pluckley was acquired by the family Dering. The Baker association in this area follows through in facts found in this document quoted here.

"The manor of Shurland in this Parish, was part of a manor of Pluckley lying south of the way leading through the fields from Surrenden to the Pluckley church. This manor passed to the Betenhams, of Betenham, in Cranbrooke, in whose name it remained for several hundred years - from Stephen de Betenham, to another Stephen de Betenham, to Thomas and to John of Cranbrooke, and beyond. Among the manors within the fields of Surrenden is a manor lying in the royal manor of Wye, a principal estate which formerly belonged to the Baker's of Sissinghurst, with whom it staid till John Baker, Esq., in the 37th year of Queen Elizabeth, sold it to Richard Dering, Esq., of Surrenden, in whose descendants it still continues, the present owner of it being, Sir Edward Dering, bart." {sic} <sup>75</sup>

The seizure of Sir Richard's lands by the Crown, because of his providing surety for his wife's family, only shows the seizure of his estates in Oxfordshire. From this statement we can probably assume he had divested himself of other property prior to that seizure. Sir John II sold the land to the Derings in the 37<sup>th</sup>. year of Queen Elizabeth's reign, which would be in 1595, some nine years before his death. One may ask, "How can we then assume that Thomas Baker was residing at Baker's Mead in the early 1600's?" The Dering's were not purchasing all the lands in the Pluckley area for their own residency. They had, as Sir John Baker had done, acquired vast land holdings which were then occupied by tenants. In 1595 some member of the Baker family was probably occupying the property, which may have been his grandson, Thomas Baker, as yet not married, who had gone to secure the

---

<sup>75</sup> Hasted, Edward, *A History Of The Parish Of Pluckley And Its Manors* p. 6

property at the time of his father's (Sir Richard Baker's) loss of much of his estates.

There was a question in my mind as to why the church records all indicate that Thomas Baker and his family worshipped at the church in Hothfield, about three miles away, when the church in Pluckley was just up the road from Baker's Mead. After considering all the information about Sir John Baker's actions under the reign of Queen Mary I found a logical answer. Queen Mary was very unhappy with Henry VIII for having divested the Catholic Church and having established the Church of England in its place. Sir John Baker, as his chief lawyer, had acted in many prosecutions during that divestiture, holding many hearings at the George Inn at Cranbrook. The process went on throughout England with many bishops and church supporters burnt at the stake. There were, without a doubt, strong sentiments in Sir John's home territory about his part in those proceedings.

Sir John Baker is traditionally remembered in Cranbrook as "Bloody Baker" because of his part in the persecution of reformers during his reign. The local historian of Cranbrook, Mr. Tarbutt, says there is no evidence to justify this character. John Fox, in the "Acts and Monuments", relates one or two instances in which he appears in his capacity as magistrate. On July 23, 1554 at a petty session held at the George Inn, Cranbrook, Sir John Baker and Sir Thomas Moyle, Justices for Kent, had to try a priest, John Bland, Vicar of Adisham, and finally handed him over to the High Sheriff to be sent to Canterbury. Bland was burned on July 12, 1555 after efforts had been vainly made to induce him to recant. Fox says that the reports of the doings in Kent were supplied him by Mr. Richard Fletecher, who was Vicar of Cranbrook in Elizabeth's reign. No doubt this accounts for the prominence given to the cases in which Sir John Baker took a small part, but they are not such as to justify a charge of such cruelty. <sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>76</sup> Baker, Rev. F.V. Baker, NOTES ON THE LIFE OF SIR JOHN BAKER OF KISSINGHURST, KENT Arch. Cant Vol. XXXVIII p. 22-23

If this animosity was still prevailing in this area of County Kent, it may have been much more comfortable to worship in the family church at Hothfield, three miles away, as it was situated within the boundaries of the manor of Hothfield, where Mary Baker and Lord Tufton resided just adjacent to the church. There is also an indication that life may not have been too comfortable in Pluckley during this time. When the son, Thomas, baptized on October 11<sup>th</sup>, chose to leave England and come to America he changed the name Baker to Backer. This could have been because he wanted to leave behind the stigma of the association with the events that had occurred in the Protestant actions in England, but more particularly in County Kent, where he had grown up.

After our visit with the Williamsons at Baker's Mead we decided to return to Hothfield and again thanked the Vicar and Mrs. Fox for their contribution to our findings on the family Baker, but also to inform them of our finding Baker's Mead. We found them well. They were happy to see us again. Upon telling them of Baker's Mead, the Vicar responded, "Yes! The Dering family, still to this day, own a great amount of property in the Pluckley area." One's observation when driving through that area is that all the window frames on the Dering property manors and houses have been replaced during restoration with white, Roman-arched, stone frames. He was correct. Baker's Mead has the Dering window frames. If any Bakers should, after reading this volume, visit Pluckley, I must inform you that the Williamsons no longer own or reside at the manor. Mail we have directed to them has been returned with the notation that they have moved and no forwarding address is known. We are, however, indebted to them for their contribution in our historical search. We are most grateful for all the fateful happenings that have occurred in our years of research.





# 5

## COMING OUT OF ENGLAND

The English had been trying to establish a colony in America for many years. The first being on December 20, 1606 when three small ships, the *Susan Constant*, the *Godspeed*, and the *Discovery* set sail with 120 men for the New World. These men were employed by the Virginia Company of London as laborers and servants in exchange for food, clothing, shelter, and protection. They were also given a vague promise of land. They finally landed on a small island in the James River on May 14, 1607 and established the Colony of Virginia. By the month of December only 40 men remained of the original 120. Fire, malaria, and general dissent plagued the Colony. More people were sent to the new Colony, but by June of 1610 only 60 of the over 700 who had left England remained. Facing famine the dispirited remnants boarded a ship to return to the homeland. They were met by the new governor, Lord Delaware, given supplies and convinced to return to Jamestown. The crisis had passed and by 1616 the population of the area had grown to 351.<sup>77</sup>

While these activities were going on another group of English Religious Reformers had migrated to Holland in 1609. They were joined by other colonists who did not share their religious views. This group eventually sailed for the New World and landed at Plymouth in 1620. These Pilgrims were members of the Church of England. They wished to reform (or purify) the church in its theology, liturgy, and government. The Pilgrims were Separatists who withdrew from the church and organized on the Congregational System. The Plymouth Colony split in 1626 when

---

<sup>77</sup> Jamestown Colony, *THE AMERICAN PEOPLES ENCYCLOPEDIA*, Vol. 11, p. 11-510 and 11-511

Roger Conant withdrew from Plymouth and established the Massachusetts Bay Colony at Salem. In 1629 a charter was drawn up between the two colonies. Under the governorship of John Winthrop the colony expanded and many arrivals from England added to the population.<sup>78</sup>

Many people were leaving England because of a number of factors, religious persecution of the Puritans being only one. On the death of Queen Elizabeth I, The Good Queen Bess, James I came to the throne in 1603. Elizabeth had never married, so James came to the throne by virtue of descent. His mother was Mary Queen of Scots and his grandmother was the daughter of Henry VII. His reign did much to end the conflict between Scotland and England. James was a small, awkward, ungainly person. He slobbered and had a speech impediment. He was afflicted with a wide range of phobias. He had strong views on a wide range of matters notably: the evils of tobacco, witchcraft, and Puritanism. He was also much given to homosexual behavior. He believed he ruled by divine authority. All these attributes caused him great trouble, especially with the Puritans and Parliament. Political, social, and religious situations were all in a state of confrontation. In 1618 the Thirty Years War broke out. His reign saw the beginning of the conflict between the King and Parliament which later resulted in the English Civil War and the exodus of many to the English Colonies in America.<sup>79</sup>

Upon his death in 1625 his second son by Anne of Denmark, Charles I, came to the throne. The continued persecution of the Puritans under Archbishop Laud, the political dissatisfaction with the personal government of Charles I, and the prevailing economic distress in the land added desire to establish a new life in the New World. The first of my ancestors to come to America was the family Gillett.

---

<sup>78</sup> *Pilgrims* - THE AMERICAN PEOPLES ENCYCLOPEDIA Vol. 15  
p. 15-778

<sup>79</sup> *Parker, Michael St. John* - BRITAIN'S KINGS AND QUEENS p. 22

In the year 1630 we find the Gillett immigration. This family preceded the immigration of the progenitor of the family Baker, who came to the New World in 1639. I, therefore, in keeping with the chronological order of this text, shall deal with the early arrival of this family.

The family Gillett (Gylet) were French Huguenots living in Guyenne, Bergerac Province, France. They fled France about the time of the massacre of the French Protestants during the reign of King Henry II and went to Scotland.<sup>80</sup> Huguenot was a name given the Protestants in France in the 16<sup>th.</sup>, 17<sup>th.</sup>, and 18<sup>th.</sup> centuries. The Lutheran form of Protestantism entered France about 1520 and soon met with opposition from the Catholics. The work of John Calvin (1509-64) greatly influenced and furthered the cause of French Protestantism. As the Protestant movement gained in strength opposition to it likewise increased. By the end of the reign of Francis I (1494-1547) the Huguenots were severely persecuted. Persecution of the Huguenots as heretics increased under Henry II who reigned from 1547 to 1559. A series of eight civil wars followed. On August 24, 1572 thousands of Protestants were killed in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.<sup>81</sup>

Many thousands of Huguenots fled to England and other countries. It was during this time that Reverend Jacques de Gillet fled to Scotland according to the information I was able to find. This confirmed the information collected by Charles Homer Gillett. How long they stayed in Scotland or if they actually went to Scotland may be questioned. In my fifteen years of putting this history together I have encountered many written statements on the family Gillett which were found in libraries and court houses that reached from the East Coast to Fort Wayne, Indiana, Wisconsin and Minnesota. The statements and recorded documents varied in many ways yet seemed to give credence to the acceptability of what these historic documents told us.

---

<sup>80</sup> Latham, Esther Gillett - THE FAMILY GILLETT 1953

<sup>81</sup> French Huguenots, THE AMERICAN PEOPLES ENCYCLOPEDIA  
Vol. 10 p. 10-731

All documents indicated that the Gilletts resided, for the most part, in Connecticut, after a short stay in Dorchester, Massachusetts. The Bakers first settled at New Haven and Milford, so we decided a visit to New Haven and Milford was in order.

The Gilletts who came to America in 1630 were the first of my ancestors to come to the New World. I therefore now discuss the Gillett family. My great-grandmother was Laura Gillett. It was not until I found the works of John Insley Coddington, M.A. of Cambridge, Mass., that I could document the Gillett history. Previously located facts had stated Jonathan Gillett had Mary his wife as being his second wife and he had come to America with his first wife and three children. Many researchers had stated the family was from County Devon, which agrees with the above stated source of the following documentation. It makes no recording that the family went to Scotland and then relocated to County Devon, England and a much warmer climate.

Coddington begins, "This is the answer to the question of the long-sought identity of Mary, wife of Jonathan Gillett, the emigrant from England to Dorchester, Mass., and the settler at Windsor, Conn."<sup>82</sup>

The Parish Register of St. Andrew's Church at Colyton, County Devon, contains the following marriage record: 1634 JONATHAN GILLETT & MARY DOLBIAR, 29 MARCH.

He goes on to say there can be very little doubt that Jonathan Gillett was a son of the Reverend William Gillett, Rector of Chaffcombe, County Somerset, who was instituted to that benefice in February 1609-10 and who died early in 1641 before April 2<sup>nd</sup>. when the inventory of his estate was taken. The will of

---

<sup>82</sup> Coddington, M.A., John Insley, JONATHAN GILLETT OF DORCHESTER, MASS., AND WINDSOR, CONN., AND MARY DOLBERE OR DOLBAIR, HIS WIFE -*The American Genealogist*, Vol.XV p. 208

Rev. William Gillett dated 1641 was proved in the Archdeaconry Court at Taunton, April 16, 1641. From this instrument we find him naming his sons William, Thomas, Nathan, and Jeremiah and daughters Habiah (Abiah) and Mary and his brother Richard. He went on to say "to all my children in England I give two silver spoons apiece" and this phrase probably meant that he had other children, unmentioned, who were not in England in 1641 and to whom he had presumably given their portions when they left home. Concerning his son Nathan he said, "The land which my son Nathan made over to me by letter of Attorney, my son William, the next reversioner of said land, shall surrender his estate (therein," etc. This is the only mention of Nathan and implies that he was one of the children who was not in England when the will was made and that he had made the land over to his father by letter of attorney after he had left England.<sup>83</sup>

Nathan and Jonathan Gillett, the brothers who migrated to New England, gave several of their children names reminiscent of the Gillett family of Chaffcombe. The use of these family names also makes for verification that they were the sons of Rev. William of Chaffcombe.

Nathan and Jonathan Gillett probably came to New England on the *Mary and John*, though their names are not on the (incomplete) passenger list of the vessel. The passengers on the *Mary and John* were a company of Puritans from the west of England gathered together by the Rev. John Warham and the Rev. John Maverick. The ship sailed from Plymouth March 20, 1630 and arrived off Nantasket May 30, 1630. The passengers all settled at Mattapan which was renamed Dorchester. Nathan Gillett became a freeman of Massachusetts Bay in 1634 and in 1636 he was a member of Warham's flock that migrated to Windsor, Conn.. He served in the Pequot War in 1637 and lived at Windsor until 1670 when he moved to Simsbury, Conn., where he died about 1688, having had issue, Elizabeth, Abiah, Rebecca, Elias, Sarah, Benjamin, Nathan, and Rebecca.{sic}<sup>84</sup>

---

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid* p. 208

<sup>84</sup> Coddington, M.A., John Insley JONATHAN GILLETT OF

The career of Jonathan Gillett was somewhat more complicated. He came to New England as a bachelor in 1630, but not long thereafter he must have returned to England for a short stay, during which he was married. The wedding took place at Colyton, County Devon, March 29, 1634 and the bride was Mary Dolbere or Dolbiar, who was baptized at Colyton, June 7, 1607. She was the daughter of Rawkey, Rockye, Rokie, Rokye or Rochee Dolbere or Dolbiar, yeoman, of the hamlet of Cadhayne in the parish of Colyton and of Mary (Michell or Mychell) his wife. It is interesting to speculate whether Jonathan and Mary were betrothed before Jonathan's first trip to America or whether the marriage in 1634 was arranged on the spur of the moment. At all events, the bride and groom sailed to New England soon after the wedding. In his account of the Gillett family in the "History of Ancient Windsor" Stilles says, "There is still extant, in the possession of a Windsor family, a copy of the Geneva edition of The Bible of 1599, commonly known as the `Breeches Bible' because the fig-leaf garment made by our first parents in the Garden of Eden, whereas the King James version is called apron, is herein given as breeches. This Bible was brought to New England by this Jonathan Gillett Sr.. In this Bible occurs the following manuscript record: "My father Gille[tt] came into new-inglan the secon[d] time in June in the yeare 1634 and Jonathan his sonne was born about half a year aftur he cam to land."{sic}<sup>85</sup>

This evidence shows that Jonathan Gillett came to New England on his first trip in 1630 merely to "spy out the land" and having found the land good returned to England to acquire a helpmate. With her he came the second time in the spring of 1634. He was made a freeman of Massachusetts Bay May 6, 1635, and the following notice appears in the Dorchester Town Records:

---

DORCHESTER MASS. *The American Genealogist*, Vol XV p. 209

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid* Vol. XV p. 209-210

"It is granted to Jonathan Gillett to fence in half acre of ground about his house, leaving sufficient highway" (17 April 1635).

"In consideration whereof the foresayd p'tyes do p'mise to fetch

all the Cowes from Jonathan Gilletts house to mr Woolcotts ..

and to drive them forth in the morning an hower after sun rising.

(17 April 1635)

"Among those who are to have meadow land in the marsh by Goodman Greenways" Jellets, 2 acres." (27 June 1636)[sic]<sup>86</sup>

Jonathan Gillett and his family moved with Rev. John Marham from Dorchester to the new settlement at Windsor on the Connecticut River in the later part of 1636. He was granted a Lot at Windsor, 17 rods wide, near Mr. Warham's. Jonathan Gillett died at Windsor August, 23 1677. His will, dated August 8, 1677, was proved September 6, 1677. His widow, Mary (Dolbere or Dolbair) Gillett, died at Windsor on January 5, 1685/6.<sup>87</sup>

To this union 10 children were born in the New World.

1. JONATHAN b. about December 1634 at Dorchester

Admitted to Windsor Church 6 April 1662 d. At Windsor 5 Sept. 1708 m.(1) At Windsor 22 or 23 April 1661 to MARY KELSEY, daughter of William Kelsey of Hartford, b. 1634, d. At Windsor 18 April 1676

m.(2) at Windsor 14 Dec. 1676, MARIUM DIBBLE, daug. of Thomas Dibble, of Windsor. She b. at Windsor 19 Feb. 1644/5 and Bapt. there 7 Dec. 1645 , d. there in childbirth and buried 18 April 1687. Ten children.

2. CORNELIUS (Twin) b. at Dorchester 1635/6

---

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid* Vol. XV, p. 210

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid* p. 210



Admitted Windsor Church 16 Jan. 1665/6 d. Windsor 26 June 1711

m. about 1658 PRISCILLA KELSEY, sister of Mary above, b. 1632

Nine children.

3. MARY (Twin) b. at Dorchester 1635/6

m. at Windsor 15 July 1658 to Peter Brown of Windsor b.1632 he

d. at Windsor 9 March 1692. Mary Gillett Brown evidently survived

him. Fourteen children.

4. ANNA or HANNA b. at Windsor 29 Dec. 1639 and specifically noted in church record as Jonathan Gillet's "first born at Windsor.

m. at Windsor 29 Oct. 1663 Samuel Filley b. at Windsor 24 Sept. 1643 eldest son of William and Margaret Filley. He d. there 4 Jan 1711. She d. at Windsor 18 Nov 1711. Eleven children.

5. JOSEPH bapt. at Windsor 25 July 1641. Removed to Simsbury and to Deerfield in 1673. A soldier in King Philip's War and one of Captain Thomas Lothrop's company who was killed by the Indians at Bloody Brook, 18 Sept. 1675. He had m. Elizabeth Hawkes at Windsor on 24 Nov. 1664. She the daug. John Hawkes of Haddam b.10 Jan 1646 They had nine children, She m(2) 16 Dec. 1680 Nathaniel Dickinson. She d. before 1682.

6. SAMUEL, bapt. at Windsor 22 Jan 1642/3

7. JOHN b. at Windsor 5 Oct. 1644 He m. at Windsor 8 July 1669 Mary daug. Thomas and Mary Barber, she bapt. at Windsor 12 Oct. 1651 They had six children. John and Mary and her parents removed to Simsbury and John d. there in 1682. She m(2) at Windsor 20 June 1683 Capt. George Norton of Suffield, Conn. She d. there 31 Dec. 1725.

8. ABIGAIL bapt. at Windsor 28 June 1646; d. there 1648 or 1649.

9. JEREMIAH b. at Windsor 12 Feb. 1647/8 d. there 1 March 1692/3 m. at Windsor 15 Oct. 1685 Deborah Bartlett daug. Benjamin and Deborah (Barnard) Bartlett, b. at Windsor 3 April (Aug) 1666 she d. there 29 Sept. 1753. Had 3 children. She m(2) at Windsor after Jeremiah's death 23 April 1694 Samuel Adams of Windsor.

10.JOSIAH bapt. at Windsor 1 July 1650, removed to Colchester, Conn. in 1702 and d. there 29 Oct. 1736. m. at Windsor 30 June 1676 JOANNA TAINTOR, daug. Michael and Elizabeth (Rose) Taintor of Branford, Conn. She b. at Branford 29 April 1657 and d. at Colchester 23 Jan. 1735/6. Eleven children. <sup>88</sup>

This reference source goes on from pages 212 through 217 to provide the family genealogy records of Mary Dolbere or Dolbiar as recorded in the Parish Records of Colyton, County Devon, in England. For this history I felt it not necessary to document this information which contains all the baptisms, marriages, and burials of her ancestors. However, anyone interested will find it in Vol. XV of THE AMERICAN GENEALOGIST, April 1939, in the City Library of New Haven, Connecticut.

If you return to the will of Jonathan and Nathan's father, you will find another son, Jeremiah, was also named. We have less information on this son. However, he is our grandsire. He probably came to America with his brother Jonathan and his wife Mary in 1634 on his second return to America. This is more or less confirmed as Jeremiah received a Colonial Grant for 50 acres for his service in the Pequot War, which occurred in 1637, when the residents of Connecticut virtually destroyed the Pequot Tribe in Connecticut. We have no record of his marriage, but he has a son, Jeremiah, Jr., who was a resident of Simsbury and Wethersfield, Connecticut, where he died March 24, 1708-09.

Jeremiah, Jr. had eight children:

Rachel	born in 1671
Eliphal	1672
John	1673
Samuel	1674
Abigail	1701

---

<sup>88</sup> *Coddington, M.A., John Insley* JONATHAN GILLET OF DORCHESTER, MASS. *The American Genealogist* Vol. XV p. 210-211-212

Abraham	1796
Abner	1708
Abiah	

Son Eliphal, born in 1672, our next grandsire, married Mary Wheeler in 1696 at Milford, Conn.. She had been baptized there on February 3, 1678. You will discover, in a future chapter, this village had its beginning in 1639 and was founded by Thomas Baker and the Wheelers. Eliphal and Mary had nine children with the following birth dates:

Mary	1697
Ephriam	1698
Jeremiah	1701
Jonathan	1703
Abraham	1705
Rachel	1707
Hannah	1710
Agnes	1715
Eliphal, Jr.	1719 on March 22

Mother Mary died on 31 January 1730 and father has a second marriage to an Elizabeth who died 17 July 1732 and a third marriage to a Hannah, before his death on March 12, 1746.

The last son, Eliphal, Jr., is the continuation of our Gillett line. He married Mercy Smith, the daughter of John Smith and Ruth Briscoe. Mercy had been baptized on September 29, 1720. Three children were born to this Gillett union at Milford:

Agnes	baptized 20 Dec. 1741
Wheeler	baptized 15 July 1744 at Bethlehem, Conn.
Eliphal	baptized 27 Sep. 1747

There is indication that Wheeler and Eliphal may have relocated to Vermont. The assumption is because the Mormons, in Utah, state a Jonathan, son of Eliphal, was baptized February 24, 1771 in Tinmouth, Vermont.

Wheeler above was our next grandsire. His wife was not identified, but their first child was born in 1768.

The children of Wheeler were:

Eliphal born 1768 bapt. 25 Aug. 1771  
Julianna bapt. 25 Aug. 1771  
Hanna bapt. 25 Aug. 1771  
Agnes bapt. 25 Aug. 1771  
Wheeler, Jr. bapt. 25 Aug. 1771  
Agnes (2) bapt. 5 Jan. 1772  
Elizabeth bapt. 28 Nov. 1773  
Lucretia bapt. 19 Oct. 1776  
Hannah bapt. 11 Apr. 1779

Wheeler's son Eliphal was our next grandsire. His tombstone, #63 in the east section of Dysinger's Cemetery, in Royalton, Niagara County, New York, evidently has an error. It states his death was on 12 Sept. 1843 at the age of 63 years, where above dates indicate it should have stated he was 73 years on his demise.

Figure 05-01: Tombstone of Eliphal Gillett, Royalton, New York.

Eliphal married Abigail (sometimes called Nabby) Hannah, the daughter of Alexander Hannah. They had three children:

Alexander H. born 1804 or 1805  
Ezra Wheeler born 1 Jan 1819  
Loretta born 27 Jan 1822

Census records indicate Alexander was born in Vermont. Family records say near Rutland. Ezra died on April 6, 1849 according to a tombstone at Royalton, Niagara County, New York. Loretta died November 27, 1840 at the age of 18 years and 10  
80

months according to the inscription on her tombstone in Niagara County, New York.

Son Alexander was our grandsire. His father was not baptized until he was three years old, which supports my opinion that baptismal records do not necessarily relate to birth dates. A family could move to an area without a church and the children may not have been baptized until a Circuit Rider Pastor came through the community, or when a church was finally established, which could be much later than their birth dates.

The records above reveal that five of Wheeler Gillett's children were baptized on the August 25, 1771.

Alexander H. Gillett, our grandsire, was born in 1804-05 according to his tombstone, which is in Woodlawn Cemetery in Neosho, Wisconsin.

Alexander took as his first wife, Laurena Berry, probably at Royalton, Niagara County, New York. Six children were born there:

Mary P.	1835
Laura born	24 April 1837
Alvira (twin)	22 Feb. 1839
Almira (twin)	22 Feb. 1839
Ezra Wheeler	1844
June or Jane	1850 <sup>89</sup>

Alexander left Royalton, Niagara County, New York and on May 23, 1851 procured land in Rubicon, Wisconsin.<sup>90</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> *Latter Day Saints Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah: All the information on Jeremiah Gillett and his descendants, in the preceding pages was supplied by Cousin Dean McCulley, a descendant of Isaac Baker, for which we offer our sincere THANKS, Dean.*

<sup>90</sup> *Dodge County Deed Records*

We will conclude the lineage of Gillett at this point. In a future chapter two Baker sons will marry daughters of Alexander. Alexander will marry as his second wife, at Rubicon, a wife of one of our family and add a stepdaughter to his family.

Before I move on with our history, I must clarify a point that anyone that may have done some research on the Gillett line may question in the text above. Mavis and I had been informed by a professional genealogist we met at the Adriance Library at Poughkeepsie, New York, early on in our searching that the Gillett line was well-documented. When I obtained the Gillett information at the New York City Public Library on 5<sup>th</sup>. Avenue I was delighted as we then had what we presumed to be the first ten generations in America. The only thing in error within that recording was that Jonathan had come to America in 1630 with his wife and three children that had been born in England. This is a typical example of the errors that we encountered throughout our years of searching. If you will look back at ANNA or HANNA, Jonathans and Mary's fourth child, you will find the entry "first born at Windsor". The genealogist ahead of us had taken this as their first born in America, so she made the statement that Jonathan had come to America with a wife and three children. We have now corrected her information and added the information on our ancestor Jeremiah.

Now that we have our French Huguenots well-established and documented in the Colony, let us return to our English roots.

If you will return to the first paragraphs of this chapter you will find all the problems going on in England. These things plus the lure of the New World made it attractive to follow the rush of emigrants heading for America. A group of Puritan Separatists, many from County Kent in southeast England, set out to establish the New Haven Colony. Among the group was Thomas Baker of Hothfield, who shall be our focus in the next chapter.

Figure 05-02: Gillett Coat Of Arms

#### GILLETT COAT OF ARMS

Ermine on a bend sable, three fishes ' hedas erased argent.  
A lion rampant holding in the dexter paw a battle axe proper.

#### Explanation of terms:

Ermine White

Bend A diagonal band which crosses the shield about a third

or less in width than the shield.

Sable Black

Erased Edges torn in a jagged line.

Argent Silver.

Rampant Head in profile.

Dexter Left hand side as one looks at the shield.

Proper Represented in its natural color.

Colors Lion (Gold), Axe (Silver), Helmet (Light Blue),

Fish (Silver with red mouths), Shield (Silver-  
with black figures), Scroll (Silver and Gold).

The Huguenots were a select class of people, manufacturers and merchants perhaps, and the most intelligent and enterprising of Frenchmen in the 17<sup>th</sup>. century. Probably no stock ever came to America so gifted as the French Huguenots. Though only a few thousand, all told, their descendants furnished 589 of the 14,000 deemed worthy of a place in "Appleton's Encyclopedia of American Biography", or eight times their due quota. They had the same affinity for ideals and the same tenacity of character as the founders of New England, but in their French blood they brought sensibility and fervor and an artistic endowment of their own.<sup>91</sup>

---

<sup>91</sup> *Genealogical Data Concerning the families of  
Gillet - Gillett - Gillette Esther Gillett Latham 1953  
Call # Gc 929.2 Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana*





# 6

## THE DAYS AT MILFORD

We have already related to the Gillett family from the southwest of England arriving in the Colony. We shall now relate to a group from County Kent, County Surrey, and County Sussex, in the southeast of England, who also made the pilgrimage west. The *Hector* and another ship left England to support the new plantation proposed at Quinnipiac. Thomas Baker of Pluckley was on his way to Quinnipiac. Mr. Whitfields was in charge on one of the vessels and a covenant was made during the time at sea:

"We whose names are hereunder written, intending by God's gracious permission to plant ourselves in New England, and, if it may be, in them southerly part, about, Quinnipiac: We do faithfully promise each to each, for ourselves and families, and those that belong to us; that we will, the Lord assisting us, sit down and join ourselves together in one entire plantation; and to be helpful each to the other in every common work, according to every man's ability and as need shall require; and we promise not to desert or leave each other or the plantation, but with the consent of the rest or the greater part of the company who have entered into this agreement."

"As for oyr gathering together in a church way, and the choice of officers and members to be joined together in that way, we do refer ourselves until such time as it shall please God to settle us in our plantation."

"In witness whereof we subscribe our hands the first day of June, 1639".{sic}<sup>92</sup>

---

<sup>92</sup> Lambert's, HISTORY OF NEW HAVEN COLONY, p. 160-161

Two names on the document of interest to this history are John Bishop and Thomas Cook. The others I do not list.

The Indian settlement called Quinopiocke on the Hammonasset River had been purchased from the Indians by a deed dated November 24, 1638. It was signed by Theophilus Eaton, John Davenport, and Momaugin, ye Indian Sachem, with Thomas Stanton being interpreter.<sup>93</sup>

The group that assembled themselves in the new plantation came from other English families associated with the Massachusetts Bay Colony and another group from the Boston and Lynn area.

Article 3 of the first meeting of this plantation, which drops the Indian name and becomes the new Colony, New Haven, contains the following language:

" (church members) shall be called free burgesses and that only they shall choose among them selves magistrates and officers to have power of transacting all public civil affayres of this plantation, of making and repealing the laws, dividing inheritances, deciding differences that shall arise, and doing all things and business of like manner. It is therefore ordered by all the said free planters that all those that hereafter should be received as planters into this plantation should also submit to the said fundamental agreement and testify the same subscribing their names under the names of the aforesaid planters as followeth:<sup>94</sup>

The list of names followed. However, I only list the few that continue on in association with our history: Richard Osborne, James Clarke, Tymothy Forde, Christopher Todd, Thomas

---

<sup>93</sup> Hadley, Charles J. RECORDS OF THE COLONY OF NEW HAVEN, p.3

<sup>94</sup> Hadley, Charles J., RECORDS OF THE COLONY OF NEW HAVEN, p.17

Osborne, Mark Pierce, James and Henry Bishop, Thomas Wheeler, John Davenport, and Ralph Dayghton, our future grand-dame's father. Ibid

There is no explanation that we found in history that explains why a group of the New Haven plantation left and joined another group at the next river inlet to the west on Long Island Sound. Could it have been they did not like the language in Article #3 above? We never will know.

The original purchase of the lands at Milford was made on 12 February 1639 and consisted of the land lying between the East River and the Oustonik, with Long Island to the south. The deed was taken by William Fowler, Edwin Tapp, Zachariah Whitman, Benjamin Fenn, and Alexander Bryan, along with the marks of the Indians.<sup>95</sup>

The Milford Church was gathered at New Haven on August 22, 1639. Shortly after, the settlers took their way through the woods to Milford, and being without any jurisdiction of any town or colony, they proceeded to organize a little self-governing republic. At their first General Court, on November 20<sup>th</sup>., it was "voted and agreed that the power of electing others should be in the Church only, and that persons so chosen should be from ourselves" and "that they should guide themselves by the written Word of God until such time as a body of laws could be established."<sup>96</sup>

The name of Thomas Baker first appears in the public records of this country in the records of the town of Milford, on November 29, 1639 on the first page of the first book of records of that town as one of those who on that day were "allowed to be free planters, having for the present liberty to act in the choyce of officers for the carrying on of public affaryes on this plantation".<sup>97</sup>

---

<sup>95</sup> Lambert's, HISTORY OF THE NEW HAVEN COLONY, 1838

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid* p. 92

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid* p.89

The fact that Thomas Baker was thus enrolled as a free planter of Milford shows not only that on November 29, 1639 he was at Milford, but also that he was then a member of a church, qualified to take part in the communion service, and had contributed to the purchase of that land and the expense of settling the plantation. A meetinghouse was built in 1641. It had special seats for guards and a place near them for their muskets. The men sat apart from the women. The following is an extract from the town records of February 7, 1643: "By the Brethren and inhabitants of Milford provide a foot way to the Meeting House and it shall be maintained with convenient stiles from the west end. The stiles are to be maintained by Mr. Nicholas Camp at the west end and by Brother Thomas Baker at the meeting house for the outside stiles. The inner stiles shall be maintained by each family placing their own stile in the most convenient place. The passage over Little Dreadful Swamp on John Fletcher's Lot shall be by a long log hewed on the upper side".<sup>98</sup>

Thomas Baker and Alice Dayton of New Haven were married on the June 20, 1643, presumably at the church in New Haven. This marriage is recorded in his Bible. The entry was probably made with the quill of a feather, as it is a rather rough entry, but clearly readable.<sup>99</sup>

The Ralph Dayton family had come from Ashford, County Kent in the year 1638. They had first settled in Lynn, north of Boston, but with the establishment of New Haven, were among its first settlers and organizers. We had researched this family in England. Ralph Dayton and Alice Wilton were married June 16, 1616 at St. Mary's Church in Ashford.

---

<sup>98</sup> N.E.MAGAZINE, November, 1889 p. 271

<sup>99</sup> THOMAS BAKER BIBLE, Call # ASE2 East Hampton Library

The baptismal records are as follows:

1618 June 28 Ralph son of Ralph Dayton bapt.  
1619 May 20 Alice daughter of Ralph Dayton bapt.  
1623/4 Samuel son of Ralph Dayton bapt.  
1626 June 28 Robard son of Ralph Dayton bapt.<sup>100</sup>

Ralph, the son born in 1618, was twenty-two years old when his parents left for New England. He did not leave England. He was twice married and died on 10 February 1705-06 at the age of eighty-eight. His two marriages, his death, and his wives' two deaths are also in the Parish Records stated above.

Thomas Baker's house lot at Milford was #10 on the Plat of 1646, which is dated December 28, 1646. Mavis and I have visited Milford and found the location of his property. It was just southwest of the meetinghouse mentioned above. It is a beautiful spot today, as a dam has been built across the Wepawaug below Thomas Baker's property. A plaque on the church lot states that the first meetinghouse stood near this site. The above statement about the maintenance of stiles to get to the meetinghouse establishes the fact that it was west of the river and Thomas Baker lived nearby.

Figure 06-01: Historical Sketches of the Town of Milford- p.11  
Press Tuttle, Morehouse and Taylor Co.

This sketch displays the lot owners and the security palisade they had surrounding the plantation. You will note Thomas Baker's Lot #10 is on the west bank of the river now called the Wepawaug and the meetinghouse stands just northeast of his home, on Lot #9. The dreadful swamp, mentioned earlier, would have been at Lot #12.

---

<sup>100</sup> St. MARY'S CHURCH PARISH RECORDS, Ashford, County Kent

Figure 06-02: Lot #, Name and Land Owned By Each Planter at Milford 1646

p. 12 Press Tuttle, Morehouse and Taylor Co.

This page identifies several people of interest to our history; Thomas Baker, Thomas Wheeler, Lot #34, and Micah Tompkins, Lot #15.

In 1889, in commemoration of the 250<sup>th</sup>. anniversary of the settlement of the town, a Memorial Bridge was built at Milford with memorial blocks for the names of the Milford founders. I checked the two bridges near the pond, which was above the dam, but found only a monument to early governors of the state. Needless to say I was disappointed. Recorded facts told me that our grandsire and grandame were so honored. Both Mavis' and my cameras developed weak batteries so we went to the car and decided to drive about the town. In one block down towards the sea we found a camera store open and solved that predicament. The car was parked before an antique store so I told Mavis to go in and browse and I would walk downstream and see if there might be another bridge. Within two blocks I found the 1889 bridge and the memorialized block of THOMAS BAKER and his wife ALICE DAYTON alongside another block with the Wheelers' names. These two blocks are on the second course of rocks that served as the side rail. It is evident that in later years more commemorative blocks were added to the top of the side rails for other families. The additions set as dental blocks, with different colored mortar holding them in place, make for a pleasant addition to the structure, as well as pay tribute to many other families that played a part in the expansion of the little independent republic that founded itself there on the banks of the Wepawaug in 1639.

Figure 06-03: The Memorial Bridge at Milford, Connecticut

Figure 06-04: The Thomas and Alice Dayton Blocks On The Milford Bridge

Church Records indicate on 11 1645 Thomas Baker was excommunicated from the Milford Church (no reason stated) and received again on January 22, 1647. The baptismal records begin in 1640 and on page five we find Hannah Baker, daughter of Thomas, baptized June 30, 1650. It is rather odd that no marriage records were kept until long after 1700. So, there is no evidence of Thomas and Alyce being married here; thus our previous statement that the marriage was probably in New Haven. In September 1650 they were dismissed by the Milford Church to Easthampton.

At this time Thomas Baker entered into an agreement with Daniel How (Howe) "for the purchase of all Howe's Accommodations at Easthampton, with housing, orchards, fences, land and meadow--withal what he possesses and what is or may belong to him in relation to his lot as his right to his settling there", for the sum of twenty pounds to be paid on September 29<sup>th</sup>, when possession was to be given.<sup>101</sup>

This statement may seem odd. However, Howe, as one of the seven original purchasers of the property would have certain rights and claims to future division and development of the new town and its environments. The total purchase had been for a tract of land containing 31,000 acres; thus this purchase allowed Thomas to acquire many other tracts of land, as the large purchase is sub-divided. Howe returned to the mainland at Connecticut and shortly after returned to his native England.

There had been a document written which was the first written constitution adopted by any government. It was called "The Fundamental Orders" (1639) and it was drafted by the early colonial settlers of the area of Connecticut. This territory formed a part of a vast strip of land, extending as far west as the Pacific Ocean, which was granted by Robert Earl of Warwick to Lord Say and Sele, Lord Brooks, and others in 1631. Before this grant the

---

<sup>101</sup> *Hedges, Judge Henry P., 1 EAST HAMPTON RECORDS, Vol.4-5,*

Dutch at New Amsterdam had explored the Connecticut River and established a trading post at Hartford. The very first English settlements in the area had been made by colonists from the Massachusetts Bay Colony at Wethersfield (1634) and at Windsor and Hartford (1635). These colonists were unhappy with the form of government in vogue in the Bay Colony. Please refer to "The Coming Out Of England Chapter" where you will find your Gillett background as part of this group of colonists. In 1637 a war was waged against the Pequot Indians by the settlers which practically exterminated the tribe. In 1639 the towns of Wethersfield, Windsor, and Hartford drew up a democratic constitution for the Colony which remained in force until the granting of a royal charter by Charles II in 1662.

This document and similar land grants caused many problems for future generations of our family. We will relate to these feudal claims in the lands west of the Hudson River in the 1800's as our family moves to that area.

While all this was going on, The New Haven Colony, which our ancestors that carry the name Baker and Dayton were a part of, drew up a constitution which was based entirely on the Scriptures. A feature of this constitution was the requirement that each settler should sign his name to the compact. These colonists were struggling with establishing a means to govern themselves in a land without any formal form of government.

The Dutch, at New Amsterdam, had given up all claim to that part of Long Island lying east of Oyster Bay by the Treaty of Hartford in 1650. The new plantation, East Hampton, therefore had to establish and govern itself.

Returning to our history, with the payment to Howe, Thomas, Alyce, and infant daughter Hannah moved to the new area of East Hampton on the eastern end of Long Island. This was, again, an area with no form of government, laws, or regulations. The exact date that they moved is not known. The paragraph that stated the particulars of his purchase from Howe mentioned the payment was to be made on September 29<sup>th</sup>.



The Church records also state they were dismissed in September 1650, so it appears that it was near that time.

The genealogical descent from Thomas of Elham, which you will find in total at the conclusion of this history, is rather long and sometimes hard to comprehend. Therefore, I list here the Baker family lineage from the 1300's to the departure from England and coming to America:

Thomas Baker b-Abt 1300  
m-Thomasine Andrew b-Abt 1300  
Sir John Baker b-Abt 1330  
m-Mary Engham b- Abt 1330  
Richard Baker b-Abt 1370  
m-Not known

These first three Baker families are difficult to firmly assign to our pedigree since there was no source of information that particularly listed all their children. Easterly Wills confirms through Thomasine Andrew's will that she has a grandson, John Baker, to whom she "gives 2 Ewes and 20f.". <sup>102</sup> The will places the Andrew family at Elham, the same locality where our Thomas Baker lived. His will was presented in an earlier chapter. The Sir John above is the only John we found born in this time frame and assumed to be the John knighted by Edward III in Chapter 1 of this history. These first generations are considered as the beginning of our history. The time frame and the areas in which these people lived and what information was found all indicate this is the beginning of our family.

From this point on, EVERYTHING is fully documented in history and you may be assured this is your family lineage.

---

<sup>102</sup> *EASTRY WILLS p. 173 Con. Vol. XVIII, fol. 90*

Thomas Baker b-Abt 1410  
    m-Benedict Middilton b-Abt 1445  
Richard Baker b-Abt 1445  
    m-Joan \_\_\_\_\_ b-Abt 1445  
Sir John Baker b-1488  
    m-1st-Catherine Sackville  
    m-2nd-Elizabeth Dyneley Barrett  
John Baker II b-1531  
    m-Catherine Scott  
Sir Richard Baker b-1568  
    m-Margaret Manwaring  
Thomas Baker b-1590  
    m-Thomasin \_\_\_\_\_ b-Abt 1590  
Thomas Baker b-1618 (This is the emigrant to America in  
    1639)



# 7

## EAST HAMPTON, L. I.

This area of eastern Long Island had been purchased by Theophilus Eaton, Governour of the Colony of New Haven, and Edward Hopkins, Governour of the Colony of Connecticut, as evidenced by this deed which is on record:

It is from the four Sachems, PAGGATACUT, of Manhansett: WAYANDANCH of Miantacutt: MOMOWETA of Corchaki: NOWENDONAH of Shinacock.

It is dated April 29, 1648 and conveys the land to the "Eastward of Southampton bounds, to the Worshipful Theophilus Eaton, Esquire, Governour of the Colony of New Haven and the Worshipful Edward Hopkins Governour of the Colony of Connecticut and their assocyates . . . for and in consideration of 20 coats, 24 Looking Glasses, 24 Hoes, 24 Hatchets, 24 Knives, and one hundred Mucxs, already received by US, and reserve unto ourselves free Liberty to fish in all the cricks & ponds, and hunt up and down in the Woods without molestation, giving the English Inhabitants noe just cause of offence: likewise are to have the fynns & tails of all Whales cast up, and desire they may be friendly dealt with in the other part also to fish for shells to make Wampum of, and if the Indyans, in hunting deer shall chase them into the water and the English shall kill them, the English shall have the bodie and the Sachem the skin." The witnesses were, Richard Woodhull, Thomas Stanton, Robert Bond, Job Sayre, and Chectanoo (by his mark) the Interpreter.{sic}<sup>103</sup>

---

<sup>103</sup> O'Callaghan, E.B.,M.D. Vol. I p. 676-677  
THE DOCUMENTED HISTORY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
,1849

There is recorded a receipt from Edward Hopkins to "Robert Bond-inhabitant of East Hampton for f34. 4s. 8d. being the amount of monies paid fore the purchase of the Lands", and a certificate of the delivering to said Bond the writings of the said purchase, dated 16 April 1651. On a blank leaf of one of the old Books of Records are seen these words, "Robert Bond delivered upon the Govr. for the purchase of our Lands, for the towns use the sum of f1. 3s. 10d. Robert Bond for his expenses, going to the Mayne land in the Town's service the sum on f1. 3s. 6d." It appears the purchase was made by these two Governors in trust & in behalf of the Original Settlers of the Town.{sic} <sup>104</sup>

The above recorded paragraphs of this chapter are also found in the NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON, L.I. written by John Lyon Gardiner, April 1798. I use the reference as I found in "DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF NEW YORK", Vol. 1, by E. B. O'Callaghan, M.D., published by Weed, Parsons & Co., Albany in 1849. This book is my personal possession and part of my library of ancient books. Many other facts relating to our history will be taken from this volume, but not necessarily from the notes of Mr. Gardiner above mentioned.

The settlement of East Hampton thus began in 1649 by Daniel Howe and six others. The town totaled 31,000 acres and was divided among the original settlers in the proportion each had advanced purchase money. These settlers were the "proprietors" of the town and, as in many towns in New England, were a distinct body from the rest of the inhabitants. Thomas Baker, by the purchase of Howe's share became one of that select group. It was on May 10, 1650 that he entered into the agreement with Howe. As Alyce was in her last days of the first pregnancy (you will remember Hannah was baptized on the June 30, 1650) they did not move to their new home until September of 1650.

The town was laid out around the pond, probably out of necessity for water for the people and their animals. On the west side at the north end was Thomas Baker. The lot was 12 rods

---

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid* p. 677

wide and 1/2 mile deep. Across the street were the Ralph Daytons, Alyce's parents. Today the Episcopal Church stands on part of that property. To the south of Thomas Baker you would have found the Osborns. During Mavis' and my four-day search at East Hampton we stayed at the Maidstone Arms, which is the Osborn house, today converted to an Inn. We had breakfast every morning in the enclosed front porch overlooking the Village Pond and the Old South Cemetery with the tombstone of Thomas Baker just across the road.

The first house of Thomas and Alyce was small, as were all the homes of the first settlers. They were made of logs or rough boards and had thatched roofs. We found no evidence of when Thomas replaced the small house, but feel it was soon, because before the church was built, Sabbath services were held at their house and they were paid 18 pence each Sunday for the room. In his private life he was a farmer like the other farmers of East Hampton in his day. He paid more attention to horses, cattle, sheep, and goats than to raising grain. Thomas Baker was East Hampton's first Inn Keeper and ran the Ordinary. In English this means a house at which meals are available at a fixed price and where ales and beverages are available. The establishment of a tavern, inn, ordinary, or victualling house, as it was variously called, was an important event in the history of New England. The tavern was a recognized institution of Colonial Life. Its important character was recognized and great care was exercised in its regulation. Only persons of good character were appointed innkeepers.

The record shows he was still licensed to be an Innkeeper in 1673.<sup>105</sup>

There was also no store or regular merchant in Thomas' day. The records show that goods were consigned to him by merchants in New Haven and elsewhere for him to supply the village. It is also recorded he bought and sold the whale oil, which was then the most important article of production and

---

<sup>105</sup> Ratary, *EAST HAMPTON HISTORY* p. 206

export. The shipping of such was probably an easy task for him as his son Nathaniel's father-in-law was in whaling and had the connections from his earlier days at New Amsterdam.

Figure 07-01: Thomas Baker House, East Hampton, L. I.

Public offices were few. Three magistrates, who were called Townsmen, were chosen annually. Their oath of office points out their duty. It was as follows:

"You being chosen by the Court for the careful and comfortable carrying on of the affairs of this Town, do here swear by the name of the Great & Everlasting God, that you will faithfully, and without respect of persons, execute all such laws and orders as are or shall be made & established by this Court, according to God, according to the trust committed to you during this year for which you are chosen & until new ones be chosen, if you remain among us, so help you God."<sup>106</sup>

The three men were to meet the first second day of every month for the tryall of any case according to an Order and to consider of those things that may concern the publick good of the place & whosoever of these Three men do not attend the day at 8 o'clock in the morning shall be liable to pay 5s." John Mulford, Robert Bond & Thomas Baker chosen by this Court for the execution of those Orders, complied with their trust for this year. Ralph Dayton, Constable and Benjamin Price, Recorder." Done at a General Court holden October 7, 1651 {sic} <sup>107</sup>

Hedge's History of East Hampton states that at the first General Court held in October of 1650 Thomas Baker was elected

---

<sup>106</sup> O'Callaghan, E.B., M.D. Vol.I p. 679  
THE DOCUMENTED HISTORY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,  
1849

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid* p. 680

a Townsman and each year thereafter, until 1662. Southampton and Southold had been established before East Hampton. Southampton had put itself under the Jurisdiction of Connecticut in 1644 and Southold did under New Haven in 1648. East Hampton was a Plantation or Commonwealth as it is styled in the Record that was Independent of any other Government from its first settlement in 1650 until 1657. The magistrates frequently asked advice in different cases "of the neighbors Towns of Southampton and Southold" and sometimes of "the Gentlemen at Hartford".<sup>108</sup>

The Recorder & Constable were the only other public officers chosen. Their oaths pointed out their duties which were similar to the Townsmen. The Constable was always a reputable citizen and of great authority. He, by law, moderated the General Court. The Recorder, or Secretary, not only recorded all orders of the General Court, but the decisions of the Magistrates, and by a vote passed in 1656 which added to his duties, the depositions of witnesses in trials at Law. For this service he was allowed a stated price as were the Magistrates and Constable. The trials were sometimes with a jury, but most of the time, without.

"John Mulford, Robert Bond, and Thomas Baker chosen by this Court for the execution of those Orders, complied with their trust for this year. Ralph Dayton, Constable and Benjamin Price, Recorder," Done at General Court holden October 7, 1651. These three were also given the power to preform marriages during this year.

It was added and decreed October 1652 that "if any man be aggrieved with any thing that is done by the men that are in

---

<sup>108</sup> *Hedges, Judge William B. EAST HAMPTON RECORDS, Vol.1*  
p.8



authority, that he shall have liberty to make his appeal to the next General Court, or when the freemen are assembled together for their public occasions."<sup>109</sup>

You can see that, although they were independent of any other jurisdiction, they ran a just and fair community.

The residents of East Hampton at that time may be known from a resident of Southampton as well as a native of Kent, in England, may be distinguished from a Yorkshire man. This statement found in a writing of 1798 was so amusing to me, as in October of 1990, while in England to trace our family, we visited our British friends the Michael Hinders, in County Wiltshire, and informed them that we had traced our roots to County Kent. Michael's comment was, "Oh! You're one of those Kentish men."

The people of East Hampton had come primarily from County Kent and Southampton from other parts of England. The names of Pierson, Halsy, Howell, Topping, Sanford, Cooper, White, Post, etc. are common to Southampton and confined there, as are the names of Mulford, Osborn, Conkling, Baker, Parson, Miller, Gardiner, Dayton, etc. to East Hampton. Gardiner's notes go on to say that very little intercourse (in colonial times this meant little trade or barter etc.) took place between the two towns before the Revolutionary War. After it, visits and intermarriages became more frequent.<sup>110</sup>

---

<sup>109</sup> Hedges, Judge William B. EAST HAMPTON RECORDS Vol.1 p.8-9

<sup>110</sup> Gardiner, Jonathan T. CHRONICLES OF EAST HAMPTON p. 44

To return to recorded facts on the plantation known as East Hampton:

The church was built in 1653. It was "26 foote long, 20 foote broad and 8 foote stood" and had a thatched roof. Tradition locates that church on the east side of the present burying grounds, opposite to and west of the house lot of Lyon Gardiner, and also on the east side of the street lived William Hedges. On the west side of the street lived Thomas Baker and Thomas Osborn, and all within one-forth of a mile of that church as a center.{sic}<sup>111</sup>

The lands were divided among those original settlers in the proportion each had advanced purchase money. These settlers were the "proprietors" of the town, and as in many towns in New England, were a distinct body from the rest of the inhabitants. In 1652 the proprietors numbered thirty-four, most of whom were entitled to a thirteen "acre" lot, some to a twenty "acre" lot, and two, one of whom was Thomas Baker, to a twenty-one "acre" lot. From this it is not to be understood that each proprietor was entitled only to the number of acres mentioned in his lot, but that he was entitled to such a proportion of the lands of the town-the entire tract-as his thirteen "acre" lot, twenty "acre" lot, or twenty-one "acre" lot bore to the entire number of "acres" comprised in the thirty-four lots. The "acres" mentioned in the lots of the original proprietors were in later years called "acres of commonage". At first home lots averaged eight to ten acres were set apart to each proprietor and the remainder of the land was allotted from time to time in varying proportions from acre for acre or less, to three, four, five and ten acres for each "acre" of the original lot or "acre of commonage". The result was that the lands of each proprietor when set apart to him consisted of widely-scattered parcels.

---

<sup>111</sup> Judge Hedges, HISTORY OF EAST HAMPTON Introduction to Vol. I

Book A., p 18 E.H.R. contains the lands of Thomas Baker as follows:

"The record of the allotment to Mr. Thomas Baker, containing a one and twenty acre lot and plain with all privileges and appurtenances belonging to such allotment as followeth:

Impimis The House Lot with the addition containing twelve acres more or less, bounded etc.

2 Five and one half acres of great plains

3 Eleven and a half acres of the East Plains

4 Nine and a half acres of Woodland

5 A second home lot containing six acres

And so on, describing in all, twenty-one parcels of land containing from one to thirty-one acres, all of which were allotted to him by virtue of his ownership of said "one and twenty acre lot".

The greatest allotments were made after his death, made in 1706-8- 1710-36-39-40 and 1747. <sup>112</sup>

When Thomas Baker moved from Milford to East Hampton in 1650, East Hampton, as mentioned, was an independent commonwealth. The Dutch at New Amsterdam gave up all claim to that part of Long Island lying east of Oyster Bay by the Treaty of Hartford (1650).

There was no written compact until 1655 when the following was entered into by all freemen of the town:

"Forasmuch as it has blessed the Almighty God by the wise dispensation of his province so to order and dispose of things that we the inhabitants of Easthampton, are now dwelling together, the Word of God requires that in order to maintain the peace and union of such people, there should be an orderly and a decent government established, according to God, to order and dispose as occasion shall require. We do, therefore, sociate and cojoin

---

<sup>112</sup> Judge Frank Baker, THE ANCESTORS OF SAMUEL BAKER OF PLEASANT VALLEY, STEUBEN COUNTY & DESCENDANTS 1914 p.4-5

ourselves, and successors to be one town or corporation, and do for ourselves and our successors and such as shall be adjoined to us at any time hereafter, enter into combination and confederation together to maintain and preserve the purity of the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ which we now possess as also the discipline of the church which according to the truth of said Gospel, is now practiced among us, as also in our civil affairs to be guided and governed by such laws and orders as shall be made according to God, and which, by the vote of the major part, shall be in force among us. Furthermore, we do engage ourselves by this combination to stand to their orders and laws, that either are or shall be made, not swerving therefrom."<sup>113</sup>

The men of Easthampton at this time did not exceed forty in number but the "litel commonwealth", in the words of its own records, has an interest for historians and students of government out of all proportions to its size and numbers. No declarations were made, no resolutions passed, but they organized a government which was in fact a pure democracy and adopted a compact in which no power or source of power other than the "accepted inhabitants" of the town was recognized.<sup>114</sup>

In 1653 the English, under Lord Protector Cromwell, were at war with the Dutch and it was reported that the Dutch were inciting the Narragansett Indians to cut off the English. The Commission of the United Colonies met at Boston in April 1653 to consider the situation and voted that five hundred men should take to the field "if God called the colonies to make war against the Dutch".

Easthampton was on the frontier; her Indians greatly outnumbered the English and the record made by the men of East Hampton in the time of peril is full of interest to their descendants. There was among them no thought of retreat. They made no call upon others for protection, but at once began to

---

<sup>113</sup> THOMPSON'S HISTORY OF LONG ISLAND Vol. 1 p. 301

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid* p. 5

prepare for war. The first step was to provide a military code. Connecticut had adopted "The Body Of Laws" drawn up by Roger Ludlow in 1650. On 5 April 1653, East Hampton's freemen, in General Court assembled, ordered "yt the order in body of Lawes about Militarie afaiers shal stond in force with us". On 15 April the General Court ordered "yt there shal be a watch and a ward for the watch, that 2 shall watch every night and for ward one is to watch every day".

On 26 April the General Court ordered that "noe Indian shall come to the Towne unless it be upon especial occasion and none to come armed because the Dutch hath hired Indians against the English".

May 6<sup>th</sup>. it was ordered: "yt a firkin of powder and shott equivalent shall be sent for to Connecticut and men shall make pey eyther in Wheat, Butter or cheese at Goodman Clarke's at the Rivers Mouth at Mickelmas, and also that every man shall appear at the meeting forthwith upon an alarum made upon penalty of paigne ten shillings, the alarm being one gun and the beat of the drum".

May 9<sup>th</sup>. it was ordered "yt noe man shall goe forth of the towne to work or stay in other towne or place without acquainting two of the three men at least and have liberty from them, upon penalty of 40s for every days absence.{sic}<sup>115</sup>

In July, New Haven and Connecticut, with a majority vote of the Colonial Commissioners, called on Massachusetts for her quota of 500 men. Governor Endicott declined the honor of the call. They then sent agents to England to petition Cromwell to send ships and troops to aid the fighting of the Dutch. Cromwell responded by assigning Sir Richard Nicolls with the conquest of New Amsterdam.

---

<sup>115</sup> Judge Frank Baker, ANCESTORS OF SAMUEL BAKER OF PLEASANT VALLEY, STEUBEN COUNTY AND DESCENDANTS 1914 p. 7

The East Hampton Army under Lt. Talmadge and Ensign Thomas Baker were ready with their troops. A fleet had gathered at Boston and a movement against the Dutch was planned. Before the fleet sailed from Boston, Stuyvesant was obliged to surrender New Amsterdam to Nicolls. So East Hampton's Army under Talmadge and Baker was not called to take a ship to New Amsterdam to settle the differences with the Dutch.<sup>116</sup>

By 1658 the people of East Hampton were desirous to join with keniticut and place East Hampton under the juristiction of their government according to the term as Southampton is, and also to carie Goodwife Garlick yt she may be delivered up onto the authorities there for triall of the cause of witchcraft, which she is suspected of. The Court heard the case and responded: We think it good to certify yt it is desired & expected by this court yt you should carry neighbourly and peacably with no just offense to Jos. Garlick and his wife & yt yy should doe ye like to you. And we charge wee conceive and advise may be justly borne as follows: yt Jos. Garlick should bear the charge of her transportation hither and return home. 2ndly yt your town should bear all their own charges & the charge of their messengers and witnesses in bringing the case to tryall here and their return home- the Court being content to put ye charge of ye tryall here upon ye County's account.{sic} <sup>117</sup>

On May 20, 1658 Thomas Baker was elected one of the Magistrates of that General Court of Connecticut and was re-elected in 1659, 1660, 1661, and 1662. On April 20, 1662 Charles II granted Gov. Winthrop and 12 Assistants the Great Charter of Connecticut. On October 9, 1662 a new election was held and Thomas Baker was chosen in 1662 and 1663 as one of the Governor Winthrop's twelve Assistants.<sup>118</sup>

---

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid* p. 8

<sup>117</sup> *Hedges, Judge Henry P., EAST HAMPTON RECORDS Vol.I p.57*

<sup>118</sup> *PALFREY'S HISTORY OF NEW ENGLAND, Vol. 2 p.638*

Governor Nicolls, on the defeat of the Dutch, changed the name of the province and its chief town to New York, in Honor of the Duke of York who had intrusted him with the duty of putting down the Dutch. Nicolls won over the friendship of the Dutch population by the liberality and fairness of his government. Thomas Baker was chosen and sent to represent East Hampton at the meeting called by Governor Nicolls regarding the territory of Long Island. The history books say Nicolls secured the transfer of the favor the Iroquois along the Hudson had shown towards the Dutch to the English and this is probably true. However, there was another Englishman that had already established that relationship with the Indians for the Dutch and he was John Baker, son of the Arthur of Bodium, therefore a nephew of Thomas. We will address this John Baker's activities in a future chapter.

November 29, 1662. It is jointly & fully agreed that Mr. Thomas Baker, Mr. Thomas James, Mr. Lion Gardiner, Mr. Robert Bond, Mr. John Mulford, Thomas Tompson and Thomas Chatfield shall go to Southampton the next second day to compound a difference between Us & Capt. John Scott, Esq. and Mr. John Ogden about Meantaquit, and do hereby engage to ratifie and confirm what our committee shall conclude upon: & also we do empower this our Committee to joyne with Southampton and Southold about a Patent Grant. It was doubtless in contemplation to have the three towns join in one government as other towns on this continent had done. However, "April 26, 1664. At a Town Meeting the Town doth desire those men that doe goe to Hartford, to debate together with the Neighboring Plantations for the things of Mutual Government between Hartford and Us for our future Settlement, but to conclude of nothing, as understanding that the Governor will come over, or a Committee from the General Court". {sic}<sup>119</sup>

---

<sup>119</sup> O'Callaghan, E.B.,M.D. Vol. I p. 384-385  
THE DOCUMENTED HISTORY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, 1849

"Dec. 21, 1664. The inhabitants of this Town-  
understanding that we are off from Connecticut, and the  
magistrates not willing to act furthur on that account, that we  
may not be without laws & Government, it is agreed  
the former laws shall stand in force till we have further order from  
York. It is agreed that the Constable of the Town shall be secured  
by the Town for not gathering the Rates."<sup>120</sup>

Gov. Nicolls established a code known as "Dukes Laws" in  
1665 and granted a charter incorporating New York as a city the  
same year. In 1665 Thomas Baker was foreman of the first Grand  
Jury to sit in the Province of New York, in New York City. Nicolls  
served as governor until 1668, when he returned to England. Sir  
Richard Nicolls service to the crown ended when he was killed in  
the naval battle of Solebay during the Anglo-Dutch War.

In an earlier chapter, "The Days at Milford", I had made the  
comment that Thomas had been excommunicated from the  
church, but reinstated, and said I would talk about this again  
later. On one of Thomas Baker's last appointments to serve the  
Colony we find this recording. January of 1675 he was appointed  
by then Governor Andros as Justice Of the Peace for the East  
Riding of Yorkshire, a new division of the Colony that included a  
good portion of Long Island and part of Westchester. Mr. Thomas  
James the minister at East Hampton since 1653 would rather  
have seen his friend John Mulford appointed. He sighted to the  
Governor that Thomas, 30 odd years before, had been an  
excommunicated person from the church and as such was not fit  
for public office. In 1671 Thomas Baker, in representing the  
people of East Hampton, had voiced his opposition to the  
purchase of lands from the Montauk Indians by Pastor James and  
John Mulford upon the grounds that it would deprive the people  
of the town the rights of commonage (grazing of animals) on the  
tract. The town records also show there had been horse trading  
between Mr. James and Thomas Baker and the problems from  
those dealings were more the cause for Mr. James's statements

---

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid* p. 685



rather than the ancient church trouble. The Governor wrote a letter to Justice Of The Peace John Topping of Southold, telling him to notify Mr. James to present to him, Mr. Topping, any claims he has of wrong doing by Mr. Baker, and when he received it he was to present both Mr. Baker and himself the Governor with a transcript of his claims, and then he would make a determination on the claims. Nothing more was heard from Mr. James and Thomas Baker was appointed to the post. He held the position for ten years and as such Justice sat in the Court of Assizes in New York, , Southampton and Southold. (Woods L.I. History p.159)<sup>121</sup>

I trust, from the history this far, you have discovered that Thomas Baker was a leading citizen of East Hampton, but also of the whole Colony of New York and played a very important part in its development. He represented the area at meetings held with the Governors to openly express the objection to the paying of taxes to the Crown without representation.

In an interesting report filed by Gov. Dongans to the Crown's inquiry as to revenues from the Colony, and dealing especially with that of Long Island, he reports: The first year there were 52 Pounds offered for the Excise of Long Island, but I thought it unreasonable it being the best peopled place in this Government, and within there is great consumption of Rum, and therefore I gave commission to Mr. Nicolls (He the son of the earlier Gov. Nicolls) and Mr. Vaughton to gather the Excise from the party from whom I made the agreement, and that I offered to pay them 40 pounds for their work, and that they should account with Mr. Stanton for the remainder. Since the last 2 years past Mr. Henry Fillkin has been collector and for his pains we have paid 30 pounds per annum. What returns he has made I refer to the audit. Most part of that Island especially towards the East end are the same stamp with those of New-England, refractory and very loath to have any commerce with this place to the great

---

<sup>121</sup> Judge Frank Baker, ANCESTORS OF SAMUEL BAKER OF PLEASANT VALLEY, STEUBEN COUNTY AND DESCENDANTS 1914 p. 15

determent of His Majesties revenue and ruin to our merchants. To prevent which the aforesaid act of Assembly imposing 10 percent upon all goods as should be imported from any colony where such goods are not produced, passed, which was intended chiefly to hinder their carrying their oyle (meaning Whale Oil) to Boston and bringing goods from thence into this Government. <sup>122</sup> Such was the grievance of the English Government as to what the peoples of Eastern Long Island were doing.

People of the three eastern towns objected strongly to paying taxes in support of a government unless taxes were levied by a General Assembly chosen by the people. In 1681 Thomas Baker, with Capt. Josiah Hobart, was again chosen to go to Huntington, Long Island, representing East Hampton to complain of the lack of a General Assembly, as an insupportable grievance.<sup>123</sup>

Here they are, 95 years before the Revolutionary War, already declaring, "No Taxation without Representation!"

We must return to the more private part of his life as this is where you and I fit into this history. In Colonial times most men and women were address as Goodman and Goody \_\_\_\_\_. Only a few were spoken of, or recorded as Mr. or Mrs., but we find our ancestors referred to as Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Baker.

The children born to Thomas and Alice were:

1. Hannah b-6-26-1650 at Milford, bapt. 6-30-1650  
m.Ebenezer Leek
2. Thomas b-7-26-1654 at E. Hampton m-Ann Topping  
Southold,LI

For those that may descend from this line see "Ancestors of

---

<sup>122</sup> O'Callaghan, E.B.,M.D. Vol. I p. 166  
THE DOCUMENTED HISTORY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,

<sup>123</sup> Ratary, EAST HAMPTON HISTORY p. 206

Samuel Baker" by Judge Frank Baker, Chicago 1914.  
This family

removed 1st to Branford, Conn., and later to Steuben  
County.

3. NATHANIEL b-12-22-1655 at East Hampton OUR  
GRANDSIRE

4. Abigail b- at E. Hampton m. \_\_\_\_ Tuthill <sup>124</sup>

In 1688 he was chosen by the voters of East Hampton one  
of the commissioners for the trial of small causes and this  
appears to have been his last public office.<sup>125</sup>

Thomas died 30 April 1700 and is buried in the Old South  
Cemetery, by the Village Pond, across the street from the Osborn  
House. A white stone marks his grave, most definitely done at a  
much later date, as well as the bronze marker that identifies him  
as a soldier of the Colonial Wars. The inscription on the stone:

IN MEMORY OF  
MR. THOMAS BAKER  
AND HIS WIFE  
They came from England A.D. 1639  
He to Milford, She to New Haven  
Were married 1643. came to  
this town 1650 where he  
died 1700 Aged 81. She  
died at Amagansett 1709  
and was buried there. He  
was here a Townsman 1650.  
Assistant of The General  
Court of Conn. 1658. Overseer,  
Constable, Justice Of The  
Peace 1675 and Patentee  
in both Town Patents.

---

<sup>124</sup> *Baker Marriages - Call "D" East Hampton Library*

<sup>125</sup> *Judge Frank Baker , ANCESTORS OF SAMUEL BAKER OF  
PLEASANT VALLEY, STEUBEN COUNTY AND DESCENDANTS 1914  
p. 15*

Figure 07-02: Tombstone of Thomas Baker, Old Cemetery,  
East Hampton



# 8

## AMAGANSETT BY THE SEA

Upon the death of Thomas, Alice went to live with her son Nathaniel at Amagansett. There, seven years later, she died on February 4, 1708 at the age of 88 years. Due to the inclement weather she was buried on land across the road from Nathaniel's home. This was done with the intent that mother would be moved to be beside Thomas in the spring, at the old burial grounds by the pond in East Hampton. This never happened. So they lie some four miles apart. Her gravestone, the oldest in the burying grounds, stands at the head of thirteen Baker family markers.

The inscription reads:

Here lieth ye Body  
of Alice Baker, Formerli  
ye wife of Thomas  
Baker who died  
February ye 4 1708:9  
in ye 88 year of  
her age.

Figure 08-01: Mavis and 13 Baker Tombstones at  
Amagansett

About 1670 three men of East Hampton village, Thomas Mulford, Jeramiah Conklin, and Minister James purchased a very large tract of land at Montauk from 'Poniute the Indian Chief'. This tract was called the Nine Score purchase because the three men were reimbursed on conveying it to the proprietors by an allotment of nine score acres at Amagansett. Some of the descendants of the Mulford and Conklin families lived in the

village for generations, but Mr. James soon sold both his tracts to Abraham Schellinger. Such a large conveyance plainly shows that the place at the time had a large unowned, as well as a large unoccupied territory.<sup>126</sup>

Figure: 08-02 Nine Score Purchase and owners in 1700

Amagansett village was first settled by four families in the following order: Baker, Schellinger, Conklin, and Barnes. One of the oldest gravestones in the old burial ground is at the head of the grave of Alice (Dayton) Baker, widow of Thomas Baker, the first, of East Hampton.

The graveyard was private property until a deed was passed, dated April 1739, conveying four poles of land to Jonathan and Daniel Baker, to the inhabitants of the village of Amagansett, their heirs and assigns forever, for a burying ground. This instrument was deemed necessary, transferring the land to the two sons of Nathaniel after his death. They then deeded the property to the village with the property strictly to be used as a burial ground. Prior to this, the property was in Nathaniel's name, being just across the road from his home. Later, in 1812, an additional piece of ground was purchased. It was adjacent to the first tract and had the same understanding as to its use.<sup>127</sup>

Note: A pole is equal to a rod and in old English terms it meant a cube of 1000 feet. This then defines the size of the original burial ground.

Nathaniel had taken as his bride Catherine (Catalnntie) Schellinger, the daughter of the Dutch man, Jacobus Schellinger. Some records spell it Schellinx.

Mavis and I spent four days in East Hampton and Amagansett gathering our information on Thomas Baker, our

---

<sup>126</sup> THE HISTORY OF AMAGANSETT, 1920 *Local Commemorative. ye 2nd page*

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid ye 4th page*

progenitor. One day we held in our hands the Bible printed in London in 1599.<sup>128</sup> This was the Bible that Thomas Baker carried with him when he came to America.

In Thomas' hand we found the following entries in his Bible:

*Thomas Backer was born ye 29 of September 1618.*

*Alys ye wife of Thomas Backer was born ye 22 May 1620.*

*Thomas Backer and Ales his wife were married the 20 of June 1643.*

*We came out of England in the year 1639.*

Nathaniel was given the Bible on the death of his father and made the following memorandum in his own handwriting:

*Thomas Backer since deceased in the year of his age 82 in April the 30 in the year of Lord Ano 1700.*

*Hannah being ye child of Thomas Backer was born to him ye 26 June 1650.*

*Thomas being ye child of Thomas Backer was born to him ye 26 July 1654.*

*Nathaniel being ye child of Thomas Backer was born to him ye 22 of December 1655.*

*Another scribe makes the next entry-*

---

<sup>128</sup> THE BREECHES BIBLE 1599 By Chrisyopher Barker - London



*Nathaniel Backer decest February the 28th, 1738-9 in the 84 year of age.*

*Abigall ye daughter of Thomas Backer was born to him ye first June 1658.*

*He then records his own family:*

*Nathaniel Backer was bornd the 22 day of December 1655.*

*Katherine Backer the wife of Nathaniel Backer was bornd the 9 day of April 1656.*

*The birth of the children of Nathaniel Backer and Katherine Backer*

*Lieut. Jonathan Backer was bornd the 12th day of Febrary 1679.*

*Hannah Backer was bornd the 7 day of July 1681 and dyed the 26 day May 1714.*

*Abigal Backer was borned the 4 day of April 1687.*

*Mary Backer was bornd the 21 day of November 1689.*

*Hannah Backer was bornd the 26 day of January 1695.*

*He then enters of his parents and his own family:*

*My sister Hannah Leek was bornd the 26 day of June 1650.*

*My brother Thomas Backer was bornd the 26 day of  
July 1650.*

*This is an account when my father and mother came  
out of England*

*before they were married. They came out of England  
in year 1639.*

*My father and mother was married the 20 day June  
1643.*

*My father Thomas Backer dyed the 30 day April  
1700, which was in*

*the eighty second year of his age. Mother Backer  
dyed the 4 day*

*of February 1708-9 in the eighty sixth year of her  
age.*

*My wife Katherine dyed the 19 day May 1722 in the  
sixty sixt year*

*of her age.*

*I was married to my second wife which was Sarre  
Post August 26 in*

*yeare 1724.*

*My second wife Sarah died October the ninth in the  
yeare 1727 in*

*the sixty second yeare of her age. {sic}<sup>129</sup>*

---

<sup>129</sup> THE BREECHES BIBLE 1599 by Barker- London p. Front Record Pages.

What a thrilling day it was to find this Bible and to hold it in our hands. We now had in our hands the complete families of Thomas and Nathaniel recorded in their own handwriting!

Where Nathaniel lived when married is not known. It may have been with his parents as their house was fairly large. His brother Thomas had also started his married life with his parents. Nathaniel and Catherine's first child Jonathan may have been born there, or in some other small house he may have first built. It was in 1680 that a sailing ship arrived at Sag Harbor from Holland and the ballast in its hold were large, oak timbers which Nathaniel purchased. He hauled them by ox cart to Amagansett and used them for the timbers under the house he built for his new family.<sup>130</sup> Those timbers must have been very good as that house still stands today, 320 year later, in 1999.

Figure 08-03: Nathaniel Baker house built in 1680 at Amagansett

Nathaniel's house was the first built in Amagansett. The town's name was used as early as 1650, but more often it was called "Eastern Plains" in early days. In later days the area now the village was called "Ye Amagansett Woods". The unwooded part was called "The Indian Well Hollow". Years ago an old man, who lived past ninety, said the Indians told him the name which means, Drinking Place, came from the "good drinking water" and the well was at the bottom of the lot east of the village, and that the water came out of the stump of a pepperidge tree.<sup>131</sup>

In 1678, before Nathaniel built this house, he and five men built a horse mill at the southern end of East Hampton. They were all to be of equal responsibility in building and operating the mill. They further agreed "that not any of us shall grind for any other person, other than our respective families, upon ye forfeiture of two shillings, the bushel, by any person of us shall be so doing."

---

<sup>130</sup> *THE HISTORY OF AMAGANSETT*, 1920 *Local Commemorative* ye 8th page.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid* ye 2nd page.

{sic} This sentence is very ambiguous, but they probably understood it all right.<sup>132</sup>

Nathaniel Baker and Catherine had the following children:

1. Lieut. Jonathan, b. 2-12-1679 at Amagansett (our next grandsire)
2. Joanna, b. 7-7-1681, d. 5-26-1714 m. 1st a (Schellinx-Shellinger) m. 2nd Joseph Ogden of Elizabeth Town, East Jersey.
3. Abigail, b. 3-15-1681/2 m. Daniel Hedges of Sag Harbor 9-20-1702
4. Henry, b. 4-16-1686 d. as an infant.
5. Catherine, b. 4-1-1687 m. a Mumford.
6. Mary, b. 11-21-1689 m. Timothy Woodruff of Elizabeth Town, East Jersey
7. Daniel, b. 8-1-1692 m. Abigail Osborn 9-7-1714.
8. Hannah, b. 1-26-1694 m. Samuel Parsons 12-14-1715.

133

There is a special point of interest with this family information. The two sons, Jonathan and Daniel, both spent their entire lives in Amagansett. Joanna and Mary both moved to the new colony, East Jersey. I must also inform you that Jonathan above had a son, Jacob, who also followed his two aunts to Elizabeth Town and he was our next grandsire.

In a bit of recorded history, we find daughter Abigail reported seeing 13 whales cast on the shore one day as she rode her horse from Amagansett to Sag Harbor to visit her in-laws. It is no wonder that all hands were required to assist with cutting up and boiling down whales for the oil. One recording about this duty stated that Mr. James and old Mr. Osborn were the only two not required to assist.<sup>134</sup> This gives you some idea of the magnitude of whaling which was the area's major industry in those days.

---

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid p. 9 Baker Family*

<sup>133</sup> EAST HAMPTON CHURCH RECORDS, Vol. V p. 577

<sup>134</sup> BARNES FAMILY HISTORY, East Hampton Library p. 17

Nathaniel died on February 27, 1739 and was buried on the grounds he had set aside as a burial ground on his property when his mother died in 1708. He was buried beside his mother and his two wives. His gravestone has the following inscription:

HERE  
LIES THE BODY OF  
NATHANIEL BAKER  
THE SON OF MISTER  
THOMAS BAKER  
WHO DYED FEBRUAR  
y 27 AND IN  
THE 84TH YEAR OF  
HIS AGE-1738-9

We also found a bronze colonial war marker on his grave.

The Will of NATHANIEL BAKER:

In the name of God, Amen, April 12, 1738. I Nathaniel Backer of East Hampton, in Suffolk County, being weak in body, I leave to my son Jonathan one piece of land from a white oak tree that stands at the corner of the land that was Joshua

Garlick's land, along the highway westward 40 poles, then northwestward to corner of Thomas Chatfield's land, being 10 acres, and all the land laid out to 2 acres of Commonage in the Last Division, and 2 acres of Commonage west of Montauck, also my large chest and the chest in my bedroom and one half of my clothes, and my Great Coat and a silver spoon, "and the reason I give my said son no more land is because

my grandson Jonathan came and told me his father ordered him to get a deed of me,

accordingly, with the consent of his mother, I gave him a deed for some land and

meadow, dated 1729." I leave my son Daniel one half of my clothes and \_\_\_ pounds of money " if I have so much on my decease" , and whereas I have in time past given my son Daniel deeds of gifts, I ratify same. "The reason I have given him more

than my son Jonathan, is because that for several years past I have had most of my maintenance from him". I leave my daughter Catharine Mulford, a frying pan and a silver spoon. To my daughter Hannah, wife of Samuel Pierson, a great Brass kettle. I have given my daughter Joanna Ogden her portion with what I have given her daughter Joanna. I have given my daughter Mary Woodruff, her portion with what I have given her daughter Catharine. I make my son Daniel and my neighbor Thomas

Osborn, Jr., Executors. Witnessed by: Matthias Burnet, David Conklin, Jr. and Daniel Baker, Jr.<sup>135</sup>

The will was proven March 8, 1739.

Before I move on with our direct line of descent, I am going to discuss son Daniel and his family. This has a direct association with our line of ancestry as two of his children moved to the Colony of New Jersey. Son Daniel was born August 1, 1692 and married Abigail Osborn born in 1698. She was the daughter of Daniel Osborn. They had eight children:

1. Daniel Bapt. 11-6-1715
2. Nathaniel b. 6-1-1718 Later in West Field, East Jersey.
3. Infant daughter b. 1720 d. 1-24-1721
4. Elizabeth b. 2-11-1722
5. Catharine b. 10-4-1724 d. by 4-24-1748
6. Henry b. 1726 d. 5-13-1780 at West Field, East Jersey.  
m. Phebe Hedges, have son Jonathan I.
7. Abraham Bapt. 11-2-1729
8. Abigail b. 1-4-1732/3 <sup>136</sup>

Daniel died on March 16, 1740 and his wife, Abigail, on October 11, 1748.

The Will of Daniel Baker Dated 5-15-1740:

---

<sup>135</sup> ABSTRACT OF WILLS, NEW YORK, Vol. 3 p. 269 - Original Bk. 13 p.263

<sup>136</sup> EAST HAMPTON CHURCH RECORDS, Vol. V p. 578

In the Name Of God, Amen. I Daniel Baker of East Hampton, in Suffolk County, being sick. I leave to my wife Abigail the use of 1/3 of all my lands for life; also 1/3 of all household goods, and 2 cows and a horse and a silver spoon, and 10 sheep. I leave my son Daniel my house and lot and all my lands and meadows at Accobonack and Nepeage; and 3 pieces of land between the land called Ephriam's Ground, and the land of my brother Jonathan Baker, and all my rights of commonage; also a parcel of land that lately belonged to Ephriam Edwards. Also he is to pay my son Abraham 10 pounds when he is 21 years old. I also leave him all my wainage and hand tools. I leave to my son Henry 100 acres of land in Elizabeth Town joining to the 100 acres I have given to my son Nathaniel. I leave my 3 daughters 2/3 of all household goods. All the rest of my estate to be sold. I make my friend Eleazer Miller and my brother Thomas Osborne executors. Witness Samuel Mulford, Jr., Matthias Burnel and Henry Conklin.<sup>137</sup> Will proven August 26, 1740.

It was this will that assisted us in our search for the particular Jonathan Baker that we were searching for. We had been searching for four years in New York and were ready to move to Connecticut until we found this on our first visit to East Hampton. The two statements, "to my son Henry and Nathaniel in Elizabeth Town, New Jersey", showed a new place to look. However, it led us to Westfield. Our search centers were now within 30 miles of our home.

Before I leave the eastern end of Long Island I would like to continue with his son, Daniel, b. 11-6-1715 and mentioned in the will above. This Daniel married Mary Osborn. They had three children: Nathaniel, Elizabeth, and Polly. Elizabeth married Abraham Edwards of East Hampton. Elizabeth died in 1815 at 68 years of age. Polly married Silas Dibble. Daniel married second. After Mary Osborn died he wed Mary, the widow of Jeremiah Conklin, by whom he had another daughter, Abigail. Abigail married John Davis. The night before Daniel Baker drowned his wife Mary had a dream that the tide rose so high that it forced

---

<sup>137</sup> DANIEL BAKER WILL, *East Hampton Records, Hedges* p. 244

open the door and a casket was washed into the house. The next morning she begged him not to go whaling that day for fear something would happen. He replied he thought he would go that day, but then go no more. The church records state: "Jan. 10th, 1753 Died Jacob Shellix (Schellinger), Daniel Baker, and Jacob negro man of Shellix, were all three drown in the surf".<sup>138</sup> This relates to some of the dangers and tragedies associated with the whaling industry, which the Schellinger and Baker families were involved in. This was the major industry at East Hampton at that time.

To return to our direct line of descent:

LIEUT. JONATHAN, the son of Nathaniel b. 2-12-1679, married June 6, 1700, Hannah Davis, who had been b. 1680, d. 6-9-1757. He d. 3-4-1747/8. He was a carpenter. To this union three children were born:

1. Jonathan (also called Lieut.) b. 5-22-1704, who inherited the homestead.

He m. Mary Talmadge and had a son Jonathan. (Can you see how difficult it was to find the correct Jonathan.

2. David b. 1706 d. 1711

3. Jacob Bapt. 10-20-1706 THIS IS OUR NEXT GRAND-SIRE <sup>139</sup>

Jonathan is buried in his father's graveyard and his grave is four plots from his mother Alice's. The inscription on his stone:

Here lieth  
Jonathan Baker  
Died March 4 1747  
in ye 69 year  
Of His Age

---

<sup>138</sup> THE HISTORY OF AMAGANSETT, 1920 Local Commemorative. ye 10th page

<sup>139</sup> Ratary, Jeannette E. EAST HAMPTON HISTORY & GENEALOGY, p. 208



History tells us that two of Jacob's aunts, daughters of Daniel, moved to Elizabeth Town, New Jersey and we would find Jacob there also. All three will be at Westfield, East Jersey, in a future chapter. They were there because of another John Baker. This John was a grandson of Sir Richard 'The Chronicler' by his son Arthur, who lived at Bodium, in County Sussex, England. This John also came to America, but settled at New Amsterdam and gained favor with the Dutch when they controlled that part of the American Colony. His brother Joseph also came with him and we will learn more about them as this history continues in the next chapter.



# 9

## STATEN ISLAND AND NEW AMSTERDAM

The first exploration of this area had been done by the Cabots in the closing years of the 15<sup>th</sup>. century. Verrazono, after whom the bridge across New York Harbor is named was also here in 1524. However, it remained for Henry Hudson, an Englishman in the service of the Dutch, to discover the river in 1609 and establish Dutch claim to ownership of the area. Colonization began in 1624 when Captain Cornelius May, as governor, arrived with about thirty families, mostly Walloons. A few of the colonists settle on Manhattan Island, but most went up the Hudson to establish Fort Orange on the site of the present day Albany. However, few colonists were continuing to arrive, so in 1629 the Patroon System was established. Peter Minuit, the third governor, had been ordered to "clear the title" and he purchased Manhattan Island from the Indians. This he did on May 6, 1626 by paying for the island with trinkets and beads now said to have been worth about \$24. He built a fort and named the settlement New Amsterdam.<sup>140</sup>

Walloons, people of southeastern Belgium, were distinct from the people of Flanders, who spoke a dialect similar to the French language. They were descended from Gallic Belgae and were of Celtic origin. They suffered religious persecution in their homelands. Some of the Walloons were Protestant and settled in

---

<sup>140</sup> AMERICAN PEOPLES ENCYCLOPEDIA Vol.14 p.14-603 &  
p.14-627

England and some came to New Amsterdam, at the mouth of the Hudson River, together with the French Huguenots.<sup>141</sup>

And so our personal history continues. Cornelis Melyn, a Walloon Huguenot, was from Antwerp, Belgium. He went to Amsterdam, Holland, where he married. The record of his marriage, which determines also the year of his birth is in the old archives. "Gementi Amsterdam, Folio 75, V, extract from the church marriage enrollment register from 7 January 1637 - 30 to March 1638," D.T.-B-No.433 <sup>142</sup>

Translated, the record above reads: "Cornelis Melyn Van Antwerpen age 20 years, living in the Stautstract, assisted by Gerart Lodroijsz and Jannetie Ariaenz Van Myert, aged 23 years".

This entry is under 22 April 1627 and he probably remained in Amsterdam until he came to America. In 1639 he was in New Amsterdam and in 1640 he sent an application to the West India Company in Holland for a grant of Staten Island. Upon returning to Holland and receiving from the Amsterdam Chamber of Commerce authority to settle a colony on Staten Island, he returned again to America with his wife, three children and servants.

They planted a colony on Staten Island in 1641 which survived for two years before being broken up by the Indian War of 1643. In 1643 he received a grant for a double lot in Manhattan, which was actually not recorded until 28 April 1644. He then moved his family to New Amsterdam and took up residence on the east side of Broad Street (now Broadway), between Stone and Pearl Street. This was a pleasant location facing the East River. He was, in 1644, made President of the Council of Eight Men elected to adopt measures against the Indians. This body met once each week. There he espoused the

---

<sup>141</sup> *THE AMERICAN PEOPLES ENCYCLOPEDIA* , Vol. 19 p. 19-779

<sup>142</sup> *Melyn History* , Call JF90 - East Hampton Library p. 50

popular side of politics, being opposed to Governor Stuyvesant, for which he was heavily fined and banished for seven years.<sup>143</sup>

He left for Holland seeking redress and was shipwrecked. He lost one of his sons and barely escaped with his own life. The home government sustained his appeal, but Stuyvesant still persisted in his opposition. He was awarded by Director General Kieft a "ground brief" or Patent, covering all (except a small reservation) of the island and investing Melyn with all the "powers, jurisdiction, privileges, and priemines" of a Patroon. He returned to Staten Island in 1650 and established a number of settlers. He built a house for himself and resided there with his family until he was again dispersed by the Indians in the massacre of 1655.<sup>144</sup>

He then moved to New Haven, Conn. where he and his son Jacob took the oath of fidelity on April 7, 1657. The interesting story of his troubles with the Indians and with Kieft's government has been told in the early histories of Manhattan and Staten Island, which we will leave for you to search if you are interested.

In 1659 he returned again to Holland, where he effected a final settlement of his difficulties, relinquished Staten Island to the West Indian Company, and soon after, returned to New Netherland. He died in 1674, survived by his wife, three sons Jacob, Cornelius and Isaac, and three daughters, Marian (married and residing at New Haven), Susanna, and Magdaleen.

<sup>145</sup> We also are certain of a Cornelia from information in East Hampton that Hatfield failed to acknowledge.

---

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid* p. 50

<sup>144</sup> Hatfield's, THE HISTORY OF ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY p. 83

*Innes, the historian, regards him as the central figure in New Amsterdam, and points out with admiration his determined character as the first one in the New World to stand for individual rights against arbitrary power. [ I do not believe Innes knew of the stand that the English settlers on the Eastern end of Long Island were expressing and fighting their taxation without representation.]* <sup>145</sup> *Ibid* p. 83

Before we deal with Cornelia, we will relate to his eldest son Jacob as he became involved with the Baker family also after his marriage. Jacob was born at Antwerp, Holland, about 1640, and came to America as an infant. His boyhood days were spent among exciting scenes, by which he was educated in the love of liberty and the hatred of oppression. He accompanied his father to Holland and back. During his residence at New Haven he was reprimanded by Governor Newman, as related in the "Blue Laws" of Connecticut, for kissing and taking other liberties with Miss Sarah Tuttle. He married, in 1662, Hannah, daughter of George Hubbard, of Guilford, Connecticut. Her sister Abigail, in 1657, had become the wife of Humphrey Spinning. He and Spinning attached themselves to the band of pilgrims who, in 1665, emigrated from New Haven to Elizabeth Town. He had been familiar, doubtless, with this particular locality from his childhood, by reason of his residence on Staten Island. His knowledge of the Dutch language, and possibly of the Indian tongue also, made him a valuable acquisition to the new colony of Achter Koll.<sup>146</sup>

His house lot contained four acres, 10 by 4 chains, bounded on the west his brother-in-law, Humphrey Spinning's; on the south by John Winas's; on the north by William Johnson's; and on the east by a highway. This lot, with his house, barn, orchard, etc., he sold, Feb. 8, 1277-8, to John Winan. He also had 100 acres on the South Neck of Elizabeth Town, which he sold to Nicholas Carter. For himself, his wife, and two servants he was allowed 360 acres. His Patent gave him 450 acres. He was a partner in a whaling company of 1669. During the Dutch rule, 1673-64, he was in high favor, being appointed one of the Schepens (Magistrates) of the town and Captain of the militia company. He moved to New York in 1674 and resided on Mill Street Lane (now South Williams Street). Two of his children, Susanna and Jacob, were baptized into Dutch Church, in New York on October 3, 1677. Subsequent to 1683 he moved to Boston for the convenience of educating his son Samuel, who graduated from Harvard College in 1696 and became a minister. At Boston,

---

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid* p. 83-84

he traded in leather and served several years as constable. He resided on High-Fore Street in the south end of town. His daughter, Abigail, married her second husband, Chief Justice Samuel Sewall, while Joanna became the wife of Rev. Jonathan Dickinson. His demise took place at Boston in December, 1706. His widow survived him by nearly eleven years.<sup>147</sup>

In the Boston News Letter, dated October 1, 1705, there is an advertisement in these words: "A House and Land in the High-Fore-Street at the Sign of the Buck, in the South End of Boston, now in the Occupancy of Mr. Jacob Melyen, to be Sold."<sup>148</sup> We will return to the Elizabeth Town connection in the next chapter.

To return to our direct lineage, we turn in our history to his sister, Cornelia Melyn, daughter of Cornelis and Jannetie Melyn. She was born in 1628-9 in Holland. She died in February of 1717. She married in June 1647, Captain Jacob Loper, Commander of a Dutch Ship of War. He died soon after and she married Jacob Schellinx (Schellinger) on April 7, 1653. This name has many spelling variations. We have used the American spelling, Schellinger, throughout this volume. The marriages are both recorded in the "Trown Bock" Marriage Register of the Dutch Reform Church, New Amsterdam. The later reads: "1653 dem 7 April, Jacobus Schellinger Van Amsterdam en Cornelia Mellyn's, ned's (widow) Van Jacob Loper". Collection, Vol.1 page 14 . {sic}

149

History has many recorded errors. While doing the in-depth research required for this book one must search out and present what is the most factual information possible. This marriage record negates the statement by Hedges of East Hampton, in his History of East Hampton, where he stated that Jacob Schellinger was married to his sister Catherine.

---

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid* p. 83

<sup>148</sup> *Boston News Letter*, No. 76

<sup>149</sup> MELYN HISTORY, East Hampton Library p. 51

The Dutch that came from Amsterdam to the New World were people and families of great wealth and position. Jacobus Schellinger of Amsterdam, Holland was born about 1626. He came to New Amsterdam about 1652 and was married, as stated above, in 1653. He lived at New Amsterdam and on Staten Island for twelve years. On March 13, 1653, when the Dutch Burgers were preparing a defense against the English Colonies, he was assessed 200 gilders. The money was used to construct an earthen work topped with a palisade, which ran right along the northerly side of the present Wall Street and ran from the East River to the site of the today's Trinity Church. It may be that the name "Wall" Street came from this line of defense built by the Dutch.<sup>150</sup>

Jacob Schellinger was a resident of Staten Island at the time of the Indian Wars of 1655. During that time his house was burned. Jacobus and Cornelia Melyn Schellinger were the parents of four children born in New Amsterdam and two in East Hampton. Catherine was born in 1656, no doubt at New Amsterdam, since the Staten Island house had been burned in 1655. She is became the wife of Nathaniel Baker after her family moved to East Hampton.

The conquest of New Netherlands by Nicolls and the English in 1664 put an end to the trade with Holland. With this connection gone, Nathaniel looked for a position that would provide him a source of income. He moved to East Hampton to retrieve his fortunes. The exact date he and his family arrived is not known, but it was prior to October 2, 1667 since there is a deed recorded at that time.<sup>151</sup>

---

<sup>150</sup> SCHELLINGER HISTORY, East Hampton Library , p. 52

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid* p. 52



We know the family was still at New Amsterdam September 26, 1662 as Cornelia's brother, Abraham, was baptized at the Dutch Reform Church on that date.<sup>152</sup>

After the English had taken over New Amsterdam and Jacobus had discovered he could live with the English he probably started his search for a profession and investigated the whaling industry which provided products in worldwide demand. The chapter on Amagansett referenced the whale population that frequented the waters at the end of Long Island at that time. Nathaniel thus chose East Hampton as his next home. These facts have now brought you up-to-date regarding the Walloon and Dutch ancestry of our colonial ancestors.

In this chapter I said that Cornelis Melyn had received a Patroon's privilege of Staten Island. Several other sizable land grants were issued by the Dutch government. These properties were along the Hudson River north of Manhattan and encompassed land that ran from the Hudson west to the Mississippi River, or so they claimed. One of the principals in such grants was a Major Johannis Hardenbergh. He maneuvered for years to expand his Dutch land grant and land titles with the Indians. Queen Anne, in England, granted her Governor, Thomas Dongan, the right to expand and define his titles in the Catskill Mountains.

Governor Dongan also divided some of this vast land area to Patroon friends. Robert Livingston, the Van Rensselaers, and the Roosevelts to name some that you will hear more about, as the Baker family moved to the Catskill area.<sup>153</sup>

A brief review of the Baker History to this point:

1. We originated from Cranbrook in County Kent, England as early as 1367.

---

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid* p. 52

<sup>153</sup> AMERICAN PEOPLES ENCYCLOPEDIA Vol. 12 p. 12-611

2. Thomas Baker worked for Christ Church (Canterbury Cathedral).
3. Sir John Baker was Chancellor of England and a member of Privy Council under King Henry VIII.
4. Sir Richard Baker The Chronicler was his Grandson.
5. Thomas Baker of Hothfield, the Chronicler's grandson, was the immigrant to America in 1637.

In Chapter 3, "The Bakers Of London And Oxford", I told you that Sir Richard The Chronicler, had a son, Arthur, who went to Bodiam Castle. Arthur had two sons, John and Joseph, and a daughter Margaret. Political and religious unrest was running rampant in England. In 1648 George Fox started his missionary journeys and to this sect the name Quakers was established. He attracted many followers and he suffered many imprisonments from 1649 onwards. To this group were attracted John and Joseph Baker. With the communication from the Thomas Baker family that had come to America in 1639 they joined a group of Quakers and came to the New World. Long Island and Connecticut had much of the better properties already occupied, so they chose to go to New Amsterdam. Little was learned about Joseph, other than that he became High Sheriff of Bergen Township, and because he had no further association with our immediate family we spent no time searching for more information about him.

John Baker, son of Arthur, became an important figure in our family and the colonial development of the area. He evidently had inherited some of the managerial characteristics of his Grandsire Sir John Baker, his namesake. At New Amsterdam he worked his way into the trust of the Dutch Magistrates. He learned how to speak to and communicate with the Indians, as well as to speak in the Dutch language. It was he who established the good relations with the Indians for the Dutch at New Amsterdam.

The next area the Baker Family moves to is the unoccupied territory of the Jerseys. The area in and around Elizabeth Town was settled by pioneers of the New England stock. They were of

stern, rigid qualities from their Puritan ancestors, with a firm determination to advance civilization and progress in their new environments.

They chose John Strickland as their agent to visit the authorities in New Netherlands. They selected one who had been foremost in planting settlements in the infant colonies. An Englishman, he had come to New England with Governor Winthrop's company in 1630. He was a freeman at Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1631. He subsequently became a member of the church at Watertown, Mass. and with others of that congregation sought a new home on the borders of the Connecticut located at Wethersfield. Here he stayed but a short time and settled next at Fairfield, Conn.. He was involved with disputes with the Dutch and Indians. He disposed of his estate at Fairfield and joined Rev. Robert Fordham, John Ogden, and others in the Great Plains Of Long Island which they later named Heemstede, now Hempstead. In this area he resided at Huntington, Jamaica and he assisted in obtaining a petition for Elizabeth. However, he never resided there. Another petitioner was John Bailies, but he too never took up residence in Elizabeth Town. He sold his interests to Governor Carteret. Daniel Denton and his brother were the next names on the petition. These people had all been through Connecticut and central Long Island. Daniel did eventually move to Piscataway, but the two brothers sold their rights to Captain John Baker and John Ogden and never resided at Elizabeth Town. Thomas Benedict, a native of Nottingham, England was the fourth petitioner. He came to Southold and later Jamaica, but later moved to Norwalk, Conn. and never fulfilled his commitment to Elizabeth Town. The fifth petitioner was a John Foster also a resident of Hempsted and Jamaica, but he also never became a resident and sold his interest. The sixth petitioner was Luke Watson, the only one to retain his interest in the Jersey enterprise. He became a founder of Elizabeth Town. He received several allotments of land, principally upland of the Rahway River. He, however, disposed of his holdings in 1676 and moved to Hoar-Kill settlement (Lewes) in Delaware.<sup>154</sup>

---

<sup>154</sup> Hatfield's, *HISTORY OF ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY* p. 59-62

Such were the original petitioners. Two of them only, Bailey and Watson, became patentees and only one a settler for about ten years. The other patentees were Captain John Baker and John Ogden. John Baker, although an Englishman, was residing in New Amsterdam. He, as mentioned, had learned the Dutch language and had a good relationship with the Dutch because of his communicative skills with the Indians. It is fair to presume that the original petitioners had employed him in their negotiations with the Dutch for the patent and he became interested in the project. The court records show that Captain Baker resided in a house on the east side of Broad Street (Broadway now), a short distance below Wall Street. After the conquest of New Amsterdam by the English in 1665, Governor Nicolls appointed Captain John Baker chief military officer at Albany. He continued to command there until May 14, 1670 after which time he became a permanent resident of Elizabeth Town.<sup>155</sup>

We will continue the history in the next chapter at Elizabeth Town.

---

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid* p. 62-63



# 10

## THE ELIZABETH TOWN PIONEERS

Before I start with the settlement, we should look at the early history of this area. The Jersey shore was still green and unblemished when the first white man arrived. His white-sailed vessels had visited the New Jersey coast as early as 1497 with the voyages of the first Englishman, John Cabot. Twenty-seven years later Verrazano, the Italian navigator, while exploring the coast for France, entered New York Bay in the winter of 1524. We now have a bridge in his honor across that harbor. On Sunday, September 6, 1609, nearly one-hundred years later, Henry Hudson anchored his ship *Half Moon* off Sandy Hook. An exploration party under John Coleman entered New York Bay and "went in two leagues and saw an open sea and returned" (Juet's Narrative). It is quite evident he did not go into the interior. Tradition states that Coleman was slain the same day by the arrow of a Sanhican Indian. Up until 1650 it was deemed not safe to venture as far into the wilderness as the western shores of the Achter Kol (Newark Bay).<sup>156</sup>

The first attempt to settle this territory was made by the Dutch in 1651. One of the most inviting regions in all New Netherlands lay immediately west of the Achter Kol and Staten Island. The Honorable Cornelius Van Werckhoven of Utrecht, Holland was attracted to this area and Mr. Augustine Heermans, of New Amsterdam, was commissioned to purchase the land from the natives. He made the transaction on December 26, 1657 with the Indians residing thereon for all the land north of the Raritan

---

<sup>156</sup> Clayton, W. Woodford, THE HISTORY OF UNION COUNTY p. 524

Creek, west to a creek called Man-kack-kewachky (possibly the north branch of the Raritan), from Raritan Point, Ompoge (now Perth Amboy), north to Pechiesse (thought to be the Passaic), up to its head and then to the creek Man-kack-kewachky. The Indians who sold the land were Mattano and Appamankaoff, for themselves and on behalf of Memmewan, Warritschew (Warischeu), Enckleen and Nechoak. The Indians who signed the contract were Mattano, Warischeu, and Appamanskaock. Van Werckhoven never took up his claim and the land reverted to the Indian owners. The purpose of the proposed colony in this section was "to serve as a bulwark to the Dutch nation against the savages on the Raritan and Minisink".<sup>157</sup>

Many attempts were made to settle the land west of Staten Island and north of the Raritan. Messrs. Benjamin Fum, Robert Treat, Dr. Jaspur Gunn, and Richard Law, from Wetherfield, in Connecticut, made such a venture, but nothing was ever heard of it. From 1633 to 1655 the Dutch carried on considerable trade in beaver hides with the Indians in this section and tried to establish a settlement, but little success followed. From 1655 to 1665 there was a decided cessation in the efforts because of the intense hatred on the part of the Indians. The Dutch had massacred them ruthlessly at Pavonia, Hoboken, and Staten Island. Consequently, whites were killed at sight by the revengeful Indians throughout the northeastern part of the State.<sup>158</sup>

The Governor of New York, Richard Nicolls, had, on September 26, 1664, given privilege to John Bayley, Daniel Denton, and Luke Watson to purchase land from the Indians in New Jersey west of Staten Island. The undertakers therefore made speedy arrangements with the native owners of the soil. Captain John Baker, then a resident of New York, was employed as the English and Dutch interpreter, and one of the natives performed a like service for the Indians. A conference was held on Staten

---

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid* p. 524

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid* p. 524

Island, where Chief Sagamores of the Indians lived and a tract of land was purchased for which the following deed was given:

"This indenture made the 28th Day of October in the Sixteenth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord Charles By The Grace of God of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, King Defender of the faith, &etc. Between Mattano Manamowaouc and Cowescomen of Staten Island of the one part and John Bayly, Daniel Denton, and Luke Watson of Jamaica In Long Island Husband Men on the other part WITNESSETH That the said Mattano Manamowaouc and Coescomen hath clearly Bargained and Sold to the said John Bayly, Daniel Denton, and Luke Watson, Their Associates their heirs and Executives One Parcel of Land bounded on the South By a River commonly called The Raritans River And on the East By the River which Parts Staten Island and the Main, and To Run Northward up after cull Bay. Till we come att the first River which setts westward out of said Bay aforesaid And To Run west into the Country Twice the Length as it is Broad from the North to The South of the aforementioned Bounds, TOGETHER with the Lands, Meadows, woods, fields, fenns, fishing, fowlings, With all and Singular the Appurtenances, with All Gaines, Profits, and advantages arising upon said Lands and all other premisses and appurtenances To the Said John Bayly, Danile Denton, and Luke Watson with Their Associates, with their Every Heirs Executives Admisistrators or Assigns for Ever to Have and To Hold The Said Lands with the Appurtenances To the said John Bayly, Daniel Denton, and Luke Watson with their Associates their Executives Assignes, AND the said Mattanno Manomowaouc covenant promise Grant and Agree To and With John Bayly, Daniel Denton and Luke Watson and their Associates their heirs and Executives To Keep them Safe in the Enjoyment of the Said Lands from all Expulsion and Incumbrances whatsoever may arise of the Said Land. By Any person or persons By Reason of Any Title had or Growing before the Date of these present, for which Bargain, Sale, Covenents, Grants & Agreements on the behalf of the said Matteno Manamowouc and Conescocomen to be performed, Observed and Done the foresaid parties Are at their Enttery upon the Said Land To Pay to the said Matteno Mnamowouc and Conescoman, Twenty

140



fathom of Trading Cloth, Two made Coats, Two Guns, Two Kettles  
Ten Bars of Lead Twenty handfult of powder, And further the Said  
John Bayly, Daniel Denton and Luke Watson Do Covenant  
Promise Grant and Agree to and with the said Mattano  
Manamowoauc and Couescoman the forest Indians four hundred  
fathom of white wampon after a years expiration from the Day of  
the said Bayly, Daniel Denton and Luke Watson Entery upon Ye  
Said Lands. In witness wherof we have herunto put our hands  
and seals, the Day and Year aforesaid:

The Mark of Mattano.....

The Mark of Sewak herones

The Mark of Warinanco.....

Signed Sealed and Delivered in the presence of us witness  
Charles Horsley

The Mark of Randal R. Hewett"<sup>{sic}</sup><sup>159</sup>

The petitioners, having thus, in good faith, purchased for  
themselves and their associates lands from the aboriginal owners,  
proceeded to submit the transaction to Governor Nicolls and  
received the following official confirmation of their title to the  
grant. A lengthy confirmation follows, which may be referenced in  
the following footnote which restates all the boundaries, etc.  
excepting Gov. Nicolls adds two statements regarding our family  
associate:

"I do confirm and Grant and by those present Do Give and  
Confirm and Greant unto Captain John Baker of New York, John  
Ogden of North Hampton, John Bayly and Luke Watson of  
Jamaico on Long Island and their Associates, heirs and Executive  
Admisistrators and Associates [here again the legal discription  
similar to above], and closing his declaration: "And the said  
Captain John Baker, John Ogden, John Bayly and Luke Watson  
and their Associates have Liberty to purchahse of the Natives (or  
Others who have the property thereof) as farre as Snake Hill to

---

<sup>159</sup> Honeyman. *Avan Doren*, HISTORY OF UNION COUNTY THE  
PATENT OF GOVERNOR NICOLLS p. 16 & 17

the End and purpose as aforesaid." Signed: Richard Nicolls  
[sic]<sup>160</sup>

It may be that there was a misunderstanding on the part of the Indians in respect to the extent of the purchase. There is reason to believe the First River "which sets westward out of the said Bay aforesaid" was thought by the Indians to be the Raritan. The fact is, there is no "aforesaid Bay" referenced in the original document. The English purchasers had in mind the Passaic River. They could not have bargained for the land north of Weequaick, as that belonged to the Hackensacks, and Elizabeth Town never made such an extensive claim, even though there was considerable controversy concerning the dividing line between the two communities. "Into the country twice the Length" if you considered the irregular boundary would have made the Delaware River the western boundary.<sup>161</sup>

There was little doubt that the Indians considered the Minisink Trail as the western boundary. This was a path that ran from Springfield, by today's Echo Lake Golf Club, east of the Fairview Cemetery in Westfield, east of Ash Swamp, through Metuchen to Kent's Neck on the Raritan, opposite what is now Sayreville. The camp of Matochshegan was located at this point on the Raritan.<sup>162</sup>

Captain John Baker, the English and Dutch interpreter of the Englishtown Purchase, seems to have been aware of the misunderstanding on the part of the Indians. Before Carteret, who was to inherit the territory arrived, Baker purchased from Minidowaskin, Canundus, Seweckroneck, and Wewonapee, the land west of the Mininsink Trail, including Westfield and Scotch Plains, later known as The Baker Tract. These chieftains were probably Minsi Lenape of the Wapping Clan, who had been crowded back to the mountains in the northwestern end of the

---

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid* p. 16 & 17

<sup>161</sup> Clayton, W. Woodford, *History Of Union County* p. 525

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid* p. 525

county because of the incoming white settlers. It is possible that this purchase is representative of the general policy of dealing with the Indians. They did not understand the language of the whites. They were honest themselves and thought the whites even more so in their bargaining. Purchases were at best one-sided bargains. The Indian who helped Baker purchase this tract was Hans. Another well-documented purchase is the "Walking Purchase in Bucks County Pennsylvania" which was also of this character.<sup>163</sup>

Figure 10-01: Map of Capt. John Baker's Purchase  
Honeyman, History of Union County p. 488

It was in 1664 after the English conquest of New Amsterdam and the Dutch holdings that Captain John Baker and John Ogden purchased the interests of the John Bayley and Daniel Denton and presented the purchase to the new Governor Richard Nicolls. Governor Nicolls, after reviewing the purchase of the lands by Bayley, Denton, and Watson on a certain Indenture dated 28 October last (1663), made the following grant:

"I have thought fair to Give Confirm and Grant unto Captain John Baker of New Yorke, John Ogden of North-hampton, and John Baily and Luke Watson of Jemaico on Long Island and their Associates the said parcel of Land Bounded on the South by the River commonly called the Raritans River-On the East by ye sea which parts Staten Island and the main, to Run northwards up after Cull Bay till you come to the first River which sets westward out of said bay and to run west Into the Country Twice the Length of the Breadth thereof from the North to the South of the aforesaid Bounds. To have and to hold the said lands to Captain John Baker, John Ogden, John Bayly and Luke Watson forever, Rendering and paying Yearly unto his Royal Highness The Duke Of York or his assigns a certain Rent according to the customary Rate of ye Countrey for the new Plantations and doing and preforming such Acts & Things as shall be appointed by his said Royal highness or his deputies. The said Captain John

---

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid* p. 525-526

Baker, John Ogden, John Bayly, and Luke Watson to take Care and Charge of ye said lands and premises. That people be carried there with all convenient speed for setting of plantacons thereon and that none have liberty So To Do without the Consent and Approbation of said Captain John Baker, John Ogden, John Bayly and Luke Watson. I do likewise promise and Grant that all persons so Inhabiting and planting on the lands shall have Equal freedom Immunities and privileges with any of his Majesties Colonys of America. And that Captain John Baker and his associates have liberty to purchase of the Natives (or others who have properties thereon) as far as Snake Hill to the end and pupose afore said. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this first Day of December In the sixteenth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord Charles The Second By the Grace of God King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland Defender of the faith & etc. at fort James In New York on the Island of Manhatans. Signed RICHARD NICOLLS."{sic}<sup>164</sup>

In 1664 Charles II, King of England, granted to his brother James, Duke of York, an extensive tract of land extending from the Connecticut River to the Delaware. Shortly after this transfer he conveyed to Lord Berkley and Sir Philip Carteret the whole State of New Jersey. When Governor Nicolls was informed of the grant he relinquished his claim to the land. Berkley and Carteret arrived from England in August 1665, with thirty associates from England and established themselves in Elizabethtown.<sup>165</sup>

The precise date of the occupation of the Elizabethtown Purchase is not of record, but ground was actually broken and something of an inhabitation was attempted as early as November 24, 1664. An erroneous tradition that there were only four families there in 1665 has grown from the fact that there were only four signatures of the Baker Purchase. The whole transaction was agreed upon by 80 associates who lived mainly from the same neighborhoods of Long Island. The compact plan

---

<sup>164</sup> Hatfield's, *THE HISTORY OF ELIZABETH, NJ* p. 32 and 33

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid* p. 525

adopted was in accordance with the one that prevailed at the time in New England, the object being for mutual defense to guard against any vicious attacks by the Indians. The settlers the first three years were mainly of the one class, wholly New Englanders, principally from Long Island and Connecticut.<sup>166</sup>

Captain John Baker was not listed among the early settlers. He was a resident of Manhattan. The house he occupied was on the east side of Broadway a short distance below Wall Street. After Governor Nicolls took command of the city, and after having the association with Baker on various dealings, appointed him, on September 25, 1665, Chief Military Officer at Albany. For this reason he is not listed among the early settlers of Elizabethtown. He continued in his duties at Albany until May 14, 1670, from which time he became a permanent resident of this town. His house lot was of ordinary size, bounded on the south, east, and west by the highways and on the north by Luke Watson. He was a leading man in the community and ever among the foremost in resisting the proprietary assumptions that were to come. He obtained, on March 14, 1675, a warrant for the survey of 1200 acres, for "himself and his Wife, and eight other Persons" of his family. He was appointed Coroner March 28, 1683 and Judge of Small Causes.<sup>167</sup>

Hatfield goes on after footnote 12 above to relate various other residents of Elizabeth at this time and from whence they originated. I shall list several of these as they played a major part in Elizabeth Town's early days and several become associated with the Baker family in future locations. I will footnote these at the point I cease to list such families.

John Ogden, one of the most influential founders of the town, as mentioned earlier, was a Dutch man. He was married to Jane Bond, a sister of Robert Bond, whom you will remember was

---

<sup>166</sup> Honeyman, Avan Doren, *THE HISTORY OF Union County* p. 18

<sup>167</sup> Hatfield, *History of Elizabeth, New Jersey* p. 63-64

along with Thomas (1) Baker at East Hampton. He was in 1641 at Stamford, Conn.. In May of 1642, he and his brother Richard, also of Stamford, entered into a contract with the then Dutch Governor William Kieft, Gilbert op Dyck, and Thomas Willett of New Amsterdam, church wardens, to build a stone church in the fort. The contract was for a building 72 by 50 feet, for the sum of 2500 gilders, to be paid in beaver, cash, or merchandise, one-hundred gilders to be added if the work proved satisfactory, and they were to be allowed the use of company boat for carrying of stones a month or six weeks if necessary. The work was duly and satisfactorily completed.

It was probably through this contract and work at New Amsterdam that he became a patentee of Hempstead, Long Island. He there associated with the Rev. Denton who had become interested in the lands at Jersey. The Denton shares in Jersey he later purchased. After residing at Hempstead for a period of time he became disgusted with Dutch rule of the area and the cruelties practiced upon the natives, many of whom the Dutch put to death. Therefore, he moved to Southampton. In 1647 he obtained from the town of Southampton permission to plant a colony of six families at "North Sea", about three miles north of Southampton. In colonial records as well as the records of Connecticut and New Haven and in Governor Nicolls' grant it is called "Northampton". During his residency at Northampton, Ogden's frequent visits to New Amsterdam as a trader maintained his friendships with his old acquaintances on the west end of Long Island. When it was proposed to him to commence a fourth colony in the new and inviting region of Achter Kull under English Rule, he readily joined his friend Captain John Baker in the venture.

John Ogden, the first resident along with his five grown sons, John, Jonathan, David, Joseph, and Benjamin erected a dwelling on the town plot. He erected a mill immediately west of the Broad Street stone bridge, with a dam across the creek just above it, hence, it was frequently called Mill Creek, or Mill River. Three of his sons, John, Jonathan, and David, took the oath of allegiance in February 1665-66 and were numbered among the original associates.

Other associates who were on the grounds during the first year of the settlement were Joakin Andris, or Andrews, whose father, William, had come to New Haven previous to 1643 (probably with the Daytons and Thomas Baker), a Francis Barber, origin unknown, who later moved to Staten Island and Robert Blackwell who married a stepdaughter of Captain John Manning, to whom New York was surrendered in 1672 to the Dutch. He became owner of an island in the East River then known as Manning's Island, which now bears the name Blackwell Island. Another associate of the new colony was Robert Bond the Townsman of the early days at East Hampton with Thomas Baker and his former brother-in-law, John Ogden. Robert also became interested in the settlement at Newark which he represented in the Legislature in 1672. However, he maintained his residence in Elizabethtown and died there in April 1677. Another of the first settlers of New Haven was John Brakett who was there in 1639, probably another of the group with the Daytons and Thomas Baker. Colonial records say he was often employed in laying out lands and was probably induced by his friends to accompany them to assist them in their surveys. He, however, in 1670 sold his property to Samuel Hopkins and returned with his son, John Jr., to New Haven. Nathaniel Bunnell (Bonnell) from New Haven had a house and 120 acres lying south of the South Branch of the Elizabethtown Creek.

Another Ogden acquaintance was Nicholas Carter from Stamford, Conn.. His house lot was 5 acres. He also had 20 acres on Luke Walton's Point and 40 acres of upland swamp lying on the east side of Blind Ridge. This tract and his house lot he sold in 1676-77 to Benjamin Wade. Carter also owned 70 acres of upland near the swamp, 193 acres of upland on Mill Creek, 22 acres of Great Meadows and 18 acres on Thompson's Creek, making his total allotment 368 acres. Another interesting fact is that he also purchased, from Jacob Melyen of New York, 101 acres of South Neck. He sold most of his holdings on May 18, 1681 to Samuel Wilson and he died shortly thereafter.

Caleb Corwith was a mariner of roving disposition, son of David Corwith of Southold. In 1668-9 he associated himself with John Ogden Sr., Jacob Melyen, William Johnson, and others in a whaling enterprise. He sold his house lot and 20 acres to William Piles in 1670-1 and moved to Southampton where he was still living in 1683. Other names we shall pass over are Stephen Crane from Connecticut, John Dickinson from Southold, and Joseph Frazee, origin not known, but a descendent from this family has written about the history of New Jersey.

Matthias Heathfield (Herfield, Hatfield), Samuel Marsh, Thomas Moore, Abraham Shotwell, Humphrey Spinning, John Wines, Robert Sealey and a few others that have no association with our Baker line, excepting-

John and James Hinds (Heynes, Haynes, Haines) brothers were also "East Enders" from Long Island. They were sons of James Hinds, who came over from England to Salem, Mass. as early as 1637 when he was admitted a freeman. He married in 1638 and at an early day moved to Southold, L.I. where he died in March 1653. His estate was valued at £123, 5s, 4d. He had eight children: John, James, Benjamin, Mary, James (2nd), Jonathan, Sarah and Thomas. In June 1656 his widow married Ralph Dayton who had moved from East Hampton to Southold. Here the family associations were being more closely woven, as the story unfolds in future chapters. John was the oldest son and was baptized August 28, 1639. James was baptized February 27, 1648. Benjamin Haines was at Southampton in 1639 and a resident of North Sea (Northampton) in 1657. He was probably a brother of James, Sr.. He was the grandfather of Stephen, who settled at Elizabethtown as early as 1725 and was the ancestor of Governor Daniel Haines.

John Hinds, son of James, Sr. of Southold, was a cooper. No record remains of his allotments of land. He married Mary, a daughter of Goodman Thompson and they had a daughter who married Isaac Whitehead, Jr. as early as 1700. John was a constable of the town in 1710 and 1711. A curious record of him appears in the ledger of Rev. John Harriman: "1695, Feb 28, paid



account of teaching my son Samuel the mistery of a cooper, tho not performed according to bargain-L4.00.00."

James was also a cooper and came there about ten years later than his brother John. He had purchased on September 4, 1676 from William Looker, then of Jamaica, L.I., his house, garden, orchard, and house lot. Under Governor Carteret a little later in this chapter you will find his warrant for 120 acres in 1677. This warrant was granted as he had a survey for 108 acres of upland, bounded by Richard Clark, James Emot, and the Westbrook, and also 12 acres of "meadow in the great meadows". Descendants of this family later moved to Ulster County, New York along with the Baker family, from which we descend, and intermarry. It was the finding of Louise Haynes Flood at Kingston, New York in 1984 that joined the Bakers of the western United States to the family from which my ancestors departed in the mid-1800's.]

Jacob Melyen, the son of Cornelis Melyn, of whom Nathaniel Baker's wife was a descendent was also here and part of the whaling company mentioned earlier. Our ancestors kept associating together in different environments and locations.

Another associate at Elizabethtown was Benjamin Price from East Hampton, the former secretary/recorder of the Townsmen of East Hampton. He was active in furthering the emigration of many of his neighbors to the Achter Kull and Elizabethtown. He became active in the town affairs. He represented the town in the House of Burgesses and was one of the council of Governors Rudyard and Lawrie, also one of the judges of small cases. He outlived most of the founders, his death occurring after August 30, 1705. His allotment of land amounted to 270 acres.

Evan Salsbury was also from the eastend of Long Island. He was called a brickmaker, but was bred a carpenter and at one time followed the sea, as the records state that Captain John Young sold him a shallop of eight tons burden fully equipped for "18,000 good merchantable pipe staves." He was a friend of Caleb Carwith and with him disappears from the records about 1671.

[This association of Young and Salsbury has to stir someone of the Baker or Godding family to do the research needed to add the name Salsbury to our Colonial ancestors, as they join the family in the late 1800's.]

John Woodruff also came from Southampton with his wife, two menservants, and a maid servant. His children were all born at Elizabethtown. He served as constable, ensign, and sheriff of the county. He had a farm of 292 acres and other outlying lands totaling 320 acres.

Captain Thomas Young and Christopher Young were sons of Rev. John Young the first pastor of the Southold Church. Captain Thomas had been born in England in 1627 and in 1654 became a resident of Oyster Bay. He was a mariner and it is more than likely that most of the colonists from eastern Long Island came to the area on his vessel. His land became known as Young's Point and was located at the northern junction of the Achter Kull with Newark Bay. He and his brother, however, both returned to Long Island. Benjamin Conkling from East Hampton was another short time resident who returned to East Hampton.<sup>168</sup>

The New England settlers had barely become settled in their new home when an event in England took place that led to a contention in regard to their land titles that was to be the source of endless controversy and dispute for over a century. The Duke of York, under his Patent received from his brother Charles II, conveyed to Lord John Berkley and Sir George Carteret, two of his royal favorites at the Court of England, a tract of land on June 24, 1664 - "all that tract of land adjacent to New England and lying and being westward of Long Island and Manhitas (Manhattan) island, and (that) is bounded on the east part by the main sea, and part by the Hudson river, and hath upon the west Delaware bay or river, and extendeth southward to the main ocean as far as Cape May at the mouth of the Delaware Bay; and to the

---

<sup>168</sup> Hatfield, *HISTORY OF ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY* p. 64-83

northward as far as the northernmost branch of the said bay or river of Delaware, which is 41 degrees-40 minutes of latitude, and crosetseth over thence in a straight line to Hudson's river in 41 degrees latitude: which said tract of land is hereafter to be called by the name or names of New Caesare or New Jersey."<sup>169</sup>

This then put in dispute the Elizabethtown Patent, which had been purchased from the Indians, and the grant issued by Governor Richard Nicolls, mentioned earlier in this chapter. John Ogden, Captain John Baker, Luke Watson, and their friends were the true founders, bringing with them men of New England who came here by way of Long Island, largely from the east end - Southold, Southampton, and East Hampton. They had been associated together in settling other plantations, were neighbors and friends who had intermarried and, therefore, they met in the new settlement as one people. Hence the town was of New England origins. Its founders were of the old, Puritan stock and brought with them their religion, habits, manners, and customs; they were of one mind and one heart and the only disturbing element came from abroad.

The English, however, under the Patent granted by Charles II, appointed a nephew of Sir George Carteret, Sir Philip Carteret, as governor of the new territory. The newly appointed governor sailed on the ship *Philip* from England with about thirty emigrants, of whom eighteen were male servants belonging to Sir George and himself, a portion of them Frenchmen from the Island of Jersey. These servants were John Dejardin, Doctor Rowland, Claude Vallot, Richard Pewtinger, Richard Michell, Richard Skinner, William Hill, Henry Hill, Eramus House, John Taylor, John Clark, Claude Barbour, Charles Seggin, Daniel Perrin, John Mattins, Robert Wallis, and John, alias Peter. Of these, Claude Vallot and William Hill were subsequently admitted as associates, while Richard Michell had land given to him by the governor, but was not admitted as an associate. There were also several French

---

<sup>169</sup> Honeyman, HISTORY OF UNION COUNTY p. 18

females and a French gentleman, Robert Vauquellin, a surveyor by profession, his wife, and Captain James Bollen.<sup>170</sup>

James Bollen, as he was styled "Captain", may have been in command of one of the vessels. He was deputed by Nicolls to receive the surrender of the fort at New Amsterdam from the Dutch and was appointed by Nicolls as the "Commissary of the Ammunition at New York". He remained in New York until August 1665 as his name appears often in court records. There is no doubt he was acquainted with Governor Carteret in England who, on his first voyage to America, sent his dispatches from Newport News, Virginia on June 13, 1665 to Captain James Bullaigne in New York. On the arrival of Governor Carteret at the port of New York, Bollen was made secretary of the new province and accompanied the governor during August to Elizabethtown. He was an ardent partisan of the governor through his troublesome administration and was rewarded with the entire confidence of his superior. Bollen was appointed justice of the peace and officiated in almost every instance in the marriage service of the period. He presided at the town meeting when the oath of allegiance was administered and kept the records of the proprietary government. Several of the early volumes were in his own handwriting. He became obnoxious to the people of the town on account of his readiness to do the governor's bidding and he finally exchanged his properties and ceased to be a resident of the town.

The Dutch were still in constant confrontation with the English. The Dutch commanders of the fleet that captured Captain Davis' sloop off the Virginia coast eagerly sought information regarding to the defenses of New York, as they were anxious to again obtain possession of their old, American colony of New Amsterdam. Davis told them that New York was well-defended with good supply of arms and ammunition. Hopkins, however, insisted that Davis' statement was false, that New York was in no condition to defend itself, and encouraged the Dutch to visit that place. Acting on this information, the Dutch fleet proceeded to New York, which was captured July 30, 1672, and

---

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid* p. 18-19

was then urged by Hopkins to proceed to the subjugation of the Achter Kull. Hopkins had been a member of the popular party and doubtless welcomed the advent of the Dutch forces, judging that a change of government would put an end to the vexatious exactions to which he and his neighbors had been subjected. It seemed like a special providence for their relief. The time set for their submission by Berry and his council was just expiring and the people were ready for another contest. The government party would receive the support of Governor Lovelace of New York and thus would have been able to enforce the proprietary exactions to the utmost. Berry and Lovelace, however, were deprived of all power to harm them. Therefore, the sturdy pioneers of the town, three days after the surrender of New York on August 2, 1672, deputized John Baker, Jacob Melyen, and John Ogden to proceed to New York for the purpose of entreating with the Admiral and associate council of war for the surrender of the town to the Lord States of the United Netherlands and his Serene Highness, the Prince of Orange, requesting that no audience be granted to their late Governor, Captain John Berry. In this petition they were joined by the towns of Newark, Woodbridge, Piscataway, Middletown, and Shrewsbury. In answer to the petition it was ordered that all inhabitanta of these towns: "should be granted the same priveledges and freedom as accorded native born subjects and Dutch born; also the petitioners and their heirs to unmolested enjoy and possess their lawfully purchased and paid for lands, which shall afterwards be confirmed to them by the governor in due form; the petitioners being further granted and accorded freedom of conscience as the same is permitted in the Netherlands." The township of Bergen had already been provided for. Thus, the whole of East Jersey passed under the rule of the Dutch.<sup>171</sup>

An election was held August 14, 1672 and John Ogden, Sen. Samuel Hopkins, and Jacob Melyen were elected schepens of Elizabethtown. The several towns chose their deputies and made their nominations for schout and secretary from which the generals and council of war were picked and September 1, 1673

---

<sup>171</sup> Honeyman, *The History Of Union County*, Chapter VII p. 56

appointed John Ogden to be schout and Samuel Hopkins secretary of the six towns. A commission was appointed to administer the oath of allegiance to the inhabitants who made their return on September 11, 1672. They rated Elizabethtown at eighty men, seventy-six of whom had taken the oath, the remainder being absent.<sup>{sic}</sup><sup>172</sup> The listing follows on pages 56, 57, 58, and 59. Most names are familiar from the areas of New Haven, Milford, East Hampton, and other areas of Long Island. However, I chose not to list them since many have been related to in earlier chapters.

There were several Dutchmen mentioned in the census of 1673. The names of Jacob Tryax (Truax) and Dirick Teunissen are found among the settlers of Middletown. The others were doubtless adventurers who disappeared with the termination of the Dutch rule. The Dutch commissioners swore in Jacob Meylen as captain, Isaac Whitehead as lieutenant and John Woodruff as ensign of the military company. The Council of War instructed Schout Ogden and the other schepens of the town on October 1, 1673 to provide that the sheriff and magistrates take care that the Reform Christian religion be maintained in conformity with the synod of Dordrecht and they were not to permit other sects to attempt anything to the contrary. Power was given to lay out highways, in all matters pertaining to agriculture, to observation of the Sabbath, to erecting churches, schoolhouses, and other public works. The sheriff was instructed to cleanse the community of all mobs, gamblers, houses of ill-fame, and like impurities and to receive half of all civil fines accruing during his term of office together with one-third part of what belonged to the respective villages from criminal cases. A double number of names of the most honest, intelligent, and wealthy inhabitants of the Reformed Christian religion was to be presented to the governor for the selection of schepens.<sup>173</sup>

---

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid* p. 56-57

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid* p. 59

As an illustration of Dutch rule, a proclamation was issued applicable to every town in New Netherland, November 15, 1673, appointing as a universal day of fast, humiliation, and thanksgiving, the first Wednesday in the ensuing month of December. All labor, hunting, fishing, gaming, excessive drinking, and retailing of liquors was strictly prohibited.<sup>174</sup>

An Assembly composed of the schout and magistrates of Achter Kull was held November 18, 1673 to make the laws and orders. The ordinances enacted were few and simple, pertaining mostly to questions of morality and religion, and were submitted to the Dutch authorities for ratification. For more than year the community of Elizabethtown was at rest; the people lived on good terms with the authorities at Fort Orange and were secure in the enjoyment of their lands and privileges. Ogden was virtually governor of the English towns in New Jersey and the government was administered the same as in New England. The people had their own way and old troubles were, for a time, forgotten. The Dutch Rule soon terminated by a treaty signed in Westminster, England, February 9, 1673-4. The mutual restoration of captured territory took place. Possession was retained in New Jersey by the Dutch until the following November when they were superseded by the English.<sup>175</sup>

The return of Governor Carteret and his associates after two years absence was to again revive the land title controversy. They were not congenial. They were not emigrants. They were colonial agents and government officials. They were largely adherents of the Church of England or the Roman Catholic Church and were not men of good character that would lay foundations of good social, moral, and religious character for the colony.

The planters of the town had matured under the doctrines of the eastern colonies. They abjured the divine rights of kings

---

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid* p. 59

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid* p. 59-60

and had a holy aversion to the House of Stuart, looking upon them as invaders of the vested rights of the people and as imperial despots. They had enjoyed the largest liberty of government, which had been constituted according to their own conceptions of truth and right and, therefore, did not want government from a far country to preside over their town meetings or meddle with their affairs.

Carteret and his followers were monarchists who believed in the divine right of kings. They made sport of Puritan strictness in religion and morals and desired to live in unrestrained indulgence of their follies and vices. These were not congenial elements for the organization of social, political, and religious institutions and, in the very nature of the case, collisions were to be expected and could not be avoided. One of the greatest problems was the title of the properties. Carteret claimed he owned the land by the virtue of the English defeat of the Dutch and that he and Berkeley had been given title to all that territory by the Duke Of York (V,1). The patent of Captain John Baker, Ogden, and Watson was null and void and the individual claims of the property owners had no validity as far as they were concerned. The arguments went on until Carteret issued a proclamation on December 11, 1674. Finding no present prospect of securing their rights, with no means of redress at hand, and threatened by their imperious rulers with summary confiscation of all their land and improvements, and also laboring under grievous embarrassments for want of definite surveys and a recognized title, the people yielded to the compulsion put upon them and, without prejudice to their previous titles, consented to receive such as the governor chose to give them. One after another they applied for surveys and warrants, the "Good old John Ogden" being the last to make application. The following schedule shows the date of the governor's warrant, the person in whose favor the warrant was given and the number of acres to be conveyed to him:<sup>176</sup>

1675 Acres1676

Acres

---

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid* pgs. 61-62



April	8-Symon Rows	180	22-William Cramer	
				180
May	3-Robt.Vauquellin & wife	300	-Nathaniel Tuthill	
				90
June	30-Charles Tucker	140	-Peter Moss and wife	
				180
	-Robert Bond	360	27-George Ross and wife	
				120
	-Joseph Bond	160	-Humphry Spinnings	
				180
	-Jacob Mellins	300	-George Morris	90
Sept.	12-Robert White,wife and		-Roger Lambert	
				120
	daughter	180	-Stephen Crane	120
Oct.	6-Leonard Headley & wife	120	-William Hill	60
	-John Parker	90	28-William Johnson	240
	22-Nicholas Carter	360	-John Little right self	
	23-William Pardon & wife	200	and Stephen Salsbury	
				180
Nov.	5-John Woodruff, wife and		-George Peck	
				120
	three servants	450	-William Oliver	180
	1676		-Samuel Marsh, Senr	180
Jan.	21-Luke Watson	400	-Samuel Marsh, Junr	
				180
March	8-Henry Lyon rights and		-John Pope	
				100
	purchase	360	-John Carter	100
	14-William Letts	180	-David Oliver	60
	-Charles Tucker (a 2d		Apr. 8-William Pills	320
	warrant)	180	-Benjamin Price, Senr	270
	-Benjamin Parkis	80	-Benjamin Price, Junr	
				90
	-Henry Norris,self and		10-Stephen Osborne	
				180
	John Wilson carpenter	210	-Nathaniel Bonnel	
				180
	-Daniel DeHaert,right of		11-Joseph Sears	180
	Richard Painter	120	14-Jonas Wood	300
				157

-Wm. Pardon, right of	-Thomas Moore	180
Wm. Meaker 120	25-Jeffery Jones	180
-Isaac Whitehead, Snr 180	27-David Ogden	
120		
-Samuel Moore, right of	May 2-Hur Tompson	
120		
John Wilson, the Less 90	9-Jeremiah Peck	
180		
-Capt. Thomas Young 240	-Joseph Fraize	
120		
-Capt. John Baker, wife	-John Winons	120
and 8 other Baker's 1200	-Barnaby Wines	
240		
-Sir Geo. & Philip Carteret	-Richard Michell	120
and 18 servants 2700	30-Math. Hetfield	100
-Philip Carteret right of	31-Joseph Osborne	100
Abraham Shotwell 150	-Moses Tompson	
180		
-Philip Carteret, right of	-Joseph Meaker	120
Peter Wolverson 480	Jun 12-Benjamin Meaker	
120		
-Philip Carteret, right of	14-Benjamin Waide	144
Dennis White 120	-John Ogden, Jnr	150
-Benjamin Wade 120	-Isaac Whitehead, Jnr	
120		
20-Richard Beach 90	-Jonathan Ogden	
120		
-Robert Moss and wife 180	Sep 12-Aaron Tomson, right of	
his		
	father, Thomas	120
	-Aaron Thomas, right self	60
	-John Lambird	100
	Oct 27-Joseph Ogdon	90
	Nov 23-John Simkins	80
	Dec 27-Samuel Trotter, right of	
	his father William	90
	1677	
	Feb 1-Margaret Baker, right of	
	Peter Wolverson	200

Jul 11-James Haynes and wife 120  
1678

Oct 26-Mrs.Hann Hopkins, wife  
of Samuel Hopkins 120

29-John Ogden, Snr. 800<sup>177</sup>

Before I move on, I think we should look at the list above of the original, warranted property owners which has some interesting facts and raises some intriguing questions. Robert Vauquellin and his wife were passengers on the ship *Philip* that brought Governor Carteret to the new province he had inherited from the Duke of York. He was, no doubt, the grandson of Jean Vauquelin de las Fresnaye, lietenant-general of the bailiwick of Caen, France and chief justice of that country. Some histories have him recorded as VanQuellin, as if he were a Dutchman, instead of French. Just another error among the scores of others we have encountered. He was a member of Carteret's council and strictly adhered faithfully to the governor's party and interests. He was appointed by Berkley and Carteret surveyor-general of their new domaine in America. The surveys of the above properties and others made between 1675 and 1681 bear his signature, generally, "Ro-Vauquellin" or "La Prairie". Though he is listed among the eighty associates, he had scarcely any interest in common with the sturdy Puritans, and this not proving congenial, in 1678 he removed to Woodbridge. Three years later he was succeeded as surveyor-general by John Reid and his name ceased to appear in the records.

The land held by Vauquellin and the Carterets totaled 3,530 acres which made them the principal landowners. However, if you look at the rest of the owners you will see that the Bakers, with 1,400 acres, and the Ogdens, with 1,250 acres, were the main property owners. It was, no doubt, the strong, colonial, puritanical strength of these people that eventually would survive.

As we look at the warrant of Captain John Baker for 1200 acres for himself, his wife, and eight other family members, we

---

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid* Pgs. 63-64

can, today, name the greater part of the recipients. We need to remember that Captain John Baker is a full cousin of Thomas of Milford and East Hampton. They were, without doubt, in communication with each other, since Thomas went to New York to sit on the General Court of New York and also due to his appointment to the West Yorkshire Riding, which covers Westchester County. Captain John then knew who his second cousins were. We know that Nathaniel's two daughters, Joanna and Mary, each moved to Elizabethtown and were, no doubt, the recipients of land from Captain John. We also know from the will of Daniel, son of Nathaniel, earlier in this history, that he gave to his sons, Nathaniel and Henry, one-hundred acres each in Elizabethtown. You will discover in the next chapter that Thomas' grandson, Thomas, by first, son Thomas, received one-hundred acres in Westfield. In the same chapter you will discover that Nathaniel's grandson, Jacob, also received one-hundred acres in Westfield. His brother, Joseph, could have been another and he sold his tract to someone else, as he was located in Bergen, north of all the problems of land titles going on at Elizabethtown. We cannot confirm that Captain John's sister, Margaret, ever came to America with them, as we never find any reference to her in history. This, however undocumented, has pretty well decided who received his land grants from his 1200 acre reservation. We also will define in the next chapter where Captain John's lands were and that Jacob and his sons, Jonathan and William, eventually end up as titled owners of Captain John's property.

The Margaret Baker who, on February 1, 1677, warranted the two-hundred acres of Peter Wolverson was not Captain John Baker's sister. This Margaret was a Dutch Backer, associated with Styvesant in New Amsterdam, who anglicized her name. Just another of the many crazy things encountered. It would have been easy to claim her as Captain John's sister that followed their cousin Tuomas to the new world.

To return to our History, the vexed question of land titles was, for a while, settled and a season of comparative quietness ensued at Elizabeth Town. There was some apprehension of famine in the winter of 1674-75 owing to the failure of crops and

160

the export of corn and grain was prohibited. The eastern colonies were, in the summer of 1675, engaged with the native tribes in bloody warfare. Fears were entertained of hostilities with the tribes of Jersey and Delaware. They inaugurated a military system by which all able-bodied males from sixteen to sixty years of age were enrolled. They were ordered to supply themselves with arms and ammunition and to train four days in the year.<sup>178</sup>

In 1675 the First General Assembly was held. Jacob Melyn was appointed province treasurer and his salary was 20 shillings. Benjamin Price and Henry Lyon represented Elizabethtown. Newark and Elizabethtown formed a county. A statute was passed prohibiting servile work and unnecessary travel on the Lord's Day, unless on the account of works of mercy or necessity. Offense for violation was punishable by fine, imprisonment, or corporal punishment according to the judgment of the court of justice or justices. The following rates were established for country produce: winter wheat, 5 shillings; summer wheat, 4 shillings 6 pence; rye and barley, 4 shillings; Indian corn and pease, 3 shillings a bushel; beef, 2 pence; pork, 3 pence; bacon, 6 pence; tallow, 6 pence; green hides, 3 pence; dry hides, 6 pence; hogs, 6 pence; and tobacco, 4 pence a pound. Beef was 50 shillings and pork 70 shillings a barrel.<sup>179</sup>

The Assembly met annually, but nothing of significant interest occurred. In 1679, to display the cost of living, a regulation was passed regulating inns. Strong liquors were retailed by the gill and were not to exceed 10 shillings and 8 pence the gallon. By the quart the price was 2 shillings 6 pence. Good wine was sold at 7 shillings a gallon, cider at 4 pence a quart, and a transient was charged 8 pence for a meal of victuals and 6 pence a day for pasturing his horse in summer and winter, oats being 9 pence a peck. Stringent laws were set against selling Indians strong drink and for disorderly conduct on the Sabbath day. The custom of common pasturage of cattle led to trouble and

---

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid* p. 63

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid* p. 63

regulations were passed for branding and marking cattle. They required making fences and keeping them in repair and also for providing a pound for stray animals.<sup>180</sup>

The province had been run under the Governorship of Sir Philip Carteret, much to the displeasure of our Puritanical founders. Upon the death of Sir George Carteret on 14 January 1679 fruitless attempts were made for two or three years to dispose of East Jersey, which had been devised to trustees for the benefit of Carteret's creditors. The province with the jurisdiction of the people was at length disposed of to the highest bidder in January 1682, together with all arrearage of rents and sums of money due to the late proprietor, for 3,400 pounds. The deeds were executed 1-2 February 1681.<sup>181</sup>

The purchasers were an association of twelve persons, residents of London and its vicinity. Most of them were with the Society of Friends - William Penn, Thomas Rudyard, and Samuel Groome being of the number. The Associates were soon doubled, six being from Scotland and the others from London. Among the Scots were James Drummond, the Earl of Perth, Lord High Chancellor of Scotland, a monarch of the Stuart type, a Papist and an exiled Jacobite, his brother, David Drummond, and Robert Barclay of Urie, the Quaker apologist. Gawen Lawrie, a Quaker merchant, was one of the new members from London. Therefore, the province's one proprietor was exchanged for twenty-four and the Cavalier rule was exchanged for the Quaker rule.<sup>182</sup>

Seventeen years had passed since Captain John Baker, Ogden, and Watson had acquired lawfully and honorably a title to the soil of Elizabethtown and entered into possession. Year after year there had been contentions with the ruling powers of the territory and a firm resistance had been made against encroachments of their vested and sacred rights. Some few had

---

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid* p. 64

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid* p. 64

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid* p. 65

grown weary of the conflict and had transferred their interests to others and moved. The larger portion, however, remained and manfully maintained the principles which they so dearly loved. These troubles also had their use. They served to strengthen and develop character, fostered an intelligent love for freedom, independence, well-regulated self-rule, constitutional principles, and popular rights. These factors prepared them to lay the foundations of the town, the state, and the church. Their children, who grew to adulthood under these conditions, would be ready to take on the burdens of their elders as they cease from their care and toil. One by one the elders were dropping into their graves. Among them were Seely, Andris, Dickinson, Pope, Simkins, Trotter, Goodman Tomson, and Bond. In the year 1681 "Good Old John Ogden" one of the founders of the town, who's child was the first, white child born in the territory, the accepted leader of the people, the pillar of the church, the last to bow down to Carteret, laid down and died. He left behind the impress of his political and religious principles not only upon his children, but also upon the community that he had so largely aided in founding.<sup>183</sup>

## UNDER QUAKER GOVERNORS

The new proprietors chose for the governor of the province Robert Barclay, with the privilege of non-residence and of acting by deputy. He chose Thomas Rudyard, a London barrister, as his deputy and Samuel Groome, a sea captain of Stepney near London, who had visited America in 1676, was appointed receiver and surveyor-general. These two officials arrived at Elizabeth Town, November 13, 1682. They brought to the area a new era of history. The outlook of affairs gave promise of peace and prosperity. Rudyard was a man of amiable instincts and courteous demeanor, although not wanting in firmness. He was not the lordly cavalier of an aristocratic court, but a representative of a trading association whose members were plain,

---

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid* p. 65

unassuming men, attached to a sect that had suffered from the intolerance of the crown.<sup>184</sup>

Elizabeth Town became the seat of Quaker government. The area naturally attracted members of that sect to settle in its midst. Governor Rudyard was pleased with his new home. A letter written six months after his arrival tells us much about the area at that time.

He states: "The fresh and salt meadows were very valuable. Vast beds of oysters that were available provided a constant supply of fresh victuals during the winter season for the English as well as the Indians. Salt fish is available in great abundance, while the brooks and streams yield perch, trout and eels. The country is well stocked with cattle, and provisions are plentiful. Two saw mills were in operation, with others in the process of building. Although timber cost nothing, workmanship by hand was at London price. The river was navigable for ships of thirty or forty tons. The temperature he described as wonderfully suited to the humors of mankind. The weather rarely holding to one point or one kind for ten days together." (How true this is yet today. We have a phrase here in New Jersey that if you don't like the weather today, just wait and within 48 hours it will change.) He goes on: "Vessels are rarely windbound for a week, climate changes occurring generally in forty-eight hours; in short there is was wet and dry, warm and cold weather. The health of himself and family has greatly improved since leaving George Yard in London. Although there is less company at his home daily and not as many pass by his doors, he could not call his habitation as solitary."

He goes on about the people.

"The people were sober, wise in their generations, courteous in their behavior, and respectful to those in office. The people were generally settled where the tide reaches the land, which is well-timbered and plentifully supplied with salt marsh. The land

---

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid* p. 67



higher up on the river reached by boats where fresh meadows overflowed in winter, and these lands were gradually being settled upon."

William Penn visited the land that year and said he had never seen such in his life. Rudyard also spoke of the large store of clams, which were esteemed as being much better than oysters, and said that an industrious man may have a plentiful supply of all things necessary to life. No less extravagant in his praise of his new home was the surveyor-general, who said it was a brave country, the ground very fruitful and inclined to raise English grass like clover, etc.. In short, the land was four times better than he had expected.<sup>185</sup>

Rudyard took the oath of office on December 20, 1682. He appointed Benjamin Price one of his council. Do you remember he was the town recorder at East Hampton in the early 1650's? A General Assembly was held on March 1, 1684. Henry Lyon, Isaac Whitehead, Benjamin Price, and Benjamin Parkis were appointed justices of the peace. Captain John Baker and Benjamin Parkis were appointed justices of the Court of Common Right. Captain John Baker was coroner, George Jewell, clerk, and James Emott, clerk of the new County of Essex. The Court of Common Right was a superior court to be held quarterly in each town. Numerous laws were passed regarding property, intemperance, licentiousness, and Sabbath breaking. Domestic slavery was recognized.<sup>186</sup>

Rudyard's administration was brief. He was succeeded in July 1683 by Gawen Lawrie, one of the proprietors. He was a London merchant and a member of the Society of Friends. He arrived in the province in January 1684. The Assembly, in session in December, 1683 without a Quaker leader present, passed a stringent militia law and appointed a chief ranger in every county to look after the stray flocks and herds. The Elizabethtown foot

---

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid* pgs. 67-68

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid* p. 68

company was commanded by Benjamin Parkis (captain), George Ross (lieutenant), and John Woodruff (ensign). This militia law was a source of trouble to the Quaker Proprietors as it gave the military officers the power to inflict punishment on those that did not comply with its requirements. The Quakers, in accordance with their conscientious scruples, could not bear arms or contribute to support of military companies. The law against Sabbath breaking also conflicted with their religious prejudices, lest it might prove a burden to some who might find it their duty not only to testify against the Jewish superstitions, but also against some others on that point.<sup>187</sup>

Governor Lawrie's first duty was to lay out the new city of Perth which the proprietors had decided was to be the new capital of the province. The population of the area was expanded by the importation of Scottish laborers. Most were of the poorer classes, but many were people of sterling worth. They were employed in and about Perth, but some settled at Elizabeth Town.<sup>188</sup>

The letters back to England gave glowing reports on the province. The Scots had increased the population. More progress was being made than over the past decade. Nothing was needed by the people. There was not a poor person in the territory. Provisions were in abundance. The soil was rich, black, and a foot deep. The soil at Perth was good for bricks. Provisions were plentiful and there was an abundance of fish and fowl. Oysters were enough for all of England. Good cider was one penny a quart, venison at 18 pence a quarter, eggs 3 pence a dozen, and walnuts, peaches and strawberries grew wild in the woods. Servants wages were two shillings a day, besides board, and they worked one-third the time they did in England and were fed better and, in time, could turn out to be farmers themselves. Lawrie urged the proprietors to send more people. This would encourage others to come and take up land and eventually bring all division to an end. He was over-confident in respect to the people of the town. The land was in

---

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid* p. 69

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid* p. 69

possession of the old families and held by the old Indian Purchase that had been made by Captain John Baker. The newcomers were obliged to buy these lands to obtain a freehold in the area.<sup>189</sup>

The winter of 1684-85 was the most severe since the settlement of the town. The Sound between the Jersey Shore and Staten Island was frozen so hard it provided traffic by carts and horses between these points. The letters of Lawrie and the publication of the proprietors did produce a great many Scotch Presbyterians, who had been persecuted beyond tolerance and life itself in the homeland. They came to this promised haven of peace seeking a love of popular liberty and religious enthusiasm. Many of these Scots found their way to Elizabeth Town and beyond, especially into the interior. The area of Scotch Plains today derived its name from these settlers. The government seat was moved to Perth (now Perth Amboy), but Lawrie continued to reside at Elizabeth Town.<sup>190</sup>

An enlargement of the council November 26, 1684 saw Henry Lyon and Benjamin Price as representatives of the town and John Woodruff, Sr. was appointed high sheriff of Essex County. The death of Charles II in England brought The Duke of York, James II, an avowed Papist, to the throne. The Puritan population at Elizabeth Town hated popery and feared the influence of a papal sovereign. Dongan, the governor of New York, also a Papist, had been attempting to unite the two colonies under one head, a project which then might happen. The state of alarm continued through Lawrie's term and helped to keep peace between the Puritans and the Quakers.<sup>191</sup>

The Quaker rule had continued for four years. The proprietors had gone to great expense to send over colonists to expand the towns and cultivate the land, but were greatly disappointed in the results. Lawrie and Rudyard had been more

---

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid* p. 69-70

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid* p. 70

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid* p. 70

interested in securing the best lands for themselves than promoting the interests of the proprietors. The Indian titles had not been surrendered, the rents were slow in coming in, and the prospect of regular dividends was not encouraging.<sup>192</sup>

As a large number of the proprietors were Presbyterians, it was decided to not appoint a Quaker to the governorship. This was also desired by the Puritan settlers who greatly preferred a member of that sect to an Episcopalian like Carteret or a Quaker like Lawrie or Rudyard. Therefore, Lord Neil Campbell received the appointment.<sup>193</sup> In 1686 the perplexing questions of the property titles finally came to somewhat of a close and the Colony could move forward and develop its vast, unoccupied territory.

In the year 1703 the City of New York had a Census taken of all residents.[This precedes any National Census, as the first was in 1790. It is difficult for us to imagine today that it only took 12 pages to enumerate all inhabitants.] The Census was divided into The East Ward, The South Ward, The North Ward, The West Ward, and The Dock Ward. The amazing entry is that Captain Baker is shown still maintaining his residency in New York at this time. He was a resident of The East Ward. The Census shows but five people over the age of sixty. The Census has the following headings: Males from 16 to 60, Females, Male Children, Female Children, Male Negro, Female Negro, Male Negro children, Female Negro Children and all above 60. Captain Baker's entry is first in Males 16 to 60, and one Female Negro child. We know he also had his residency in Elizabeth Town and no doubt due to his class status was still maintaining his city residency, but it was only cared for by a Negro female not yet 16 years of age. On reporting she probably made the declarations, as he was probably at Elizabeth Town. The total Census shows 700 family heads, in 1703.<sup>194</sup>

---

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid* p. 70

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid* p. 70

<sup>194</sup> O'Callaghan, E.B., THE DOCUMENTED HISTORY OF NEW YORK,  
Vol. I, p. 611-624

In 1705 Captain John Baker, the last of the three original founders of the Colony, died. We do not know his exact age, but it should have been about eighty years. His cousin, Thomas, was eighty-two at his death in 1700 at East Hampton. These two, emigrant cousins were the firstborn male children of their grandfather, Sir Richard The Chronicler, being sons of Thomas of Hothfield and Arthur of Bodiam.

Our next chapter will cover the growth and development of the inland portion of the Elizabeth Town Colony, and more specifically, the "Baker Tract" purchase, which was the lands west of the Minisink Trail.



# 11

## THE BAKERS OF ELIZABETH TOWN AND WESTFIELD

Captain John Baker purchased the lands west of the Minisink Trail and was the owner of the lands known as the "Baker Tract".

We have also recorded in the last chapter the Carteret demands that all property rights had to be warranted and surveyed by his group. It was recorded that on March 8, 1676 he warranted 1200 acres for himself, his wife, and eight Bakers. We also know that he was a first cousin of THOMAS Baker, as they are both the grandsons of Sir Richard Baker The Chronicler.

We found no record of Captain John having any children. He therefore was reserving 100 acre tracts of land for his family, (relatives) out on Long Island, children of his cousin, Thomas, the founder of Milford and East Hampton. Thomas and Alice had four children: Hannah, Thomas, Nathaniel, and Abigail. Without any document, as to who these family members were, we have to look into the history of Captain John's relatives who move to the Elizabeth Town area.

1. Son Thomas received one share, which he passed on to his son Thomas, who we shall relate to in this chapter at Westfield
2. Son Nathaniel's family:
  - a. Lieut. Jonathan, 1 share which he passed on to his son Jacob who went first to Westfield and later Elizabeth Town.
  - b. Daughter Joanna, 1 share. She later at Elizabeth Town.
  - c. Daughter Mary, 1 share. She later at Elizabeth Town.
  - d. Son Daniel, 2 shares. One to his son Nathaniel and the other

to his son Henry. Both later at Westfield.

3. We should assume his brother Joseph was also a benefactor. His share was probably north of Newark, in Bergen County.

4. The balance he reserved for himself, at Elizabeth Town.

You recall in the will of Daniel Baker, in an earlier chapter, he provided for his two sons to inherit 100 acres each at Westfield. Daniel never left Amagansett the place of his birth, yet he willed property to his sons. We now know how he procured the property. The history continues to unfold.

THOMAS, of Milford and East Hampton, had a first, male child is also named Thomas. We have no will for this second Thomas, but as his brother Nathaniel's family is part of Captain John Baker's reservation, I am confident that he also was given or purchased one of the 100 acre tracts which he passed on to his son, Thomas. He is the only one of the first Thomas' sons who moved to the Westfield area, adjacent to Jacob, Nathaniel, and Henry, mentioned below. From this we can assume that he received one of Captain John's 100 acre tracts.

NATHANIEL, the only other son of THOMAS, the emigrant, had children with much more connection with the Elizabeth Town area and Captain John Baker. NATHANIEL also stays in the East Hampton-Amagansett area where he was born, died and was buried. He was probably either the benefactor or purchaser of four of the 100 acre tracts. It is two of his daughters who marry Elizabeth Town men and are probably the benefactors of two of the 100 acre tracts, namely, Joanna married to Joseph Ogden, and Mary, married to Timothy Woodruff, which kept him in contact with all the Baker family at Elizabeth Town and Westfield. If you also go back to NATHANIEL's will in an earlier chapter you will probably solve the problem of where his son Daniel could have come into possession of two 100 acre tracts in Elizabeth Town. He also may have given another 100 acre tract to his only other living son, LIEUT. JONATHAN, as his son JACOB, also ends up at Westfield, adjacent to Daniel's sons, Nathaniel and Henry,



and was also a probable benefactor of Captain John Baker's efforts.

JACOB, baptized on October 20, 1706 at Amagansett moved to the West Field of Elizabeth Town, East Jersey. He established a tannery in the West Field, just below his cousins, Henry and Nathaniel. He probably went to this area at the same time as his two aunts and cousins, Henry and Nathaniel, sons of Daniel, which was about 1727. He would have been a young man of just over twenty years of age at that time. He probably married later, as his first son, David, was not born until 1749. We found no record of his marriage, but it appeared to be to Hannah Ball. There were no records kept on births of children in those days. The only source of information regarding children was through baptismal records. We knew nothing of any children until we found his will, which we will relate to in this chapter. He did, however, establish a tannery in this area.

Figure 11-01: Map of Westfield at the time of the War

On the map of Westfield above you will see the Tannery identified as Nathaniel's. This was true at the time of the War. However, let us try to explain what went on in Jacob's life. Henry and Nathaniel were tradesmen and Jacob's father had been a carpenter. He chose not to follow that profession and decided to be a tanner of leather, which he was for his entire life.

American aborigines were well-versed in the art of tanning when the white men first invaded their territory. Usually it was the women who did the laborious work of removing the hair and smoking the hides. The leather so made would withstand any amount of wetting and would return to its original soft, pliant condition after drying.<sup>195</sup>

Jacob built the tannery and started the treatment of the skins of the animals for his neighbors. This is in the late 1720's

---

<sup>195</sup> AMERICAN PEOPLES ENCYCLOPEDIA Vol. 12 p. 12-298

by other information we found. He married later, but possibly his wife did not like being a helpmate in the tannery and Jacob evidently deserted the project and left his wife and child with the property. We encountered, in our searching, that Nathaniel bought the tannery from "the widow of Jacob Baker".<sup>196</sup> We were elated having found Jacob and now it appeared he had died! Time marched on. We discovered he had not died and the entry in the G&B was a desertion and the recorder had called his wife a "widow".

The map of Westfield confirmed the residency of Thomas as he followed the profession of his grandsire, Thomas, the emigrant, who ran an Inn and Tavern in East Hampton. You will find this Thomas' Inn and Tavern at the junction of Broad and Mountain on the map. He, however, later moved to Turkey, now New Providence, and on his death in 1767 is presumed to be the Thomas buried at Connecticut Farms Church, Union, NJ.<sup>197</sup>

The map also locates Henry and Nathaniel Baker's properties. As this is some forty years after Jacob had deserted the Tannery, I would have to believe that Nathaniel had sold his first inheritance, possibly the tract called the Arsenal, and was in the 1770's living at Jacob's house adjacent to the Tannery, as the map displays.

Evidence that you will find in a later chapter discloses the fact that Jacob goes up to the area of Dutchess County where other former acquaintances and people from East Hampton were living. It is here he probably married Deborah Jean \_\_\_\_\_, and a son, Jonathan, is born in 1757. This is seven years since the birth of his first son, David, who was born at Westfield. His son Jonathan, in a deposition he filed as an elderly man in Shandaken, Ulster County, New York, stated he was born at Fredericktown, New York. This deposition will be found in a future chapter. How long Jacob stayed away from Elizabeth Town area

---

<sup>196</sup> *G & B of New Jersey Vol. 56*

<sup>197</sup> *Rattery, J. E., EAST HAMPTON HISTORY p. 206-207*

was never found. We discovered he did return with his wife and new family to Elizabeth Town, to the area where two of his aunts Joanna Ogden and Mary Woodruff lived. He became the owner of the earlier property of Captain John Baker who had died in 1705, probably buying it from his estate. He established himself back in the tannery business by building a tannery south of his residence and farmland on Oyster Creek. He fathered several more children at this location and established a relationship with his first born son, David, from his Westfield marriage or relationship. David probably assisted his father in the tanning business. Trees and the bark from trees are an essential to tan leather. They purchased a neighboring wooded property for that supply.

The next task was to attempt to find proof of the assumptions that appeared to be the life story of our grandsire Jacob. Union County had not yet been formed at that time. If I was to find any verification on Jacob I had to go to Essex County, to see what I could find in the old archives. I then proceeded to Newark, New Jersey and the Essex County Court House, to try to locate a will, or any information that might be there, pertaining to our ancestor. It was there I found the call numbers for the wills of a Jacob and a Jonathan J. Baker. I assumed I had now found Jacob and his son, our ancestors. However, the wills were not there, but could be found in the archives of the State Library in Trenton. After seven years of searching, could it be there, within 16 miles of our home, that we would find the connection we have been looking for? So I hoped.

Here for your reading is the will of our ancestor JACOB BAKER:

In the name of God Amen. I, Jacob Baker, of the borough of Elizabeth, County of Essex and province of East Jersey. Tanner, being Weak of body but Sound of Mind and Memory do this Twenty ninth day of January, One Thousand and Seven hundred and Seventy four, make, ordain and Constitute this my last will and testament in manner and form Following; Viz:

"First I Commit my soul to God that gave it and my body to the Dust from which it came, to be buried at the Discretion

of my Executors hereafter mentioned and Named, Imprimis: After all my Just debts and funeral Charges be paid I give and bequeath unto my beloved Son David Baker the sum of five Shillings to be Raised and Levied out of my Real and Personal Estate where with I utterly Exclude Preclude and barr him from any Further claim, pretence or Demand, as being my Eldest son and heir at Law. Item: I ("give and"-crossed out) bequeath unto my said Son David Baker my pair of Gold Sleeve Buttons. Item: I hereby ordain and appoint that my Equal half of ten acres of Woodland, between me and my son David Baker as also four acres and a half of Salt meadow my Property adjoining Benjamin Hains on one Side or End and one Side adjoining Oyster Creek may be disposed of in Order to pay my Debts and Should there be any overplus thereon after my Just debts are paid the overplus so being to be Divided between my two Sons Jonathan Baker and William Baker to each one of them and Equal Share part and Proportion thereof and to there Several and Respective Heirs and Assigns forever and to be paid and delivered unto them Severally and Respectively as they shall Severally and Respectively attain or arrive to their Several ages of twenty one years with any Profits that may accrue there from, During there Nonage. Item: in case the two above mentioned pieces of Wood land and Meadow should not be Sufficient to answer my Just Debts I hereby Ordain and appoint that in order to pay my Just Debts a Sufficient Quantity of Household Furniture and Such farming Utensils may be disposed of as my Executors may best approve of. Item: I give Devise and Bequeath unto my two Sons, Jonathan Baker and William Baker, the House and Farm with all the Improvements thereon where I now Live and Equal and Even Share part and portion thereof and to their Several and Respective Heirs and Assigns forever and to be paid and delivered unto them Severally and Respectively as they shall Severally and Respectively attain or arrive, to their Severally ages of Twenty one years with any Profits they may accrue there from during there Nonage. Item: all the Rest Residue of my moveable's after my Just Debts are paid I Give devise and

bequeath, unto my well beloved Children, Sarah Baker, Phebe Baker, Ester Baker and Mary Baker, and Equal and Even Share part and portion thereof and to their Several and Respective Heirs and Assigns forever, to be delivered them as they shall Severally and Respectively attain or arrive to there Several Ages of Twenty one years or days of Marriage with any Profits that may accrue there from during there Nonage. Item: In Case any of the above mentioned Named Sons or either or both Should happen to die under the age of Twenty one year, Then and in such Case I give devise and Bequeath the Share or Shares of Such Son or Sons so dying unto my two Daughters Easter Baker and Mary Baker and Equal and Even Share part and Portion thereof and to there Several and Respective heirs and assigns forever, and to be paid and Delivered onto them, Severally and Respectively as they shall Severally and Respectively attain or arrive to there Several ages of Twenty one years or Days of Marriage with any Profits that may accrue During there Nonage. Lastly I do by these Presents Nominate Constitute and appoint my Good Friends Timothy Woodruff, Senior and William Herriman Executors, to this my Last Will and Testament Ratifying and Confirming this and no other to be My Last Will and Testament. In witness where of I have hereunto Set my hand and Seal the day and year first above written. Note the word "unto" interlined between the seventh and eighth line in Second Page as also the word "Named" between the nineteenth and twentieth Line on second page also before the Ensealing and Delivery of the written will. Signed, Sealed and Pronounced and Declared by the Testator the said Jacob Baker, as his Last Will and Testament in the Presence and hearing of us who have Subscribed our Names in the Presence of the said Testator: Benjamin Hains, Andrew McMyer, Gilbert Myer.

Jacob Baker    (Seal)

Benjamin Hains and Gilbert Myers two of the Witness to the written will being duly Sworn on the Holy Evangelical Almighty God did depose and Say that they saw Jacob Baker the Testator within named Sign and Seal the same

and heard him Publish Pronounce and declare the written Instrument his Last Will and Testament and that at the doing time the said Testator was of a Sound and disposing Mind and that as far as these Deponents know and as they verily believe and that Andrew McMyers the other Subscribing Witness was Present and signed his Name as a witness to the Will together with these deponents in the presence of said Testator. Signed: Benjamin Hains

Gilbert Myers

Sworn this 1st day of March 1774

at Elizabeth Town before me:

Signed : Robt. Ogden Jr. Surrogate

Also at the Time and Place above : William Herriman and Timothy Woodruff came before me and were Duly Qualified by taking Oath as Executors as appointed by Law.

Signed: Robt Ogden Jr. Surrogate" {sic} <sup>198</sup>

I have photocopies and have handled the actual pages as well as copies of the Probate Copies that were rewritten by the Mormons, the later being much clearer and readable. All spelling, word usage, capitalization, etc., has been copied as it appears on the original copies. Either Jacob, or one of his witnesses, was a very well-versed personage, as this will is very technically correct and explicit in its wording. One of the daughters has two spellings, one entry is Ester and the later Easter. One of his named executors, Timothy Woodruff, Sr., is the husband of Mary Baker, his aunt, and another witness is Benjamin Hains. Hains is one of the ancestral spellings of the family Haynes.

From this will, we can now establish the children of JACOB as:

---

<sup>198</sup> *Perth Amboy- Lib "L" p. 108-109-110 However documents are at State Library, Trenton, NJ Archives Area*

David, Sarah, Jonathan, William, Phebe, Ester, and Mary. JONATHAN was 16 years old at the time and he and his younger brother, William, will inherit the home farm when of legal age. Is Jacob again a widower, with the youngest daughter possibly about eight years of age? Or, was it just assumed his wife would retain title until the children become of age? He also never mentioned the tannery, but this could be it was considered part of the property. I feel she was still alive and will relate to why I make this assumption, later in this chapter. We now have some understanding why his son, David, was excluded from his estate beyond his mentioned legacies. We know that he was from a first marriage or relationship that was not successful. Thus, he is only a half-brother to his other children and not the son of his present wife.

It is with interest, we note from the will, that he has Gold Sleeve Buttons, yet being only a farmer and tanner. Is this still some of the family inheritance brought with THOMAS from England?? Gold and silver items were usually given to the favorite child or children. It is odd to note that David is given his father's Gold sleeve buttons, but barred from most of property dispersed in the will.

Figure 11-02: Section of Map of Elizabeth Town 1775-1783  
Ernest L. Meyer, C.E.

This map of Elizabeth Town at the time of the Revolution shows us the location and the titled owners to the property at this time. Please note that the small segment of this map, has Jonathan Baker as 1/2 owner of the home site. William's share has no doubt been sold to Eliha Bond. The Tannery will be found on the stream now called Brackett's Brook. You will also note the main highways that Captain John Baker's lot description described in an earlier Chapter. This clarifies that this was his property now owned by our grandsire, Jacob. To the east, on the full map, the 10 acres of woodland that the heirs evidently did not sell, but gave to David Baker, his first born son, is also evident, titled to David Baker. This map I also found in the State Library at Trenton, New Jersey.

The British burned the church in Elizabeth Town and all the records were assumed lost. However, many years later, in an excavation under the Chancery floor of the old church grounds was found the remains of "Record Book of First Presbyterian Church of Elizabeth", dating from 1668. In the pages of Burial Records, we were fortunate to find the following: JACOB BAKER - February 13, 1774.<sup>199</sup>

The churchyard is filled with tombstones, shoulder to shoulder, from the front stone fence, for many rows. How were we to find Jacob's stone? Walking the rows, we found all the names of the families that had association with the Baker family from Connecticut and Long Island. Scores of the stones were similar to the stones we found at East Hampton and Amagansett. It was not until we were at the very south edge of the burial grounds that we found the stone of "Jacob. B". It was a white, sandstone stone with all the small engraving weathered and gone. The stone stood alone on an otherwise vacant lot. To the left, is the family Winan's stone and to the right the Woodruff's. It appears that when Jacob was buried the family purchased a lot for several more graves. This indicates the family left the area some time after this date period.

Figure 11-03: Tomb Stone of Jacob Baker

Son David died, evidently still a bachelor, in 1796, at the age of 47, and was buried at the Presbyterian Church in Westfield, near where he was born in Grave # 706.

Our family lived in an area of great turmoil. There was the dispute over the rights and titles to their lands. The attitude that the Quakers had brought with them of the evil practice of keeping slaves was gaining momentum. There was a growing rebellion on the part of the younger and more enlightened colored population. A Negro conspiracy in the City of New York in 1741 when the

---

<sup>199</sup> FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BURIAL RECORDS  
*Elizabeth Public Library - Archive Packet*



Negroes planned to burn the city and murder the population, aroused the thoughtful people against the evil business of slavery. In New York 154 Negroes were committed to prison. Fourteen were burned at the stake and eighteen were hanged. It is evident this fear and punishment spread also to Elizabeth Town as a record of burning of two Negroes was recorded in the Freeholders Book Of Records, Essex County, June 4, 1741. This enmity between the Negroes and the whites continued during the Revolutionary War. It was probably capitalized on by the British. On Sunday, June 20, 1779 it was discovered in Elizabeth Town that the Negroes planned to rise up against the inhabitants, murder them, and burn the town. After the War the movement against slavery gained momentum and people hastily set the Negroes and Indians free.<sup>200</sup>

Numerous actions of trespass and ejectment appear in the courts in 1740 and after related to rights to the lands of the Capitan John Baker Tract, which in this area were allotted in 100 acre lots in 1699. In an attempt to clear the atmosphere of the scores of disputes, the owners hired James Alexander to place the case before the King's Most Excellent Majesty. A petition was worked up and placed before the court. It recited very clearly and fully the matters in controversy. It narrated succinctly the history of the Indian Purchase and the opposing claims, referring to the litigations determined and others not yet issued. It showed the difficulties of obtaining impartial hearings as the courts and the country were constituted and appealed to His Majesty, George II, for relief and redress. It was read in the King's Council, referred first to his Committee on Plantation Affairs and then to Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations. How it was disposed of was not known. Following this presentation and the lack of decision many disputes arose between the Proprietors and the landowners. Arrests were made, many were imprisoned, jails were broken, riots were common and Westfield, with most of East Jersey, was in a state of anarchy. This spirit was particularly rampant at Turkey (now New Providence).<sup>201</sup>

---

<sup>200</sup> Clayton, W. Woodsford, *HISTORY OF UNION COUNTY* p. 492

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid* p. 493

While matters grew worse and worse, James Alexander under the Proprietor's direction drew up a defense in the elaborate document known as "The Elizabeth Town Bill in Chancery". An answer was formulated by William Livingston and William Smith for the Freeholders and inhabitants of Elizabeth Town. Governor Morris, unfortunate for the advocates of the bill, died in 1746, and Jonathan Belcher succeeded him. He allied himself with the Presbyterian Church of Elizabeth, which had branches in Westfield, Connecticut Farms (now Union), Turkey (New Providence), Rahway, Basking Ridge, Rocsitcus (now Mendham), West Hanover (now Morristown), and Springfield. Alexander died in 1756. The French triumphed over the English in the French and Indian Wars. On top of this came the Stamp Act and the Revolution. The controversy which had lasted for a century died a natural death. The Elizabeth Bill in Chancery and its Answers are sources of a great deal of historical material, biased though it may be. The original papers of Alexander from which the bill was drawn are now in the New York Historical Society Library and are a great source to New Jersey historians.<sup>202</sup>

If you thought the Lottery was a new gimmick to raise money, think again. In about the year 1748 the Lottery craze spread throughout this region. Many schemes to raise money for public purposes were proposed in the New York papers. It was a common method of raising money for church purposes. The following advertisement shows that the practice even reached Westfield: "Lost by the subscriber, some time last spring, a State Lottery Ticket, No. 84757. Any person who hath or shall find said ticket and return it to the owner, will be handsomely rewarded. The managers of said Lottery are hereby requested not to pay any prize that may be drawn against said number, to any person except the subscriber.

West Field, East Jersey May 18, 1748.

DAVID BAKER"

The effect of the lottery was the general demoralization of society, reaching even into religious bodies. On December 16,

---

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid* p. 493

1748 the Legislature passed a stringent act against this gambling practice and thereby the mania was subdued.<sup>203</sup> Is it not sad that today, over 250 years later, that the act of 1748 is not still in effect, as the lottery today is leaching MILLIONS of dollars each day from the general public of this the same area in New Jersey. Who the David Baker above mentioned was, I never researched. He was probably the son of Henry. He was not the son of JACOB, as he was born in 1749.

To return to the other problems that plagued our ancestors: the accessions of the British after the French and Indian War, The Stamp Act, and the English dominance over the Colonies hastily culminated a hatred of England and the desire for independence. An unfortunate happening near Elizabeth Town was the killing of a nurse on the boat of Colonel William Rickets, by a shot fired from His Majesty's ship the *Greyhound*, lying in the North River. The shot was fired apparently because the day before Rickets' boat had passed the ship and had not lowered his pennant. The incident was smothered at the time of the shooting, but later became a considerable bone of contention.<sup>204</sup>

The Massachusetts Circular on the Stamp Act and the request that the several Colonies consult together on circumstances relative to the spirit of the mother country towards them was presented to the New Jersey Legislature on June 20, 1765 at Burlington by Robert Ogden of Elizabeth Town as speaker, the last day of the session. No action was taken. The position of the people of Elizabeth Town and Essex County against the Stamp Act was a decided one. There was not only opposition, but also the strictest enforcement of severe penalties. A clipping from a New York paper dated February 27, 1766 shows how drastically opposed to the use of stamps the officials were: "A large gallows was erected at Elizabeth Town last week, with a rope ready affixed thereto, and the inhabitants there vow and declare

---

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid* p. 493

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid* p. 494

that the first person that either distributes or takes out stamped paper shall be hung thereon without judge or jury."<sup>205</sup>

A subsequent meeting was held at Amboy (Perth Amboy), where the delegates were appointed to attend the "First Continental Congress" which convened in New York in October 1765. There a Declaration of Rights and Grievances was formulated. Following this action, organizations of the "Sons of Liberty" sprang up in every hamlet, pledged against the enforcement of the Stamp Act. On March 5, 1770, came the news of the Boston Massacre. This inflamed the people of Westfield with a patriot zeal. The "Boston Tea Party" and the closing of the port followed. The torch had been lit, the die cast, and the spirit of the birth of a new nation expressed itself in a demand for "Liberty or Death". Abraham Clark and Ephriam Marsh of Westfield met with the Elizabeth Town corporation and headed the patriotic movement in this part of Essex County.<sup>206</sup>

The General Congress was in session at Philadelphia "determined to resist the oppressive measures of the British ministry." At the court house on December 6, 1774, Ephriam Marsh was appointed a member of the committee to enforce the above resolution of Congress. However, some of the inhabitants leaned toward the Crown. Staten Island was boycotted and vigilance committees were established. The last straw was broken when the news of the battle of Lexington, April 19, 1775, spread like wildfire throughout the length and breadth of the country. Young men volunteered to go to Boston at the cry, "TO ARMS." Soon sixteen companies of foot soldiers and one cavalry were mustered from Elizabeth Town and its environs. As the Massachusetts's delegates came from Boston on their way to Philadelphia they were hailed with great processions and loud acclaim at New York, Newark, Elizabeth Town, New Brunswick

---

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid* p. 494

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid* p. 494

and Trenton. War was declared, Washington was chosen commander-in-chief and the people everywhere flew to arms.<sup>207</sup>

The most exciting news to reach Westfield, after the declaration of war, was the capture of *Blue Mountain Valley* by Lord Stirling, off Sandy Hook. His was an armed supply boat sent off from the English warships in New York harbor to supply ships outside the harbor. The vessel was brought into Elizabeth Port and put in charge of Colonel Elias Dayton. This hazardous task was accomplished by three small boats, eighty volunteers, and thirty militiamen. David Ross, Ephriam Marsh, Henry Baker, and Jonathan Woodruff of Westfield, went out on this enterprise. There was great rejoicing at Charles Clark's store when the prize was reported safe in harbor at "The Port."<sup>208</sup>

The British evacuated Boston on March 17, 1776 and it was expected they would make New York their headquarters. On July 8<sup>th</sup>. British transports appeared off Staten Island and their troops disembarked under the command of General Howe. Congress had made the declaration of war four days earlier on July 4<sup>th</sup>. A nation had been born. Loyalists were now traitors. Every man must now be a friend or a foe. The conflict was on and the enemy was at our door. Staten Island became a rendezvous for loyalists and raiding parties from this hotbed of the enemy harassed our community throughout the six years of war.<sup>209</sup>

The winter of 1776-77 was the most trying for the cause of liberty. Washington had lost at White Plains, Fort Washington was taken November 16<sup>th</sup>., Fort Lee was evacuated on the 18<sup>th</sup>., and the retreat across New Jersey began with the British army close upon the rear guard. Washington moved from Hackensack to Newark. He found Newark deserted. When his army left one end of town the British came in the other. Thence he moved to Elizabeth Town. The town had summarily evacuated. Westfield now saw the

---

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid* p. 494

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid* p. 495

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid* p. 495

effects of war for the first time. Long lines of refugees passed through the town on their way to the safety back of the mountains. For days the processions continued, everyone leaving behind their homes to the raping of the enemy. The British reported twenty tons of musket balls together with great quantities of stores left behind at Elizabeth Town.<sup>210</sup>

At this time there were a few who chose to espouse the British cause and sought protection under General Lord Cornwallis' army. This was purely for selfish gain as they assumed the British would be the victors. The following advertisement was indicative of what happened:

"Whereas, the subscriber purchased a plantation in the autumn of 1776, situated in West Field in the Borough of Elizabeth Town, of Samuel Smith, and paid the greater part of the consideration Money; but as said Samuel Smith soon after fled to the enemy without giving a title for the said plantation: Notice is hereby given, that application will be made to the General Assembly of this State, at their next session, in order to get an act passed that the property of the above premises may be secured to Moses Tucker"<sup>211</sup>

General Williamson wrote from Morris Town, December 8, 1776: "Very few of the Counties of Essex and Bergen joined my command. I have it from good intelligence that many who bore the character of warm Whigs have been foremost in seeking protection of General Howe and forsaking the American Cause." While in Elizabeth Town, Lord Howe announced that he would publish pardon and peace to all who desired it. He gave sixty days of grace from the Congress down to the Committee. No man on the continent was to be denied his mercy. It was evident the British were planning on the Colonists caving in as they saw the might of the homeland at their doorsteps. The Rev. Mr. Caldwell, who had fled back of the mountains, wrote: "The Lord deliver us from his mercy." Cornwallis' troops entered the town, "a grand army."

---

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid* p. 496

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid* p. 496

Washington's army had just left in tattered garb. There were no more than 3,500. The cause for liberty looked hopeless to the inhabitants of Westfield; but they were loyal to their staunch patriots in arms. Those were the darkest days of the conflict. Ashbel Green said at this time, "The whole population could have been bought for eighteen pence a head."<sup>212</sup>

In December, 1776 there were about 6,000 British in Elizabeth Town. Most of the cattle in the vicinity had been driven back of the mountains before they took the town. Foraging parties of the enemy gathered up all the hay and grain they could find and transported it back to New York. These activities by the British led to bitterest spirit between the Whigs and the Tories. The Rev. Caldwell wrote General Lee on December 12: "Our militia who have taken many of the most active Tories have made some prisoners and among have shot their English forage master so that he is mortally or very illy wounded." From this section the enemy had collected some 400 cattle and 200 sheep that had not been evacuated and assembled them at Woodbridge. The State Militia, made up partially of men of Westfield township, was much exercised by these depredations, and on the night of December 11<sup>th</sup>. recovered all the cattle and sheep, drove them through Westfield to the back of the mountains to safety. The following list of claims for depredation made by the enemy mainly during the years 1776 and 1777 further shows the extent to which the enemy was active in this section of the state:

LSDLSD

Ichabud Ross, 177716100 William Marsh 177798176  
 Joseph Acken, 17778879 Gershom Frazer 177732100  
 Moses Carman 17778189 Susannah Frazer 1777506  
 Matthias Clark 17761730 David Baker 1777 32400  
 William Terry 17772060 Daniel Perrine 17773700  
 Jonathan Terry 17779180 Samuel Winans 177711020  
 John David Lamb 177768130 David Stewart 17773496  
 Benjamin Little 17774345 John Hinds 17761310  
 John Little 17774345 Cath. Vreelandt 17771283  
 John Acken 17776550 Morris DeCamp 17816000

---

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid* p. 496

Peter Ryno 1777100166 David Meeker 177757160  
 Ephriam Ryno 177779102 Benj. Williams 177723530  
 Gershom Frazer Jr 177785130 Joseph Mills 177765140  
 Samuel Jacques 17775119 7 John Crane 177644120  
 Peter Tremly 1777181510 John Ross 177720156  
 Esek Ryno 177757110 Nathaniel Baker 1777197176  
 Michael Nestor 17801090 John Hawkins 17774238  
 William Person 17766190 Rachel Clark 17802500  
 Steph Ball(Rahway)177720100 Samuel Meeker 177741170  
 Abigail Stewart 17773610 Ephriam Scudder 177741170  
 Moses Jaques 1777217150 Hannah Hinds 1777820  
 Stites Woodruff 17776700 John William 1776/7580  
 Nehemiah Hand 1777301211 Jeremiah Garthwait'7677190  
 Jonas Frazer 177741139 David Mills 177773100  
 Corbet Scudder 1777 1062146 Thomas Marsh 17771231810  
 Jacod Noe 17802833 Ezekiel Ross 177715190  
 To.Fitz Randolph 177711609 David Ross 1777 73166  
 Elizabeth Frazer 17774008 John Meeker 1777791211  
 Matthias Sayre 17836696 James Lambert 17776983  
 Joseph Hinds 17776606 Frazee Morris 177748910  
 David Ross Jr 17776200 John DeCamp 1777260128  
 Sarah Stewart 17771120 John Hallet 17774137  
 Benjamin Connet 178044100 George Ross 17772000  
 Elias Mills 17778660 Rich.Whitehead 177754166  
 Benjamile Sayre 17772460 Samuel Robertson 1777 12060  
 Daniel Robertson 1777123129 David Miller Esq 177717429  
 Joseph Stanbury 1777189126 Moses Ross 1777168157  
 Daniel Connet 177714786 Charles Clark Jr 1777801110  
 John Ross Jr 177712206 John Ludlum 17773316  
 Philemon Elmar 177710600 Edward Marsh 177724550  
 Hannah Clark 17771556 Samuel Downer 1777130103  
 Benjamin Crane 17775380 Gardner Connit 1777107133  
 Geo.Michael Deeds 178125100 James McMananas 1777731310  
 William Lee 17773546 George Ryno 177786193  
 Jonathan Woodruff 177724163 Jeremia Pangburn 1777 18965  
 Jesse Clark 1777252135 James Winans 177711365  
 John Ryno 177734181 Moses Frazer 177715400  
 David Dunham 1776110 David Clark 177715594  
 Jacob Crane 1776149166 Moses Marsh 1777270104



Susannah Little 1777701510 Widow Anna Marsh 1777 1469  
 James Keys 17771900 Susannah Jones 1777412  
 Ephriam Marsh 1777106178 Charles Clark 1777224154  
 Daniel Pierson 17764800 Matthias Ludlum 1777228102  
 Edward Harris 17775047 Henry DeMoney Sr 177777180  
 William Marsh 17776950 Caleb Potter14190  
 Susannah Elstone 17778106 Henry DeMoney 17776526  
 Patient Miller 177714110 <sup>213</sup>

John Ross, the father of Gideon Ross, lived here at this time. The following list of articles, together with those given above, shows the extent to which the depredations of the army of Howe and Cornwallis were carried. List of articles taken by British army, June 26 and 27:

2 mares and 2 colts4000 1/2 Barril matheglin200  
 2 2yr. old colts4000 10 gallon Molasses176  
 1 beef cow700 9 plates/2 platters1150  
 3 2 yr old heifers1500 4 basins0120  
 3 yearling Heifers600 2 milk pails080  
 3 spring calves4100 2 shets & a pair of  
 1 cubboard710 0 pillow cases1150  
 1 Clock case of cherry600 1 bed blanket100  
 2 dining tables3100 1 pr buckskin pants200  
 Set carpenter & joiners 5 pair stockings1150  
 tuels1500 pr.house to saddle200  
 damage to meadow to amount 7 gal.cider spirits180  
 20 ton hay2500 100# pork @ 9c3150  
 400 poles of Cedar700 100# of Cheese @ 6c2100  
 100 hups2100 TOTAL10046

Proven by John Ross, Esq. and Matthias Ludlum  
 [sic]<sup>214</sup>

---

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid* p. 495-496-497

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid* p. 497

These statements of the times that preceded the war and of the devastation of the area of Westfield and Elizabeth Town were taken from "The History of Union County". Many more explanations of the battles and incidents in the area may be found in this volume, but I will only describe one more which deals with our family.

It was on the afternoon of June 23, 1780. A plundering party of the enemy passed through Westfield and stopped at the home of Henry Baker. The officer in command promised protection to the inmates if they would give them some cider. They got their cider and soon grew bold and insulting. Captain Littell and Captain William Clark, with their minutemen, had followed the forging party and lay in ambush nearby so they could observe their movements. In their boisterous conduct, Mrs. Baker was forced to the wall of her home at the point of a bayonet. Captain Littell saw the deed, fired, and wounded the officer. The enemy took to their saddles and in moving one of their cannons was swung against a rock, the right arm, or horn, was broken off and was left behind. Littell had a brush with the enemy and captured the prize. From this time on this famous old cannon was known as "One Horn."<sup>215</sup>

#### Figure 11-04: House of Henry Baker at Westfield

You will remember that JACOB, father of Jonathan, died in 1774, just before the start of the Revolutionary War. We do know that JACOB died at the age of 68 and that all the children except David were not yet 21 years old.

The search for our Jonathan was not an easy task. We found a Jonathan I., son of Henry Baker, buried at the Westfield Church. This Henry is the son of Daniel, brother of LIEUT. JONATHAN, our grandsire. Henry had inherited his farm at Westfield from his father, Daniel, and it is one of the Captain John Baker tracts reserved for the other eight Bakers. A large bronze plate near the gate to the burial grounds lists Jonathan as

---

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid* p. 509

one of the Revolutionary War soldiers buried there. The date of his death is listed as 1844 and his birth, by his tombstone, is 1764. Beside him lies Keziah Clark, his first wife, and he married second, her sister, Charity Clark. They were both the daughters of Jessie Clark, Esq.. This rather disproved the fact that he was our grand- sire. His will is also on file in Trenton, for the information of those that may descend from this family.

The cemetery at the Presbyterian Church at Westfield has many Baker burials. The oldest section is in the first row to the left of the entrance gate. Here you will find Henry and his family all in a row. Others are scattered throughout the grounds. Jonathan I. and Keziah, Jesse C. and Elizabeth, and Charity and Wm. Cory, the later two children of JONATHAN I., are all buried there, but only David, son of our Jacob, comes from our line.

To return to the Chronicles of our family, the good news is that the microfilm at Trenton proved equally as informative for our JONATHAN J. BAKER. We often wonder what our ancestors may have looked like. Were they small people or large? Were they dark complected or fair skinned? In all my searching I have never encountered what I found in Trenton before:

Under the Title: MSS#3600

Master Roll of The Levies Raised in the 1st Regiment of the Militia on New Jersey, Essex County and Township of Elizabeth- Commanded by Colonel Samuel Poter, Esq. together with their names and description- May 2, 1778

#41Name: Jonathan Baker

Class Belonging to: 2

Time Entry: May 11, 1778

Age: 21

Feet High: 5 inches 11

Born: Elizabeth Town, NJ

Complexion: Light

Eyes: Light

Company Belonging to: Captain Chandler

## WHAT A FIND!<sup>216</sup>

This clarified the two Jonathan Bakers that served from New Jersey. We now know that the Jonathan buried beside Keziah in the Westfield Cemetery is not our Jonathan. The above establishes the birth of our Jonathan J. Baker as 1757 or 1758 depending on the month of his birth. There is one discrepancy. He is recorded as born in Elizabeth Town, and a statement, made in later years by his daughter Rachel, in Shandaken, says he was born in Fredricktown, New York. This could be a recording error by the enlisting clerk, or the clerk could have failed to ask the question and just entered Elizabeth Town as that was where the recruits were from.

The map of the area of Elizabeth Town earlier in this chapter gives us the location of Jacob's house, outbuildings, orchard and farmland. A short distance south you will find the tannery located on a small stream that is identified as Beckett's Creek. In his will, Jacob called it Oyster Creek and he also stated he had a salt meadow at this location, which the map also identifies as salt meadow. Now, in November of 1992, I have searched the area along North Broad Street, which on the map is identified as "Road From Stone Bridge" and north of the "Y" you will see it called "Road To Jewells Mill". The stream, Oyster Creek, (later Beckett's Creek) is not there today. I visited the Archives Area of the Elizabeth Library and the knowledgeable librarian informed me that the Civil Engineers in the layout of the now modern city had eliminated the natural waterway. He also said that even now, in periods of high rainfall, the area of the old waterway is still evident, as the soil in that area tends to be somewhat soft and unstable. It was a real thrill to again be able to locate and walk on the very soil that our family had lived and worked on through the period of the 1700's. In looking at the map you will find the tannery just south of the "Y" of the roads. A short distance north, along Road to Jewells Mill, you will find the home of Jacob, now titled to Jonathan. If you continue north on the

---

<sup>216</sup> MSS#3600 Archives Div.- State Library, Trenton, NJ

same road a short distance you will find Timothy Woodruff - 1743, later to Enos Woodruff. Remembering Nathaniel's daughter Mary is the wife of Timothy Woodruff, Sr. and that Timothy Woodruff was one of the executors of Jacob's will reveals to us that members of the family were living as close neighbors. The map also locates the 10 acres of woodland mentioned in Jacob's will that he owned with his son, David. This reduced photocopy does not reach quite far enough east to display this tract. The title was still in David's name in 1775.

The devastation that was experienced by the people of Westfield and Elizabeth Town during the War was beyond belief. They probably suffered more than any other area of the Colonies. Much of this was because Staten Island, just across The Arthur Kill, was the base of operation for the British. As explained earlier, most of the people of the area evacuated to the mountainous area to the west. My opinion is that without a husband, and with a young family, Jacob's wife chose to go back north to where her parents lived and she had family and friends, instead of seeking exile in the mountain back country. She and her children probably returned to the Dutchess County area from which she originated. It was quiet and peaceful and there was little activity of war or plundering by the British soldiers. However, son Jonathan made a return trip to Elizabeth Town to inspect his interests and that of his family. On one of those visits he is outraged with what he found and enlisted on May 11, 1778 at the now mature age of twenty-one. We know that the enlistment is not for Jonathan I. Baker, as his birth date is 1764, so he would only be 14 years of age on May 11, 1778. This establishes our Jonathan as the volunteer of May 11, 1778. Many of the Revolutionary War enlistments were for short durations, and as this enlistment does not show the time volunteered, we might assume that he returned to his family in Dutchess County after a short term of duty.

In a future chapter, you will also discover, our grandsire, Jonathan, also served in the Revolutionary War again, from his residency in northern Dutchess County. This service, however, is recorded in the Massachusetts records.

There is another personage of great importance in this period, which needs reference to this history of the area, as well as of the family Baker. Several small notations were made to a Rev. Caldwell in this chapter. He was the pastor of the Elizabeth Town Presbyterian Church during this perilous time. His life story is only fitting to be added. He was installed as pastor in March of 1762. He was 27 years of age. Due to the prevalence of small pox in New York City, the first meeting of the joint Convention of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia met Nov. 5, 1766, in the Elizabeth Town Church. The convention met each alternating year and held its meetings at Elizabeth Town, until the severance of the Colonies from the sovereignty of Great Britain. Rev. Caldwell, accompanied Rev. Dr. Witherspoon, under the appointment of the Synod in 1769, to visit Virginia to solicit funds for the College of New Jersey. (Today this is Princeton University) The church in Elizabeth Town grew in religious enthusiasm under his leadership.

This enthusiasm was overcome by the War of the Revolution. On the questions of the day Rev. Mr. Caldwell's position was a matter of public notoriety. Of an ardent temperament, he did not wait to learn how the struggle was likely to terminate, but boldly announced his devotion to his country for liberty and independence. This he made emphatic in his prayers, sermons, and his pastoral intercourse. There was no religious society in the Colonies that took a bolder or more efficient stand for their country's cause, which was largely due to the patriotism and fervent zeal of their energetic pastor. From this congregation alone went forth about forty commissioned officers, not to speak of non-commissioned officers and privates - one of the most prominent being Elias Dayton.

The future General Dayton's regiment, which was attached to the Jersey Brigade, was quartered in the winter of 1775-76 in Elizabeth Town. In April he was ordered to relief of the northern army, then besieged in Quebec. The officers and privates of the

194

regiment expressed a desire for the services of Rev. James Caldwell as their chaplain. The congregation gave their consent, and Parson Caldwell joined the regiment at Albany on May 11, 1776. The Jersey Brigade was stationed most of the season in the Mohawk Valley. Mr. Caldwell preached at Johnstown and German Flats, also taking an active part in military operations with the British on Staten Island. He returned to Elizabeth Town and moved his family to Turkey. The parsonage in Elizabeth Town was torched by the British on the morning of February 25, 1779 and the church was also burned on the night of January 25, 1780. Services after the destruction of the church were held in Colonel Hatfield's, "Red Store House", nearly opposite the site of the old parsonage, where Rev. Caldwell preached, with his pistols on each side of him on the pulpit, while sentinels kept watch during the time of service.

During the year 1778, Rev. Caldwell lived in Springfield, but in the summer of 1779 moved to Connecticut Farms. Here his beloved wife was murdered by a British soldier, who deliberately shot her through the breast in the old parsonage, in which the family was temporarily residing. After the murder he purchased a small house in Turkey and continued in the discharge of his duties until his death. The circumstances attending his death were as follows: a Miss Beulah Murray, a member of a family who had been serviceable to American prisoners confined in New York City, intending to visit her married sister residing in Elizabeth Town, left the city in a sloop. Rev. Caldwell, hearing of her proposed visit, went to Elizabeth Point with his horse and chair to convey her to the borough. Arriving at the Point and visiting the ship he was told the lady had already gone to town. Being about to return, a person on the sloop requested him to take ashore a small parcel tied up in a handkerchief. To this he readily consented, placing the bundle in his chair, and while driving off a soldier demanded to inspect the bundle to see if it contained seizable goods. Rev. Caldwell readily consented to this request, and taking the bundle stepped on board the sloop, when an American soldier, by the name of Morgan, stationed on the quarter-deck, ordered him, when about two yards away, to stop.

Rev. Caldwell obeyed this command, but the soldier presented his musket, shot him, and he instantly expired without a groan.

The murderer was imprisoned and was arraigned for trial at Westfield, January 21, 1782, found guilty, and was hung at Westfield, January 29, 1782. Thus, at the hands of a murderer, November 24, 1781, The Rev. James Caldwell departed this life, a zealous churchman, a noble patriot, of a self-sacrificing disposition, a character commendable as a worthy example to posterity, who by a dastardly deed of a British soldier was deprived of his help mate and who was to suffer the same fate from one who disgraced the uniform of the American Army.<sup>217</sup>

---

<sup>217</sup> Honeyman, Avon Doren, HISTORY OF UNION COUNTY Vol I  
p.172-173





# 12

## THE NEIGHBORS AT NEWARK

When Governor Carteret came to Elizabeth Town to claim his inheritance he found the area already occupied and claimed by the friends of Captain John Baker, John Ogden, and Luke Watson. Hoping to sell his property to other settlers, he sent agents into New England to publish the "concessions" or terms of the proprietors, and to invite others to the new colony. His terms were liberal and early in 1666 agents were dispatched from Guilford, Branford, and Milford in Connecticut, to view the country, and to learn the particulars about the purchase, as well as the state of the Indians in the vicinity. They returned to Connecticut with a favorable report, especially of the district "beyond the marshes, lying to the north of Elizabeth Town". They were forthwith sent back with the power to bargain for a township, to select a proper site for a town, and to make arrangements for an immediate settlement. To the good judgement of these individuals, who were Captain Robert Treat, John Curtis, Jasper Crane, and John Treat, we are indebted for the plan of the town, the wide streets (the only ones laid out at that time), and the beauty and extent of our public squares.<sup>218</sup>

These preliminaries being arranged, thirty families from the towns above mentioned and New Haven embarked under the guidance of the exploring agents and arrived at the Passaic River early in the month of May. At this point their progress was impeded. The Hackensack tribe of Indians, who claimed the soil granted to the agents of the emigrants by the governor, met them

---

<sup>218</sup> *Barbers, HISTORY OF ESSEX COUNTY p. 173*

here and opposed their landing until full compensation should be made to them.<sup>219</sup>

The manor in which this difficulty was settled is set forth in a large affidavit by Captain Robert Treat dated March 13, 1687. This document is part of the long "Bill of Chancery of New Jersey", filed in April of 1746 by James Alexander, at the suit of John Earl of Stair, and other claimants under Carteret and Berkley, against the certain settlers in Elizabeth Town and against the English settlers in East Jersey. The affidavit, which may be found on page 118 of the bill- contains the following interesting narrative. After clearing that he was then at the time of the affidavit about 64 years of age and was "one of the company that first settled at Newark", Captain Treat proceeds:

"That from my discourse and treatise with the governor, I expected that he would have cleared the plantation from all claims and encumbrances, and given quiet possession which he had promised to do; but no sooner were we on the place, and landed some of our goods, when I and some others were warned off the ground by the Hackensack Indians, who seemed angry that we had landed any of our goods, although we told them we had the governor's orders. But they replied the land was theirs and that it was not purchased. We thereon put our goods on board the vessel again and acquainted the governor with the situation. He could not say it was purchased of the Indians. I and most of my company were of a mind to depart, but the governor and other gentlemen were loath to let us go. They advised and encouraged us to go to the Indians, and directed us to one John Capteen, a Dutchman, that was a good interpreter to go with us. I with some of the others of my company and the Captain went to the Hackensack with the Sagamores and other Indian proprietors of the land lying on the west side of the Passaic river, about purchasing the lands. One Indian "Perro" laid claim to Passaic lands now called Newark. The result of our treaty was that we obtain a body of said Indians to give us a meeting at Passaic,

---

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid* p. 173

and soon after they all came: Perro and his kindred, with the Sagamores that were able to travel; Oraton, being very old, but approved of Perro's acting. At this meeting with the Indian Proprietors we did agree and bargain with the said Indians for a tract of their said lands on the West side of the Passaic river to a place called the Cove, by the said governor's order and allowance, and upon information thereof he seemed glad of it; and I with some others solicited the governor to pay for the purchase to the Indians, which he refused, and would not disburse any thing unless I would reimburse him again and a bill of sale was made, wherein the purchase of the said land will appear, and I can and do testify that the said Indians were duly paid for it according to the bill whereas we became debtors to the Indians, and not to the governor, as I judge, and Perro affirmed that he had not sold this land to any before this time."<sup>{sic}</sup><sup>220</sup>

This tract, thus purchased from the Indians, is more particularly described in a certificate dated March 5, 1687, from Samuel Edsal, who appears to have been one of the negotiators, where we find on page 117 of the same "Bill in Chancery" that the land is a:

"parcel of land lying and being on the west side of the Kill Van Coll, beginning at the mouth of a certain creek named Wawayack, (Bound Creek), upon the bay side; and from thence running up the said creek to the head of the cove, and from thence westward to the foot of the (Newark) Mountain, called by the Indians Watchung; thence running along the said foot of the mountain, until it meets by an east line with a small river coming from the hills into Passaic River, named Jantucuck, (3rd river,) from thence running down Passaic river, and Arthur Kull Bay, till it meets with the mouth of Wawayack, as above said."<sup>{sic}</sup><sup>221</sup>

---

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid* p. 174

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid* p. 174

These limits formed the original township of Newark, and contain the present township of Newark and the townships of Springfield, Livingston, Orange, Bloomfield, and Caldwell. The price of the purchase was L130 (pounds) New England currency, 12 Indian blankets, and 12 Indian guns. It must have been satisfactory to every townsman to know that every foot of land lying within the bounds was honestly and openly purchased from its original proprietors. However unjustly the aborigines may have been dealt with elsewhere, no act of this group can be pointed to with the slightest reproach by the most jealous advocate of Indian rights.<sup>222</sup>

[  
My response to this statement is: "Yes, the meets and bounds were clearly defined, but the price paid for the purchase, vast as the territory was and is, was still not a fair bargain for the Indians." This earlier historian was trying to establish that their purchase was much more fair than Captain John Baker's purchases.

The settlers first located themselves according to the town from whence they came, in separate neighborhoods. But the sense of mutual danger soon induced a change in this respect. On the 21<sup>st</sup>. of May, 1666, delegates from the several towns resolved to form one township, to provide rules for its government, and "to be of one heart and hand, in endeavoring to carry on their spiritual concernment, as well as their civil and town affairs, according to God and godly government." For the more speedy accomplishment of their desires a committee of eleven was appointed to order and settle the concerns of the people of the place. The committee consisted of Capt. Robert Treat, Lt. Samuel Swain, Samuel Kitchell, Michael Tompkins, Morris Say, Richard Beckley, Richard Harrison, Thomas Blatchly, Ed. Rigs, Stephen Freeman, and Thomas Johnson. The articles of government which they formed possessed a full portion of strict religious spirit of the people. "No person could become a freeman or burgess of the town, or vote in its elections, but such as was a member of some of the Congregational churches: nor be chosen a magistrate, nor

---

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid* p. 174

to any other military or civil office." But all others admitted to be planters, were allowed to inherit and to enjoy all other privileges, save from those above excepted. Disregarding the rights of the English proprietors of New Jersey, (meaning the Carteret's), and apparently with a resolution of disclaiming all fealty towards them, and of depending on their Indian grants, they resolved: "to be ruled by such officers as the town should annually chose from among themselves, and to be governed by the same laws as they had, in the places from whence they came."<sup>223</sup> [I'd say a pretty strong headed group of Englishmen, wouldn't you?]

In November of that year, "many of the inhabitants of Branford, Conn. appear to have joined their associates in the enterprise. The following document, which we copy from the town records, appears to have been signed by them on this occasion, and to have been subsequently endorsed (in June 1667) by the other male settlers. It will be seen by this document that in June 1667, the whole population of the town consisted of sixty-five efficient men, "besides women and children".

October 30, 1665

`At a Meeting Touching the Intended design of many of the Inhabitants of Branford the following was subscribed:

`1st. That none shall be Admitted freemen or free Burgesses within our Town, upon the Passaick River, in the Province of New Jersey, but such planters as are Members of some or other of the Congregational Churches; nor shall any but such be Chosen to Magistracy or to Carry on any part of Civil Judicature, or as deputies or assistants to have the power to Vote in Establishing Laws, and making or repealing them, or to any Chief Military Trust or office. Nor shall any But such Church Members have any vote in any Elections; Tho' all others admitted to Be planters have Right to their proper Inheritances, and do and shall Enjoy all other Civil Liberties and privileges, According to Laws, orders, Grants, which are or Hereafter shall be Made for this Town.

---

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid* p. 175

2nd. We shall with Care and Diligence provide for the maintenance of the purity of Religion professed in the Congregational Churches. Whereunto subscribed the Inhabitants from Branford:

Jasper Crane Josiah Ward Delivered Crane  
Richard Johnson Abraham Pierson John Ward, senior  
Aaron Blatchly Ebenezer Canfield Samuel Swaine  
Ed. Ball Samuel Rose Richard Laurance  
Laurence Ward John Harrison Thomas Pierson  
John Johnson Thomas Blatchly John Crane  
John Warde Samuel Plum Thomas Huntington  
John Catling Thomas L. Lyon, his X

{sic}<sup>224</sup>

And upon the reception of the letters and subscriptions of their new associates from Branford, the present Inhabitants in November following, declared their Consents and readiness to do likewise, and at a meeting the 24<sup>th</sup>. of June 1667, they also subscribed with their Hands upon the back side of these two Fundamental Agreements. Their names as follows:

Robert Treat Edward Rigs George Day  
Hauns Albers Obadiah Bruen Robert Kitchell  
Thomas Johnson Thomas Morris Matthew Camfield  
J. Brooks, mark JB John Curtis Hugh Roberts  
Samuel Kitchell Ephraim Burwell Ephraim Pennington  
Jeremiah Peeke Martin Tichenor Robert Denison, mark R  
Michael Tompkins Nathaniel Wheeler Francis Links, mark F  
John Browne, jun Stephen Freeman Jonathan Seargeant  
Henry Lyon Daniel Tichenor Zachariah Burwell  
Azariah Crane John Browne John Bauldwin, snr  
William Campe Samuel Lyon John Rodgers  
John Bauldwin, jnr Joseph Walters Joseph Riggs  
Stephen Davis Robert Dagleish Stephen Bond  
Jonathan Tompkins

{sic}<sup>225</sup>

---

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid* p. 175

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid* p. 176

At the first distribution of land, each man took by lot 6 acres as a homestead, and as to the families from each of the several original towns, the allotments were made to them in their respective quarters of the new settlement. Seven individuals, selected for the purpose, assessed each settler his portion of the general purchase money. The lands were eventually divided into three ranges, each range into lots, and parceled by lottery-first setting apart certain portions, called tradesmen's lots, one of which was to be given to the first of every trade who would settle permanently in the settlement. Reserving also the Upper Green of the Town, (Now Washington Square) for a market place, and the Lower Green (now called the Park) for a military parade grounds. the land near the Now Market Street (then a swamp) was set aside as a public watering place for cattle.<sup>226</sup>

In 1667, The Rev. Abraham Pierson, the first minister, from Guilford, Connecticut, commenced his official duties. He is said to have been "episcopally ordained" at Newark in South Britain and to have named the town after his ordination by which name it was sometimes called abroad. However, it was known by others as Milford, which more or less establishes that the first group were probably predominately from their first settlement at Milford Connecticut. In 1668 the first "meeting house" was built. It stood 26 feet wide, 34 feet long, and 13 between the joists. The town voted 30 pounds for material and every individual was to perform such labor as a committee of five might require towards its completion. It was a small frame building that stood at the center of the town, fronting on Broad Street on the lot now known as the old burying grounds, opposite the present First Presbyterian Church.<sup>227</sup>

It will be perceived by these names listed above to be the whole number of the first two years of the settlement of Newark.

---

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid* p. 176

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid* p. 176



We also can assume that many of these families were people that had made the voyage with Thomas Baker and the Daytons to Milford and New Haven in 1639. We know that Nathaniel Wheeler along with Thomas baker was one of the founders of Milford, Connecticut. However, the real thrilling result of this particular information was finding the family TOMPKINS, which you will find in a chapter to follow, becoming part of our family tree. We also know that, shortly thereafter, the Hinds (Haynes) family moved from Elizabeth Town to this settlement and joined these people at Newark.

The family Tompkins: Micah Tompkins was a freeman of Milford, Connecticut on November 29, 1639. He and his wife Mary joined the church at Milford shortly before their first two children were baptized there on December 17, 1643. In 1667 he was one of the eleven persons who bought from the Indians the large tract of land on the Passaic River (presently the site of the city of Newark, New Jersey today).

Micah and Mary Tompkins had seven children:

1. Jonathan, bapt. Dec. 17, 1643 at Milford.
2. Mary, bapt. Dec. 17, 1643 at Milford.
3. Elizabeth, b. Feb. 1645 at Milford.

She married, Dec. 12, 1665 the Hon. James Bishop at Milford.

4. David, b. 1647 at Milford.
5. Seth, b. 1649 at Milford.
6. Rebecca, b. Nov. 24, 1653 at Milford.
7. Abigail, b. 1655 at Milford.

228

There is an interesting bit of information, in regard to the earlier related incident, of the Indians not allowing the purchasers of the Newark lands to come ashore. Tradition says that an illuminated miniature of one of the English Queens, sent by the

---

<sup>228</sup> Stiles, *HISTORY OF ANCIENT WETHERSFIELD, CONN.*  
Vol. II, p. 705

daughter of Micah Tompkins as a gift to the wife of the Indian chieftain, was the turning point in the transaction.<sup>229</sup>

In a future chapter you will discover that a daughter of this family became the wife of Stephen Baker, from whom we of this line, all descend.

The settlement of Newark was to the north of the marshes above Elizabeth Town. Another settlement also was formed to the south of Elizabeth Town and east of the Westfield to be known as Rahway. This settlement has more significance than being just another settlement, but in its members we find another Colonial family that become part of our family tree.

---

<sup>229</sup> HARPER'S NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE, Oct. 1876  
Vol. LIII, p. 661



# 13

## THE NEIGHBORS AT RAHWAY

When Carteret and his surveyor evaluated his inheritance they discovered that Elizabeth Town proved to be a large English-speaking settlement with boundaries that stretched from the Raritan River to the Passaic River, and ran inland to encompass parts of what are now Morris and Somerset counties. In the middle of this large piece of land was a river flanked by fertile grounds that would soon attract many Betsytowners. Several names would be attached to the area, but in the end it would be called Rahway.<sup>230</sup>

Within a year after the settlement at Elizabeth Town the lands surrounding the village were used as outfarms and plantations. Many more families became interested in the land and on May 21, 1666 a grant was made by Carteret giving them the opportunity to go forth and settle it. On that day John Pike, Davis Pierce, and Abraham Tappen signed articles of agreement on behalf of themselves and their associates with Carteret. The articles gave them the right to settle one or more plantations or townships. Each was to consist of 50 to 100 families to be located between the Rahway and Raritan Rivers. These families became the associates that settled on the south side of the Robinson Branch of the Rahway River and formed the village of Woodbridge.<sup>231</sup>

As it turned out, the Rahway area was a choice one to settle for two very good reasons. First, it was only a few miles from Elizabeth Town, the seat of government in the Colony, and second, the river that twisted through the land presented the settlers with numerous possibilities. This body of water proved to be not only a

---

<sup>230</sup> *The Unfolding Of A Future, Rahway* p. 9

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9

feature of settlement, but also a natural boundary line separating lots, settlements, and counties.<sup>232</sup>

The associations from both the Elizabeth Town and Woodbridge groups were attracted to certain portions of this river resulting in growth of small settlements in different parts of the area. Records show that by 1680 a settlement of considerable size had prospered and grown along the Elizabeth Town side of the River. This section was called "Rawack" and is regarded as the earliest settled part of the Rahway area. While the "Rawack" section was being developed another settlement was forming on the Woodbridge side of the river. This settlement became known as Bridgetown or Lower Rahway.<sup>233</sup>

In 1675, the boundaries of Essex and Middlesex counties were established with the Robinson Branch of the river serving as the dividing line. It was because of this division that the Rahway area was split in half with each part falling under the jurisdiction of a different county. In time, the sections of Milton and Leesville would develop giving the area four distinct sections. These sections remained in the two counties until 1857 when Union County was formed.<sup>234</sup>

The majority of the associates who came to this area tended to settle at or near the river. This location afforded them the ability to construct various types of mills for which the area would be noted.

Jonathan Bishop, a freeholder from Woodbridge, was granted permission to construct a grist mill on the South Branch of the river near the Present Hazelwood Avenue bridge. (A bridge I have been driving over for the last 25 years.) Bishop's Mill shipped out large quantities of hay, grain, and stone-ground flour. Since Bishop was a freeholder, one who owned property and could vote, his mill was exempt from taxes for five years. In January of 1686

---

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9

he constructed the first bridge in the area over "Mill Brook", the name given to the south branch of the river, at approximately the same place as the present day Hazelwood Avenue bridge.<sup>235</sup>

A little east of the mill "Captain" John Bishop, a relative of Jonathan owned and resided on the land known as "Bishop's Landing". A short distance from this landing was a second one owned by Robert Wright. Wright's Landing was located approximately where the bridge spans the river on Lawrence Street. Both landings were reserved by order of the town to be used as public docks. When they were first built they were used mainly for the transportation of hay, but within a few years, an extensive trade developed making them well-known and important points on the river.<sup>236</sup>

In October of 1684, Captain Bishop was appointed to serve as the overseer of the Rahway roads. To properly maintain these roads, inhabitants were required to appear at several places assigned by Bishop and "be ready to go to work at sun on high hour" (12 noon). He was soon put in charge of a highway that was built in January 1687 for Rahway settlers, which began at Wright's Landing and continued east into Woodbridge (the present Highway 35 which I use regularly). Another important road that Bishop was to look after was the old road from Elizabeth Town to Woodbridge which followed what is now Linden Avenue (another of my main east-west streets used in that area). This old thoroughfare once met Main Street at about the spot where Bridge Street converges with it today. Main Street in those days was nothing more than a cow path that followed the river from Edgar's Corner (corner of Hazelwood and Lawrence Street) to what is now Irving Street.<sup>237</sup>

With the growth of the mills and roads, it would appear that steady progress was being made in clearing and cultivating the land. This progressive area attracted more and more settlers, so

---

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10

that, in 1687, a second division of common lands was necessitated. John Conger, Jonathan Bishop, and eight other citizens were appointed to make the new divisions, as the land had not been altered since the first division was made by the original associates.

238

By the late 1600's the Rahway area was well on its way to becoming a thriving and important part of the New Jersey Colony. Like any growing settlement, the Rahway area found it needed leaders to guide its progress. Capt. John Bishop was the first president of the town court, serving from 1688 to 1700. The first constable was Robert Wright who served four years (1689-93), after which he was succeeded by Noah Bishop.<sup>239</sup>

The first legal suit in the Rahway area was initiated in 1693. Charges were brought against John Conger and Noah Bishop, who had been engaged to protect the timber on the common lands. It was their assignment to prosecute anyone in Rahway or adjacent places who illegally cut the trees. They made a mistake one afternoon, however, when they discovered and removed timber from land they thought was public. As it turned out, the land was not public nor was the wood. The suit was brought against them by Thomas Thorp for removing some of his dressed timbers. Thorp won the suit and the town agents had to pay the fees.

In January 1701 the settlers in Lower Rahway were given permission to build a pound for animals caught running at large. Prior to this time they had to take such animals to the Woodbridge pound, which was a great disadvantage to those living in Rahway.

Another inconvenience was traveling to Elizabeth Town and Woodbridge to attend religious services. This was remedied when two early religious groups broke away from their sister congregations and began to meet locally. A Presbyterian group left their Elizabeth Town church in 1741 and within a year had built

---

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid*, p. 11

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10 - 11

their own house of worship. In 1742 a Quaker group left the Friends in Woodbridge and had a meeting hall constructed by 1757.

240

As the area was pulling together and creating its own identity, it was also becoming recognized by travelers as they passed through on the road between New York and Philadelphia. Five popular inns were in operation by 1770 which indicates that traffic was heavy along the old Georges Avenue. Weary travelers were certain to find comfortable accommodations and pleasing company in any of the fine inns. Coming from Elizabeth Town, one had a choice of stopping at the Merchants' and Drovers' Tavern (Westfield and St. Georges Avenue) or the Terrill Tavern (alongside the Robinsons Branch off St. Georges Avenue). If these prestigious inns were all full one might stop at Randolph's Tavern, where Ezaak Randolph and his wife "Aunt Sally" provided hospitality. Just up the road from Ezaak's Tavern were the Milton Inn (St. Georges and Hazelwood Ave.) and Scott Drake's Tavern (opposite the Old Milton). The Milton Inn was owned and operated by Abel Clarkson. After the American Revolution it gained the reputation of being the best tavern on the stage run from New York to Philadelphia, entertaining such guests as Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Aaron Burr, and Alexander Hamilton.<sup>241</sup>

Figure 13-01: Terrill Tavern today in the year 2000

This area also saw the ravages of the Revolutionary War. It also witnessed and was part of the more glorious days after Washington crossed the Delaware and defeated the British at Trenton. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of December at Trenton, Washington wrote to Maxwell at Morristown and instructed him to gather as large a force as possible at Chatham "and after gathering the proper intelligence, endeavor to strike a stroke upon Elizabeth Town or that neighborhood." These instructions Maxwell hastened to carry out. Following up his advantages, Washington marched at night and

---

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid*, p. 11

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid*, p. 11



captured Princeton on the morning of January 3, 1777. He then moved his troops to Pluckamin where they stopped for two or three days. The British had been routed and they pulled their troops in the area all together at New Brunswick, to provide a concentration of their forces and to guard their large supply of stores at that place. On Monday the 6<sup>th</sup>. Washington removed his weary troops to Morristown to give his troops some rest and to watch his panic stricken foe.

Gen. William Howe wrote from New York on January 5, 1777 that Lord Cornwallis returned with the whole force to Brunswick and the troops at the right were being assembled at Elizabeth Town with Major General Vaughan in command.

Taking advantage of the consternation of the enemy and the advantage of the American Army, General Maxwell, with the militia under his command, swept down from the Short Hills, compelled the remaining British at Newark to evacuate, had a brush with them at Springfield, drove them out of Elizabeth Town, and fought them at Spank Town (Rahway) a couple of hours.

If Spank Town had never had the name before it was entitled to it from this time certainly on account of the SPANKING rate at which Maxwell came down from the Short Hills with his militia and punished the rear of the retreating enemy. The field report of this affair is taken from a letter dated at Philadelphia, January 16, 1777.

"Our army marched from Pluckamin and arrived in Morristown on the sixth. General Maxwell with a considerable body of Continental troops and militia, having marched towards Elizabeth Town, sent back for a reinforcement, which having joined him, he advanced and took possession of the town, and made prisoner of fifty Waldeckers and forty Highlanders who were quartered there, and made prize of a schooner with baggage and some blankets on board. About the same time one thousand bushels of salt were secured by our troops at a place called Spank Town, about five miles from Woodbridge, where a party of our men attacked the enemy at that place; they sent for reinforcements from

Woodbridge, but the Hessians absolutely refused to march, having heard we were very numerous in that quarter."

The battle at this place is alluded to in another letter dated January 9, 1777.

"A regiment of British troops at Spank Town, six miles below Elizabeth Town was attacked on Sunday by a party of Jersey Militia; the encounter continued for about two hours. Two regiments marched up from Woodbridge and Amboy to reinforce the enemy and thus saved them."<sup>242</sup>

Some of you readers may wonder why I have brought this chapter into our Chronicles. The main reason is that the Bishop family, mentioned in this chapter, will become part of our ancestry. James and John Bishop were brothers who had been born in England. They came to America with the group who established New Haven. James' home was on the corner of State and Elm Streets. He married second, after his first wife Mary Lewen died, Elizabeth Tompkins, daughter of Micah Tompkins. This is another family that has a very important relationship in our ancestry. The Honorable James Bishop was Lieut. Governor of Connecticut from 1683 to 1687 and from 1689 until his death in 1691. Hinman says he was: "one of the most efficient men in the New Haven Colony, and after union of the Colonies, sustained his influence and standing. He was succeeded at New Haven by several of its most talented and able men of the name, and most of them his descendants."<sup>243</sup>

In Chapter 12, I introduced you to the Tompkins Family with the statement that they were part of our ancestry. Here in Rahway and the area just south of Rahway was the area of Woodbridge, East Jersey. John Bishop, brother of James, had first settled in Woodbridge, but moved to the Rahway area.

---

<sup>242</sup> Chapter XXXIV THE HISTORY OF RAHWAY

<sup>243</sup> THE BIOGRAPHICAL RECORD of New Haven, Conn. 1902  
VOL. I, p. 242-246

John Bishop, Sr. was a carpenter by trade. Like his many associates, he held several prominent offices in the Woodbridge, but is not mentioned in the records in any way to throw light on his character. He had first settled in Newbury, Massachusetts and it was there he married on October, 1647, Rebecca, widow of Samuel Scullard, daughter of Richard Kent, by whom he had eight children, all born before he arrived at Woodbridge. He died in October, 1684.<sup>244</sup>

His sons, John, Jonathan, and Noah became freeholders and prominent citizens at Woodbridge, East Jersey, and the latter left several children. There were no births, deaths, or marriages recorded relating to the others.<sup>245</sup>

In a few chapters, you will discover that John Godding, Sr. will take as his bride, Betsy Bishop. We have very complete descendants for James Bishop, brother of John, and know that Betsy was not in his family. From all observations and the location of our ancestors at that time period we can make the statement that Betsy was from this family of John, Sr. and Noah. Betsy Bishop is my great, great, great, great-grandmother, born about 1750, or possibly slightly earlier. This is the reason I have introduced you to in another colonial family which is part of our ancestry.

There is also another reason for this chapter. As mentioned in the Foreward to this History, I related to a statement that my father made to me when I was preparing a message to my classmates about what I knew about my ancestors. This was when I was nine years old. He had told me we had Quakers in our ancestry. Thus, the following:

The majority of the first settlers in Rahway area were Quakers, members of the Society of Friends. It is believed that the

---

<sup>244</sup> Coffin's, HISTORY OF NEWBURY, MASS.

<sup>245</sup> Whitehead, William, EARLY HISTORY OF PERTH AMBOY AND ADJOINING COUNTRY, 1856 p. 364-365

meetings held by the Friends in this area were among the earliest established in New Jersey.

The first monthly gatherings were held in Perth Amboy and date back to 1686. The Friends met there for only three years and then switched to Woodbridge. Rahway residents were meeting with the Woodbridge Friends, William Robinson, John and Joseph Shotwell, the Marshes, the Hunts, and other prominent residents. A Society meeting house was built in Woodbridge in 1713.

On October 16, 1742 a motion was brought before the Woodbridge congregation to begin weekly meetings in Rahway. The motion was granted allowing Friends to meet in the house of Joseph Shotwell, a long time resident of the area. The ministers and elders began meeting monthly at the home of John Vail in 1755.

The first meetinghouse built in Rahway was completed in 1757. During February and March of that year, Solomon Hunt, Samuel Marsh, and Abraham and Benjamin Shotwell were appointed to purchase a suitable lot. Francis Bloodgood, Abner Hampton, and Robert Willis were also appointed to assist the aforementioned gentlemen in selecting the grounds and determining the size of the building. It was soon decided that the meetinghouse would be thirty-four feet long and thirty feet wide and that it would be erected on the east side of what is now Main Street. It was located approximately thirty yards south of where Cherry Street meets Main. Directly behind the meetinghouse was the group's cemetery. The house remained in use by the Friends until 1804. After they left the building, members of the First Methodist Church began to meet there and continued to do so until their new church was built. The old Quaker meeting house was still standing in 1882 and was being used as a hardware store operated by George W. Hall.

The Friends organized the first school in the area. It was built in 1785 on the same lot as the meetinghouse. It was a one storey structure, twenty feet by thirty feet in size and fronted on the road.

The Quaker congregation continued to grow and in 1804 another meetinghouse was built on Irving Street at the head of Poplar. Isaac Vail, a descendant of John Vail, was instrumental in the building of this hall. A new schoolhouse was erected on a lot just south of the meetinghouse. The school stood there until 1835 when a railroad came through necessitating the removal of the building. The meetinghouse itself was sold and razed fifty-eight years later.

By 1919 the Quaker atmosphere was nearly extinct, ending an episode of Rahway's history that lasted almost two-hundred years. The Quaker graves were moved from the old Quaker Cemetery on Central Avenue to the Hazelwood Cemetery.<sup>246</sup> I have personally walked the Quaker graves, but found none of our family, excepting one of the Vail inlaws. This could well be part of the history my father had related to me, as the Bishop association with our family comes through my father's mother, Ida Mae Godding. There will also be another association with the Quaker faith in a future chapter.

---

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid* p. 26 & 27



# 14

## WHO IS JONATHAN BAKER?

The search for Jonathan has been exhausting. Our forefathers named many sons Jonathan. To run the ancestry and descent for each has taken countless days of reading and searching at many locations. Hedges, the great historian from East Hampton, has recorded that his father, Jacob, appears to have left Long Island and was in New Jersey by 1746. He says no more than that as he closes the facts on grandsire Jacob. As stated earlier in this volume, we have Jacob as a Tanner at Elizabeth Town and have presented his will and his death in 1774. In collaboration with a cousin, Dean McCulley, who descends from the line of Isaac, we now have information supplied that tends to provide some light on the movement of the family. Dean went to The Later Day Saints Archives in Salt Lake, a source I had never used, and the following information helps to fill a gap. It also fits in well with the Orrin Baker history which stated that his grandsire moved from Fishkill to Delaware County.

Following are these documents:

B2093 Jonathan Baker for a Pension regarding the Act of June 7th, 1832.

Matthew Hulcottt, Esq. Hulcottsville, NY

State of New York

Ulster County

On this 14th Day of May 1834 personally appeared before Henry Winkoff one of the Lawyers of the County Courts of said County, Jonathan Baker a Resident of the Town of Shandaken in the County of Ulster and State

of New York aged 82 years and being first Duly Sworn according to Law Oath and his Oath make the following Declaration in and to obtain the benefits commanded by the Act of Congress passed June the 7th 1832. That he entered the Service of the United States and served as herein after stated:

In the Summer of 1776 as near as he can now ascertain or recollect he Resided in the Town of Lanesborough, County of Berkshire and State of Massachusetts and enlisted or volunteered in the Service of the United States under Captain Lacy for the term of 5 months. At the time he enlisted the Company was officered by Captain Lacy as Captain, Dave Reynolds as 1st Lieutenant and Watson as 2nd Lieutenant. Among the noncommissioned officers was a Sergeant

Lord, Sergeant Miles, Sergeant Wooding and a Corporal by the name of Peoning. The Company at the time he volunteered or enlisted was on a march from Newton in the State of Connecticut to the vicinity of Lake Champlain. After the Declarant joined the Company it Marched to Bennington in Vermont and from there to Shaftsbury and through Mission to Skeensborough where they made a halt of about one week after which they marched to Fort Ann where they remained about one month when they were ordered back to Skeensborough and from there embarked on board of Butery for mount Independence at which place they first joined the Regiment and was placed under the Command of Col. Summner where they continued During the remainder of the term for which this Declarant originally enlisted the full term of five months for which he volunteered or enlisted being explained all of which he this Declarant faithfully Served. He Received a Verbal Discharge and returned to his place of Residence until after the Plundering of New Haven in 1779.

Shortly after receiving the news of the affair he again volunteered his Service for the term of three months under one Captain Newel and immediately marched for New Haven where the Company was Stationed to guard the place



and Continued there until the expiration of the three months for which he volunteered. During all which time this Declarant was in the Service of the United States and said Company under the Command of the aforesaid Captain Newel. This Declarant further says that he does not now recollect that the Company to which he belonged ever joined any Regiment or boarded with any During this tour of Service, neither can he at this time tell what Colonel had the Command of the Station at this time, as he does not now Recollect of ever Seeing the Colonel during this period of three months the company was divided into \_\_\_\_\_ and was quartered in private homes, and Newel was the Orderly Sergeant at this time. In both the before mentioned tours of Service this Declarant was a private Soldier.

He continues, he was born in the town of Fredrickstown, County of Dutchess (Now Carmel County of Putnam) in the year 1752, but has no record of his age. When he first entered the Service of the United States he Resided in the Town of Lanesborough, County of Berkshire and State of Massachusetts where he continued to Reside for several years after the close of the Revolutionary War and from that place removed to Westchester County, State of New York after which he removed into Fishkill Dutchess County where he remained for several years and from Fish Kill he removed into the Town of Middletown, County of Delaware where he continued to reside until the Spring of 1829 when he removed into Shandaken County of Ulster and State of New York where he still resides.

He was a volunteer or enlisted in both tours of Service. He was not personally acquainted with any of the officers of the Regular Continental Army. That he now recollects he never Received a Written Discharge or a Commission. He has no Documentary or other written evidence to prove any part of his Service as herein set forth, neither does he now know of any person Serving by whom he can prove his Service as herein stated or any fact thereof

the 8 months Service as before set forth the declaiment performed in person, but in addition to the Service performed personally by him he had a substitute for the term of 7 months. But for the 8 months personal Service he Claims a Pension.

He hereby relinquishes every claim assertions to a pension or annuity except the present and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state.

Sworn & Subscribed the

Day and Year aforesaid: JONATHAN BAKER (In a very shaking hand)

HENRY WYNKOFF one of the Judges  
of the County Courts of the County  
of Ulster

We Moses Winslow and Barnabas Rider residing in the town of Shandaken hereby certify that we are well acquainted with Jonathan Baker who has subscribed and sealed the foregoing Declaration. That we believe him to be of the age of 82 years, that he is Respected and believed in the neighborhood where he Resides to have been a Soldier of the Revolution and that we concur in that opinion.

Sworn and Subscribed this

Day and Year aforesaid: MOSES WINSLOW

BARNABAS RIDER

HENRY WYNKOFF one of the Judges  
of the County Courts of the County  
of Ulster : and the Said Judge does hereby Declare his opinion after the investigation of the matter presented by the war Department that the above named applicant was a Revolutionary Soldier and Served as he States and the

Said Judge further certifies that it appears to him that there is no Clergy man residing in the Immediate vicinity of this applicant and that in consequences of bodily infirmity he is unable to attend court to make the foregoing statements and Declarations and the said Judge further CERTIFIES that Moses Winslow and Barnabas Rider are Residents of the town of Shandaken in Said County of Ulster and are Creditable persons and that their Statements are entitled to Credit.

HENRY WYNKOFF one of the Judges of the  
County Courts of the County of Ulster

State of New York

Ulster County Clerks Office: I Jacob Snyder Clerk of the County of Ulster and Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas of Ulster County do hereby Certify that Henry Winkoff Esquire was on the day of the date of the foregoing proceedings in the Matter of the Application of Jonathan Baker for a Pension One of the Judges of the County Courts of the County of Ulster And that I am well acquainted with the hand writing of Said Judge and verily declare the Signature of Said Judge Subscribed to the Affidavit of Said Jonathan Baker and to the Annexed Affidavit are Certified to be genuine.

In Testimony whereof I have here unto Subscribed  
my name and affixed the Seal of Said Court and  
County this Sixteenth day of October 1834.  
JACOB SNYDER

There is also a note attached to these papers:

Hartford-April 22nd 1835

Sir- I have called at the Controllers office of the State of Connecticut for proof in support of the claim of Nathan Osborn for a pension. The Controller informs me that it is very difficult for him to examine the record and furnish the proof

without the Declaration which I did not receive. Will you have the goodness to forward the Declaration to him in order that he may compare it with the record in his office.

Respectfully Your Humble Servant

Matthew Holcott

Also the Declaration of Jonathan Baker as he said have Served in a Connecticut Company and not in a Company Raised in Massachusetts as you deem to suppose.

M. Holcott

of Holcottsville, NY

The above note regarding Jonathan's claim was evidently in response to a follow up on why they had no action on the claims for pension benefits. It also makes it appear that Jonathan did not know with what State he was volunteering. It does, however, establish that there may be records of his service to a Connecticut group of soldiers.

The next document is dated May 1st, 1835 and follows:

In The Case of STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Jonathan Baker Controller's Office

Hartford- 1 May 1835

On examination of the books of this office it appears that in June 1776 Two Battalions were ordered to be raised by enlistment to join the Continental Army in the Northern department, and to be holden in service until the first day of December. That one of the said Battalions was under the command of Samuel Mott as Colonel, William Worthington as Lieutenant Colonel and Iolus Summer as Major- That the other of said Battalions was commanded by Henry

Swift Colonel, Iasiah Stair Lieutenant Colonel, Stillworthy Waters Major, That Thaddeus Lacey was Captain of a Company in Col. Swift's battalion- That on the 5th day of May 1777 Ebeneaser Lacy rendered on account for the amount paid his company by the late Captain Thaddeus Lacey for procurement & first month wages the \$695.00 which sum was charged to the United States-

No pay rolls of said service in this office.

Certified by-Rogertt Huntington

Comptroller of Public Accounts

It is evident that no more action was taken by the children of Jonathan Baker in Shandaken, until September of 1852. It is then we find the following:

#### POWER OF ATTORNEY

For ascertaining whether any increase or arrears of Pension are due the Widow or heirs of Revolutionary Pensioners, etc.\* \_\_

State Of New York

County Of Ulster-Be it known that before me-

Hiram Cook a Justice Of The Peace personally appeared Rachel Canniff aged 67 Years, who being duly cautioned and then sworn in due form of law, states that she is the Daughter of Jonathan Baker who was a Revolutionary Soldier in the State of New York and that he died on the \_\_ day of June 1842 and that My mother Sarah Baker died on the 8th day of October, 1827 and that they were married on the \_\_ day of \_\_\_\_ in the year 1779 and that they were residents of Dutchess County in the State of New York and that they resided there Six years, and that they resided in Ulster County and furthermore BY THESE PRESENTS, constitutes, appoints, and fully empowers and authorizes, irrevocably and with powers of substitution, F.E. Hassler of Washington city, D.C., as MY true and lawful Attorney for ME and in MY name and stead, to examine into, to prosecute, to demand, and to receive from the U.S.

Government and State Officers MY rights in all and in any manner of claim for increase of Pension or Land, that may be due me as HEIR of Jonathan Baker who died leaving the same undrawn, as in right of law HE and I may be entitled.

In WITNESS WHEREOF, She has on this 15th day of September 1852 hereunto signed her name and affixed the seal.

Her

RACHEL X CANNIFF (SEAL)

Witness: Matthew GriffinMark

DeWitt Griffin

Signed , sealed, acknowledged, and sworn to before me; and I further certify, that SHE has always by the community been known as the DAUGHTER of JONATHAN BAKER

Dated on this 15th day of September 1852.

HIRAM COOKE J.P.

STATE of NEW YORK

County of Ulster to wit:

I hereby certify, That Hiram Cooke Esq., before who the foregoing affidavit and acknowledgement were made, and who has hereunto subscribed his name, was at the time so doing, a Justice of the Peace in and for the County aforesaid, duly commissioned and sworn, and that his signature above written is genuine.

In testimony whereof, I hereunto set my hand and affixed the Seal of Ulster County Court, this Seventeenth day of September one thousand eight hundred and Fifty Two.

JOHN DeMontanye Clerk

(A hand written note explains a smudged out signature where Hiram Cook signs.)

The word Thomas Smith stricken and that of Hiram Cook written by County. signed Matthew Griffin. (It probably means that a former Justice of The Peace had preassigned some documents that were never used, it however could have cast some doubt in Washington as to the validity of this claim ?)

It appears that Rachel may have heard something negative about her appointment of Power of Attorney with Mr. Hassler as the next document is dated October 12th, 1852 we find the following:

State of New York

County of Delaware

Be It Known, that on this twelfth day of October A.D. 1852 before me, the undersigned, a Justice of the Peace in and for the County and State aforesaid, personally appeared Rachel Canniff, Abraham Baker, Mercy Kelly residents of Griffin's Corner, N.Y. in said County, and made oath according to law that they are the legal heirs of the identical man who was a Soldier in the War of the Revolution, and who has theretofore made application for the benefit of Pension Acts of (This blank was filled out but has been stricken as they probably did not have the legal description) that they are directly interested as a claimant in said pension and make this affidavit to be filed with such additional evidence or arguments as my agent may use in prosecuting said claim\_\_\_\_\_.

Countermanding and revoking all Powers of Attorney, and authority before given, I hereby appoint C. W. Bennett of Washington City, my true and lawful Attorney, to prosecute the claim of Jonathan Baker A Revolutionary Soldier for any amount of Revolutionary Pension, or increase that may be due; and I hereby authorize my said Attorney to examine all papers or documents in relation to said claim on file in the Department at Washington City, or elsewhere, to file additional evidence or arguments, and to receive for my

exclusive benefit, the certificate which may be issued for said claim, which certificate I wish made payable at the New York City, N.Y. Agency; to appoint one or more substitutes under him for the purpose herein expressed, and to do all things that I might or could do were I personally present. Hereby ratifying and confirming all that my said Attorney Agent shall lawfully do in the premises.

Her

Rachel X Canniff

His      Mark      Her

Abraham X Baker      Mercy X Kelly

Mark      Mark

SWORN to, Subscribed and Acknowledged before me the day and year above written, and I hereby certify that I believe the said Rachel Canniff, Abraham Baker & Mercy Kelly to be directly interested in said claim as set forth, and to be the identical party's therein alleged.

Witness:

Matthew Griffin      E.I. Osterhoudt Justice of the Peace

State of New York

County of Delaware

It Is Hereby Certified, that satisfactory evidence has been exhibited before me, Clerk of Court of Delaware County that Rachel Canniff, Abraham Baker and Mercy Kelly the party who has sworn to, and acknowledged the foregoing Declaration and Power of Attorney is the Identical Children of Jonathan Baker reputed soldier aforesaid, I further certify that E.I. Osterhoudt Esq. before whom the preceding affidavit and Power of Attorney were made and acknowledged, was, at the time of so doing. a Justice of the Peace, in and for the said County, and that the signature purporting to be his, I believe to be genuine.

In Testimony Whereof. I have hereunto set my hand  
and affixed the seal of Office the 15th day of



October 1852

Signed: Wm McCloughrey, Clerk

The Words Washington City DC deleted

and New York City N.Y. added above

duly executed and added by:

William Griffin

It is evident that Rachel had heard something negative about Mr. Hassell so the 3 children took the above action. It appears Mr. Bennett produced no results on the Pension Claim and Rachel again took action in 1854. The following document is on file.

#### POWER OF ATTORNEY AND CERTIFICATE

Know all men by these present, That I Rachel Canniff of the County of Delaware and the State of New York do hereby Constitute and appoint H.H. Bostwick, of Auburn, N.Y. my true and lawful attorney, irrevocable, for me and in my behalf to prosecute my claim for whatever Pension Benefits I may be entitled to, as one of the children of Jonathan Baker, deceased, on account of his military services in the Revolutionary War. And to receive such certificate as may be issued, and to appoint one or more attorneys under him for the purposes aforesaid, hereby revoking any power of attorney which may have been heretofore given, and confirming all things that my attorney, the said H.H. Bostwick, may lawfully do in the premises.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 6th day of November A.D. 1854

Witness:

John BeadleHer

Orin Baker Rachel X Canniff

Mark

Acknowledged before me the day and year last above written. And I certify that I am not interested or concerned in the prosecution or result of this case. And that I am satisfied that the said Rachel Canniff is one of the children of the said Jonathan Baker, deceased.

Signed: John Beadle, Justice of the Peace

The next instrument on file is not dated till 1857:

Auburn, N.Y. Aug. 14th 1857

To the Hon.

The Secy of State of Mass

Boston, Mass

Sir

Enclosed please find \$2 and Power of Atty from Rachel Canniff, child and heir at law of Jonathan Baker died.

Please furnish me with a certificate from the Records of the State of whatever appears relative to the service of said Jonathan Baker in the Revolutionary War.

Also please return the Power of Atty. to me with the certificate as I shall require the same to be used prosecuting the Pension Claim.

Yours truly

H.H. Bostwick

By W. DeMott

This letter in proper form and in excellent penmanship was evidently done by a person of some legal training. Rachel had gone to a professional far west of the local, Shandaken community for help. She probably had heard of his

success with other claims as Auburn is a great distance from Shandaken. Why there are three years from his appointment until he takes action is strange.

Mr. Bostwick's letter produced results as, fifteen days later, the Secretary of State's office in Boston produced the following.

The next document regarding the Pension of Jonathan Baker follows:

COMMONWEALTH Of MASSACHUSETTS

Secretary's Office

August 29th, 1857

I HEREBY CERTIFY, That from an examination of the Books and Documents relating to Military Service in the War of the Revolution, which remains in the Department, it appears that the name of Jonathan Baker is born on pay roll of Capt. Samuel Clark's Comp. Col. Powell's Regt. Berkshire County from July 22nd to Aug. 26, 1779. 1 Month 12 days, travel included as private, service at New Haven. Also on pay roll of Capt. Abraham Andrews Comp. Col. Ephriam How's Regt. from July 27 to Oct. 30, 1780. 3 Months, 7 days as private from Middlesex County.

Also on pay roll of Capt. John Reed's Comp. Col. Samuel McCobb's Regt. raised for the defense of the Eastern part of Massachusetts from Sept 14 to Dec 1, 1781, 2 Months 18 days as private. Capt. Reed of Falmouth, now in Maine. Also enlisted in Capt. Joseph Bates Comp. Lt. Col. John Brook's Regt. April 2, 1781 for duration of War, as private.

Also on "List of Final Settlement"  
in Lt. Col. Commandant of John Brooks  
Regt. as follows viz:

NO. 10276 Jan'y 1, 1782 \$54.55

NO. 10752 Jan'y 1, 1784 \$80.00

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto affixed the Seal  
of the Commonwealth, the date above written,  
FRANCIS H.\_\_\_\_\_ Secretary of the Commonwealth

This document does verify the statement that he enlisted from Lanesborough in Berkshire County. It also displays how many of the Revolutionary War soldiers enlisted for short terms of service. Many went home and planted the crops and then enlisted until harvest time. It appears he probably volunteered for the duration at the end, but as the war was far south by that time, he no doubt saw no service, but may have been paid as a volunteer.

The next letter comes again from Mr. Bostwick:

Auburn, N.Y. Sept. 4th, 1857

Hon Geo. C. Whitney  
Commis of Pensions  
Sir,

In the case of the Revolutionary pension claim of the children of Jonathan Baker dec'd. I would state that since the Power of Attorney from Rachel Canniff was forwarded to the Pension Dept. it has been ascertained that the said Jonathan Baker served in the State Service of Mass and at the time (1796) lived at Lanesborough, Berkshire County Mass.

When the certificate of service from the Records of Mass was applied for Baker's residence was not known.

Yours Truly  
H.H. Bostwick  
By W. DeMott

The next dated document follows: Parts are not readable-

PENSION OFFICE

Sept. 8, 1857

Sir,

The Certificate of the Secretary of State of Massachusetts, filed by you as evidence for the pension case of Jonathan Baker, deceased, of New York, under the Act of War, describes service of Jonathan Baker in 1779 under Capt. Samuel Clark's of one month and twelve days in duration. The service described by the claimant as having been performed by him in 1779, he alleges to have been of three months duration under Capt. Newell and stated \_\_\_\_\_ orderly sergeant.

(The last paragraph is not readable but appears to say that the service described by the Secy. of State does not agree with Jonathan's statements when 82 years old and further evaluation is needed.)

I Am Most Respectfully

Your \_\_\_\_\_ Servant

George C. Whiting

Commissioner

H.H. Bostwick, Esq.

Auburn, N. York

COMMONWEALTH of MASSACHUSETTS

Secretary's Office, Boston

Sept. 14th 1857

I Hereby Certify, That from an examination of the Books and Documents relating to Military Services in the War of the Revolution which remain in this

Department it appears that the Roll of Capt. Ebenezer Newell's Comp. for the year 1779 is not found in this office.

Some of the soldiers who served with Jonathan Baker in Capt. Samuel Clark's Company in 1779 served also in Capt. Ebenezer Newell's Company in 1777. Jacob Werd served in both Companies in 1777 and 1779.

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto affixed the Seal  
of the Commonwealth the date above written  
Francis DeWitt Secretary of the Commonwealth

This letter is not disclaiming Jonathan's statements, but just states the records are not in this office, yet they go on to state that there were soldiers that served in both units.

On Sept. 16th Bostwick responds with:

Auburn N.Y. Sept. 16th, 1857

Hon. Geo. C. Whiting  
Commr. of Pensions

Sir,

Herewith I send additional certificate in the pension claim of Rachel Canniff for the Revolutionary services of Jonathan Baker, descd.

Yours truly,

H.H. Bostwick

By Wm DeMott

The next letter on file:

Auburn, NY Dec. 15th 1858

Hon. Geo. C. Whiting

Commr. of Pensions

\_\_\_\_\_ (Undistinguishable Salutation)

Allow me to call your attention to the claim for pension under Act of June 7th 1832 of the surviving children of JONATHAN BAKER, decd.

On your letter of Sept. 22, 1857 you stated that the claim was suspended until a decision was given by the Attorney General.

Will you please inform if such decision has been given and whether favorable to the claim or otherwise?

Hoping to hear from you soon

I remain

Yours truly

H.H. Bostwick

By Wm DeMott

The last letter in the file is evidently written in his own hand as Mr. DeMott has evidently retired, deceased or-

Auburn, NY Augt 31st 1859

Hon. Geo. C. Whiting.

Commr of Pensions,

Sir,

I send herewith power of Attorney in the case of the children of Jonathan Baker of New York. Also a certificate from the Revolutionary Records of Mass. Find mostly this certificate shows the other alleged three month service.

Your early attention to the case will be esteemed a favor.

Yours truly,

H.H. Bostwick<sup>247</sup>

This seems to be the end of the claim process. The government has now stalled since the 14<sup>th</sup>. day of May 1834, a period ternnty-five years, three months, and seventeen days since Rachel informed the government that a pension was due the children of Jonathan Baker, the Revolutionary War private. The whole basis for the denial of this pension was probably the confusion over the statement made by our great-grandsire, who was born in 1752 or 1757, as to his service record in his deposition taken when he was eighty-two or seventy-seven years old. One must remember that enlistment, draft, or discharge records were not as well-organized as they are in our day and many records were simply not available. However, the statement that he was on the Pay Rolls and had a Final Settlement, written on the Letterhead of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and dated August 29, 1857, should have satisfied the Commissioner of Pensions. Why it did not is just another question in my genealogical research.

But, to get back to the vexing question of who was Jonathan Baker, I had made the assumption when searching for our Jonathan that he was born about 1760. After sixteen years of research and the study of every Jonathan Baker known, I have no doubt that he is our grandsire. No other Jonathan fits the known facts and all other Jonathans have listed children that are not our line. Yet, there are perplexing questions about him.

We know he is the son of Jacob. He spent his youth and early manhood in Elizabeth Town, East Jersey, living beside his relatives the Ogdens and the Woodruffs as well as the Haines (Haynes) next door, whom he again had as

---

<sup>247</sup> *Jonathan Baker Pension Claim by Daughter Rachel Canniff 1834-1859*  
*Later Day Saint's Archives - Salt Lake City, Utah {sic}*



neighbors at Shandaken, New York. He was a minor in his father, Jacob's, will in 1774 as were all of Jacob's children, excepting his first born son, David. This also supports Jonathan's enlistment in Elizabeth Town at age of twenty-one years in May of 1778, making his birth 1757 or 1756 depending on his birth month. Jonathan, in his own declaration, stated he was born in Fredricktown, Dutchess County, New York which substantiates my assumption that Jacob did leave the Westfield-Elizabeth Town area after his son David was born in 1749. Jacob's will and the map of Elizabeth Town confirms the family did return to Elizabeth Town. Jacob died between the making of his will the 29<sup>th</sup> of January, 1774 and the 1<sup>st</sup> of March, 1774. The church records at Elizabeth Town verify his death and burial as February 13, 1774. Elizabeth Town was very much a devastated, deserted area during the year 1776 and 1777. After Jacob's death, his wife, Deborah Jean Baker, evidently returned to the safety of Massachusetts or Dutchess County with her family, rather than follow the population of Elizabeth Town which sought shelter from the British soldiers in the mountains west of the coastal plains.

At the age of twenty-one Jonathan returned to Elizabeth Town to see what was left of his inheritance, the homestead and the tannery of his father Jacob. Devastated by the depravation of the site and the plight of the residents of Elizabeth Town which had been brought upon them by the British based on Staten Island, he enlisted on May 11, 1778 as an adult. Everything fits well to this point in Jonathan's life story, excepting his claimed birth in 1752 at the deposition he made on May 14, 1834, when he claimed a pension for service in the Revolutionary War.

Jonathan's enlistment in the New Jersey Militia at Elizabeth Town in 1778 was probably a quick angry decision after his observation of the devastation to his property, that of his father's estate, as well as to the people of Elizabeth Town. He hastily did what he could against the enemy. He enlisted!

His duty here was much different than his duty in Massachusetts and Connecticut in 1776. There they had only marched from one location to another with no contact with the enemy. In Jersey they found the enemy everywhere. He probably had second thoughts about his enlistment and thought about his mother and young sisters back north. He possibly joined the ranks of the deserters and returned to his mother and family. The microfilm records in Trenton do not list him among the deserters, but do list many who deserted because of hunger, fear, lack of pay, etc.. If he did desert, he had engaged in a punishable act if the Colonies won the cause.

From the earlier depositions we know he again enlisted for a short tour of duty in reaction to the plundering of New Haven in 1779. Daughter Rachel's deposition of the 17<sup>th</sup>. of September, 1852, states that Jonathan married her mother Sarah in 1779. This statement, however, is in error. Sarah was the only mother she may have remembered, but Jonathan's first wife was a Margaret, whom he may have married in 1779, and had two children, Stephen, born in 1782, and herself, born in 1785. Margaret, evidently died and Jonathan had two children. In 1790 he returned to Elizabeth Town and, as I found recorded in the old Essex County archives, sold his one-half interest in his father Jacob's property to Elisha Bond, whom you will find as his co-owner on the Map of Elizabeth Town, earlier in this volume. You will remember Jonathan and his brother William, both minors in Jacob's will, had inherited the property on reaching twenty-one years of age. William had evidently sold his half to Mr. Bond earlie and now Jonathan was disposing of his half, as he now had interests in New York. Even though Margaret was dead, he signed off on the title to Mr. Bond, as Jonathan and Margaret Baker. Probably Mr. Bond wanted to ensure clear title to the property and requested Margaret be mentioned in the purchase. Jonathan had probably brought his two, small children with him to visit his aunts, the Ogdens and the Woodruffs, who lived adjacent to his property. While he was down visiting old neighbors and relatives, as well as selling his

interest in Jacob's former property, he met Sarah Jarvis of Rahway and they married.

One of the enjoyable aspects of doing genealogical search is to find facts that keep pointing you in the correct direction, but there is another. This is the people you meet at the scores and scores of places at which you visit while tracking down your ancestors. Some are specialists, such as the archivist at the County Record office in Maidstone, County Kent, who knew in an instant that the 1370 will of Thomas Baker of Elham was not in his library, but in Seven Oaks. Or another professional genealogist we met in Adriance Library, in our early days of searching for Jonathan, who lent encouragement with the statement, "You will find him at Middletown, just keep the search narrowed on that location." These thoughts crossed my mind as I received the above information on Sarah Jarvis. I was in Rahway searching one day and I was informed by the sexton of the First Presbyterian Church of Rahway that I should visit with Gladys Whithead. She was the historian for the area and had written three books on the early days of Rahway. He directed me to her home and I met the most interesting elderly lady. She was keenly interested in our search and said she would search the old church records for any information she could find, and forward it to me. We spent several hours talking, about the Bakers of Rahway and about her three books. She informed me she still had a few of her third book titled, "Recollections III". I purchase one, and she inscribed the fly page with: For Lee Baker, Best Regards, Gladys M. Whitehead- September 11, 1991. Several weeks later I received from her the fact that an undated entry on a 1790 page recorded the following: Jonathan Baker, of Elizabethtown to Sarah Jarvis-Rahway. (With Jarvis underlined- telling me: here is your information.) She also made notation of other entries which related to our conversation of the Bakers of Westfield and Rahway. She had information on the Cory and Job Clark families of Rahway which I had related to in an earlier chapter.

The church I visited, however, was the second building of this congregation; the first building was on the grounds of the Rahway Cemetery, near the graves of Gitty Baker and husband, Job Clark, as explained on page 2 of the book I had purchased.

Jonathan, Sarah, and two small children, Stephen and Rachel, return to his property, probably in Dutchess County, as their next two children, Isaac and Abraham, both list their place of birth on later census records as Dutchess County. This also confirms the reason for the eight- year period when no children were born to Jonathan. Jonathan's children are listed to add credence to these assumptions.

1. Stephen Baker Sr. Born in 1782. My GGGG Grandsire.
2. Rachel Baker born in 1785 by her deposition.
3. Isaac Baker born in 1793 by his tomb stone in Wisconsin.
4. Abraham Baker born in 1794 by his statement on a NY Census of 1855.
5. Joshua, born Oct. 18, 1798 and died April 13, 1879.
6. A daughter who dies after 1800, but was on the 1800 Census.
7. Mercy who married a neighbor Kelly.
8. Another daughter born after 1800 that died as an infant by family records.

Rachel made the statement that her mother, Sarah, died in 1827. However, we now know Sarah was her stepmother, as is confirmed above. From the depositions in this chapter and later information, which you will read about in future chapters, the family spent part of their earlier lives living in western Massachusetts, Dutchess County, New York, and at Fishkill. We cannot, however, assume that the village of Fishkill today was where they resided since, in Colonial times, the area defined as Fishkill was a vast area that

reached from Westchester County to Hyde Park. We can declare that Jonathan was born at Fredrickstown, but spent most of his youth at his father Jacob's property at Elizabeth Town until his mother fled the area in 1776. We know from Rachel's deposition that the family lived for eight years at Fishkill, or at least, Dutchess County, as several children list their places of birth as Dutchess County on later census records, before the move to Middletown Township of Delaware County, New York.

In 1790 the new United States Government decided they needed to count the people of their land and establish some formal records. I never located Jonathan in that census. I never searched in the County of Dutchess Census of 1790, but I did locate Jonathan and his family on the 1800 census for Delaware County as we knew my family had originated from Shandaken, Ulster County. Delaware County was part of Ulster in the early days. Family records also substantiated they were there. The early census only listed the Head of Household by name and the age bracket. Other members were listed by age groups for males and females.

It is my assumption that when the United States government started to look at each and everyone of us that our grandsire Jonathan thought back about his Revolutionary War service with the New Jersey Militia from which he may have deserted. One way to disassociate himself from those records was to declare he was five years older than his enlistment age at Elizabeth Town, New Jersey. This declaration, coupled with the fact there were no birth records kept at the time of his birth, meant he could never be prosecuted. From that day forward he declared his birth date as 1752, which clarifies why his entire life fits with his birth date of 1757 and not 1752.

We do know that the family resided at Middletown, Delaware County. Two daughters died while at that location and were probably buried on the

property where they lived. The family history of Orrin L. Baker states that the family from whom he descends, which is Stephen Sr. above, moved to Shandaken Township in April of 1826, to the site of the "Old Baker Farm" of today. This is also the family from which I descend. In Jonathan's deposition he stated that he moved to Shandaken in the spring of 1829. I believe he moved at the same time as son Stephen and his family moved, as per Orrin L. Baker's history. Son Isaac, had moved to Green County, which is verified by his children's declaration as being born in that county. Son Abraham, however, stays at Middletown and will still be found there with his family as late as a New York State census of 1855. Rachel stated in a deposition that her mother, Sarah, died on the 8<sup>th</sup>. of October in 1827, which is only eighteen months after moving to Shandaken Township. Where shall we bury Sarah? We have two infant, unnamed daughters buried back at Margaretville, but we now live here. There are no graveyards in this remote area.

Jonathan and his two daughters Rachel and Mercy, along with Stephen and Sallary. evaluate the situation. There are others of our neighbors also here along the Dry Brook stream, and we now have a new community here. Possibly we should consider a burial grounds down along the Dry Brook. A spot was picked out along the trail that ran along the Dry Brook, at a serene spot along the stream with trees along its bank. It was a quite, restfull location, with the sound of rushing water as it raced on down the mountain towards Middletown, from whence we came. Here Sarah Jarvis Baker was buried in 1827. And her burial became the beginning of a new burial grounds.

Figure 14-01: Tomb Stone Sarah J. Baker Woods Cemetery

Her death left Jonathan living alone at age 70. His two daughters, Rachel and Mercy, have both married and are living on the same mountain. Isaac, his son in Broom County, decideds that to come and join his brother

Stephen and his family on the Baker property and provide a home for his aged father. We therefore find Isaac on the 1830 census at Shandaken, with his wife three children and his father, Jonathan, listed as a male in his 70's, in his household.

Isaac's brother, Stephen, died in April of 1834. The family records only state that he was buried down on the lower end of what is now identified as the Woods Cemetery. He was buried down on the Dry Brook burial grounds near his step mother Sarah J..

Figure 14-02: Stephen Baker, Sr. Tombstone - Woods Cemetery  
Lee C. Baker GGGG Grandson sets his stone.

Sally carried on with the operation of the farm, along with Isaac. Stephen's son, Stephen T., married a neighbor's daughter, Delight Crook, and their first son, Nelson, was born in 1834. He is my great-grandfather. They are either living on the same farm or an adjacent piece of property. Jonathan died in June 1842, as recorded in his daughter Rachel's deposition in regard to his War Pension benefits. He was buried down by his wife Sarah J. and close by is the grave of son, Stephen Sr..

Figure 14-03: Jonathan Baker Tombstone - Woods Cemetery  
Stone set by GGGGG Grandsons Lee Baker/Don Vredenburgh.

In 1998 I, along with cousins Robert Vredenburgh and his son Joe, from Binghamton, New York, placed a stone with Stephen's information at one of the bluestone field markers in the lower end of the Woods Cemetery. We could not confirm which bluestone marked his grave, but selected the one that was separated from three other blue stone markers. At that time we did not have any recollection of who else might be buried there. It was not until Sunday

afternoon, on April 3, 2000, as I was working on the final editing of this chapter, that I came to the revelation of whom the other blue stone markers were for.

In 1998 Bob, Joe, my wife Mavis, and I placed a tombstone on Stephen's wife, Sally Tompkins Baker's, grave on the mountain top of the Old Baker Farm. In selection of where her new marker was to be placed, it was again a guess. Family records had said she chose not to be buried down by the Dry Brook, but wished to be buried, on her demise, on the farm overlooking the property. There were two, bluestone markers indicating an adult and two other bluestone markers that indicated a small child had been buried there. It was determined these marked the burials of Sally and Juliaetta, the little daughter of Orrin and Eunice Baker, who had been born May 25, 1857 and died June 2, 1860. Family records had mentioned she was buried by her grandmother, Sally. However, Sally did not die until June 30, 1860. I, at the time of setting Sally Baker's tombstone, had some serious questions with the family records. When the light came on today, April 3, 2000, the questions on the burials of family members back there in the wilderness of Shandaken Township were suddenly clear.

Figure 14-04: Sally T. Baker Tombstone.

Sarah Jarvis Baker, second wife of Jonathan, who died on the 8<sup>th</sup>. of October, 1827, was the first bluestone marker in the Woods Cemetery, down along the Dry Brook stream.

Stephen Baker, Sr., died in April of 1834 and is buried to the left of Sarah leaving room for Jonathan beside Sarah.



Jonathan died in June of 1842 and is buried beside Sarah J. down by the Dry Brook beside his wife and near his son.

Little Juliaetta died on June 2, 1860 and was buried beside her great-grandmother, Sarah. Thus, the fourth Baker burial down in the burial grounds, along the Dry Brook stream was now identified. However, after Sally made the request and to be buried up on the mountain top, overlooking her own property, Orrin and Eunice removed little Juliaetta's body from the grave in the Woods Cemetery and buried her beside her grandmother. This now makes the family records correct; little Juliaetta was buried beside her grandmother. Orrin and Eunice determined they would also be buried at this new location on their deaths. Such was the beginning of the Baker Cemetery on the old Baker farm. In another chapter we will list the people who now rest from their labors in this private cemetery on the top of the mountain on the old Baker farm, at the head of Old Baker Road, with an address of Arkville, New York.

Figure 14-05: Juliaetta Baker stone beside her grandmother Sally in old Baker farm cemetery.

The new grave markers for Stephen, Sally, and Juliaetta were all paid for by funds from the Baker Reunion now in its 94<sup>th</sup>. year in the year 2000.

The grave markers for Jonathan and Sarah Jarvis Baker were paid for by my family: Mavis and myself, Lee C. Baker, and our three sons, David, Michael, and Brent. All have been to a Baker family reunion and walked on the hallowed ground of our Shandaken connection. The graves of Jonathan and Sarah Jarvis Baker and Stephen Sr. are now all identified in the Woods Cemetery down on the Dry Brook stream, in Shandaken Township and Sally T. Baker and little Juliaetta's graves are up on the mountain top.

We can now say, not "Who is Jonathan Baker?", but this is our grandsire born in 1757 and deceased in June of 1842 at 85 years of age. Two infant daughters were probably buried down on a hill overlooking the present village of Margaretville, Delaware County, New York, the site they moved to in the late 1790's. He was the son of Jacob Baker, 1706-1774. Jonathan had two wives. Margaret, who gave him two children, Stephen and Rachel, and Sarah J., who gave him six children, three sons, Abraham, Isaac, and Joshua, and three daughters, Mercy and two others, who died as infants.

Jonathan is my GGGGG Grandfather.

There were many unanswered questions, which I can now clarify at this time. There are more bluestone grave markers down in the Woods Cemetery, which can now also be identified. It is evident that Sarah J. Baker had kept a record of her family for us as had Sally T. Baker. Their personal records were never located, however, the wife of Ozias Baker, whom you shall hear more about in a future chapter, did transpose the facts from their parchments, which she probably felt would not survive for future generations. I will not reproduce her total recordings in this chapter, but only deal with the family members who are buried in this same burial ground, called today, The Woods Cemetery. Her records make it possible to identify the balance of the graves in this cemetery that were marked with bluestone slabs. These graves with old, bluestone markers and also new engraved stones are:

Jonathan, born 1757 - died June 1842

Sarah J., Abt. 1760 - 8 Oct. 1827

son Stephen Sr., 1782 - 15 April 1834

The children of Stephen Sr. and Sally Tompkins Baker, still with only blue stone markers are:

Elias, 19 April 1809 - 13 Nov. 1828

Lorza, 6 Aug. 1828 - 19 Feb 1832

Lyman, 1816 - 15 July 1841

Also the daughter of Orrin and Eunice Baker:

Juliaetta, 25 May 1857 - 2 June 1860 (However this small child was moved to the Old Baker Farm Cemetery after the death of her grand mother Sally, on June 30, 1860, and now has an engraved marker.)

This now accounts for all the Baker burials with bluestone grave markers at the lower end of the Woods Cemetery, in Dry Brook Hollow.

These statements are all substantiated by the pertinent facts that have been gathered over the past sixteen years. Recorded information by family members were not plentiful at this location. Many people that moved to remote areas without schools never learned to read and write. This is evident by many legal documents only being signed by an "X", identified as their Mark. We are grateful to both Sarah Jarvis Baker and Sally Tompkins Baker who did record the births and deaths of their children. We also need to include Nora Graham Baker, wife of Ozias, who transcribed this information, which has survived to this day, and can be found in the files of Donald Odell and his wife Phyllis, who own and live on the old Baker farm. Phyllis is Nora's granddaughter.

Another source of information was the census records which, prior to 1850, provided very limited information. Heads of households were listed by name, and all the rest were only categorized as males and females in various age

brackets. The early years of New Jersey census were all lost, so that source was no help. Our family research in the 1810 and 1820 census for New York produced no information. The probable reason why our family did not show up on any records for those years was because they chose not to be enumerated. The rich land barons in this area were claiming title to the land, with circuit riders collecting their rent. Our ancestors avoided the census hoping they could avoid paying rent. A future chapter will relate to the Anti-Rent War with which our family was involved in more than a small way.



# 15

## THE JONATHAN I. BAKER CONFUSION

To the reader of this chapter, please be informed that this person is not our line of descent. He was related and just one of the many, many Jonathans that had to be researched. However, with his location and birth all being parallel, he was considered as our Jonathan for a period of time.

We include this chapter for other researchers as this may well be the family line they are looking for. Early census records also indicated the ages of his children as very closely duplicating our known Jonathan's children's dates. I present the lineage of these two Jonathans to show their close relationship, starting with Thomas, the emigrant at Milford:

Jonathan BakerJonathan I. Baker  
1757-1842 1759-1844

Thomas BakerFatherThomas Baker  
Nathaniel BakerGrandfatherNathaniel Baker  
Lieut. JonathanG. GrandfatherDaniel Baker (Brothers)  
Jacob BakerGG.GrandfatherHenry Baker  
Jonathan BakerJonathan I. Baker

I present here the will of Jonathan I. Baker:

I Jonathan I. Baker, of the Township of Westfield, in the county of Essex, and the State of New Jersey, being of sound mind, memory and understanding (for which blessing I thank

God) do make and publish this my Last Will and Testament, in the manner following, that is to say-  
First it is my Will, and I do order, that all my just debts be paid as soon as may be after my decease- ITEM, I give and bequeath unto the persons hereafter named the following specific legacies, to be paid to them respectfully within one year after my decease, or if any of them should be minors at the time their legacies may become due and payable, the same shall be paid to their legal guardian or guardians appointed by the Court. viz- To my grandson Jonathan I. Baker, son of my son Jesse C. Baker deceased, I give and bequeath Five Hundred Dollars- To David Baker also the son of my son Jesse C. Baker, deceased, a certain note (for One Thousand Dollars) which I hold against Ezra Fairchild, together with all the interest that may be due thereon, charging my Grandson David Baker with Five Hundred Dollars, which I order my Executors to deduct from his share of the residue of my estate hereafter bequeathed to him- To my granddaughter Margaret Cory, I give and bequeath Fifty Dollars- Should any of my above named grand children die, without lawful issue, and before they receive their above legacy, or legacies, the same shall be paid to their surviving brother or brothers, sister or sisters, in equal proportions- I give and bequeath to my daughter Harriet, wife of John Squire, Fifty Dollars and her receipt for the same to my Executors, or either of them shall be a full discharge for her legacy- I give and bequeath to the Presbyterian Church of Westfield Fifty Dollars, to be paid to the Trustees of said Church for the use thereof- I order and direct my Executors hereinafter named, to sell all my estate, both real and personal, at their discretion, and in such time and manner as they may judge most conducive to the interest of my estate, but within three years after my decease; and I do hereby authorize and empower my Executors, the actor or actors, or survivor of them, to give good and sufficient conveyances in law, to the purchaser or purchasers of the same; and the proceeds of such sales, together with my personal estate after paying as above directed I order and direct my Executors to divide into five equal shares or parts, and pay the same hereafter directed, viz- To my daughter Charity wife of William Cory and her heirs one equal fifth part- To the children of my late son Jesse C. Baker, deceased, and their heirs, one equal

fifth part, to be divided equally among them-To my daughter Mary, wife of Ezra Drake, and her heirs one equal fifth part-To the children of my daughter Gitty, wife of Job Clark, a certain House and Lot situated in Rahway, which I purchased of their father, the said Job Clark, charging the children of the said Gitty with the sum of Two Thousand Dollars, without any interest thereon until my decease-My said daughter Gitty to have the use of the said House and Lot during her life. I also give to the children of Gitty an equal fifth part of the proceeds of the sale of the whole of my estate, deducting from their share the Two Thousand Dollars aforesaid-To the children of my daughter Harriet wife of John Squire, I also give and bequeath the remaining equal fifth part-And should any of my grand children, to whom I have herein given or bequeathed any share of the residue of my estate, die, before the same is paid to them or their guardian or guardians, and without lawful issue, the share or shares of them, or such of them so dying, shall be paid to their surviving brother or brothers, sister or sisters equally-And further it is my will that my daughter Gitty, ( wife of Job Clark) and Harriet, wife of John Squire, shall receive during their lives the interest of the several shares of my estate, to which their children may be entitled, in the division of my estate as aforesaid-And before my Executors shall pay to any of the children of my said Gitty and Harriet or their guardian or guardians, as the case may be, their respective share or shares of my estate, or any part thereof, the said children, each and every one of them, their guardian or guardians, shall secure to the full satisfaction of their respective mothers, the interest of the several shares which they may receive of my estate during the life time of the said daughters Gitty and Harriet- And on the neglect or refusal of any of the said children of my said daughters Gitty and Harriet, their guardian or guardians, so to secure the interest as aforesaid to their respective mothers, for two years after my decease, the share or shares of the one or more so neglecting to pay the interest afore said shall be paid to his, her or their mother-The children of my daughter Gitty shall receive the same equally-and also the children of my daughter Harriet, shall likewise receive the same equally, males and females alike-Item- All bonds, notes, book accounts or other evidence of debt which I hold against any of my children or their husbands, or against any

252



of my grand children, whether outlawed or not, shall be charged to them respectively; but no interest shall be reckoned on them prior to my decease; and the amount of such claims against my children or their husbands or my grand children shall fall into my estate, and be divided amongst my children and grand children as heretofore ordered and directed. Neither shall any interest be allowed to any of my children or their husbands prior to my decease, for any amount they or any of them, may have against my estate\_ Item- I hereby nominate and appoint my trusty friend Dennis Coles and my son-in-law Ezra Drake, Executors of this my Last Will and Testament. In testimony whereof, I here unto set my hand and seal, this tenth day of July, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty Three.

Jonathan I. Baker (Seal)

Signed, sealed, published and declared by the said Jonathan I. Baker, to be His Last Will and Testament in the presence of us:

In the 13th line of this will, the words

"for One Thousand Dollars" shall be interlined.

Sign, sealed, published and declared the same to be the Last Will & Testament.

William Abell

James Coles

Susan Coles

This is to be a Codicil to The Last Will and Testament of me the said Jonathan I. Baker, which will bear date, the same as the foregoing will, on the tenth day of July, in the year of our Lord Eighteen Hundred and Forty Three- Item-If either of my Executors named in my Last Will and Testament, viz the said Dennis Coles or Ezra Drake, or either of them, should die before me, or their health be such as to render them or either of them unable to attend to the duties in said will ordered and directed, then my will is, and I hereby nominate and appoint Gideon Ross, Esq., one of my Executors, who shall act jointly as such with the one above mentioned who may be living and able to act out-But should the said Dennis Coles and Ezra Drake be both alive at my death, and able to perform the duties ordered and directed in said Will, then in that case they are to perform the duties of said Executorship,

the same as if this Codicil had not been made. In testimony whereof I have set my hand and seal, the day and year aforesaid.

Jonathan I. Baker (Seal)

Signed sealed and published and declared  
by the said Jonathan I. Baker to be a Codicil  
to his Last Will and Testament, and to be taken  
as a part there of in the presence of us.  
In the 6th line of this Codicil "unable" interlined  
before the said Testator-executed the same.

William Abell

James Coles

Susan Coles

A second Codicil was also recorded:

I Jonathan I. Baker of the Township of Westfield in the County of Essex and State of New Jersey, do make and publish this my second Codicil to my Last Will and Testament in writing bearing date the tenth day of July in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty Three, and direct the same to be annexed to my said last Will and Testament and to be part of it. I do hereby give and bequeath to my grand daughter, Margaret Cory, in addition to what I have bequeathed to her in my said Will. One Feather bed, bedstead and bedding for the same. To Wit, the choice of such as I may have in my house at my decease. And whereas in my last said Will and Testament, I have nominated and appointed Dennis Coles one of my Executors, and whereas in a Codicil to my Last Will and Testament bearing even date therein, I have nominated and appointed Gideon Ross to be one of my executors in case of the death or inability of either of my Executors named in my said Will, and the said Dennis Coles having since departed this life, I do therefore hereby fully ratify and confirm the nomination and appointment of the said Gideon Ross in the said Codicil named to be one of my executors in the place of the said Dennis Cole, deceased. In testimony whereof I the said Jonathan I. Baker have hereunto set my hand and seal the Nineteenth day of January in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty Four.

Jonathan I. Baker (Seal)

Signed,sealed,published & delivered  
by the said Jonathan I. Baker to be  
a Codicil to his last Will and  
Testament and to be taken as a  
part thereof in the presence of us:  
William Abell  
Benj' Cory  
Joseph Ross

It is very evident from his will that he was a man that was very sharp mentally at age 85. His signatures on the will and first codicil are clear and in good form. The will and codicil were dictated to a scribe as it is not in his own hand. Upon the read back to him, you will see in the statement of the witnesses that he wanted the particular note that is a legacy to grandson David to be specified as being for "One Thousand Dollars" and in the first Codicil he wanted it specified that Gideon Ross, Esq. was only to act if his first nominees could not act. May we all be as sharp when we reach 85 years of age. However, the signature six months later is a shaking signature, evidence that his health had changed. He died in March about six weeks later at the age of 86 years.

It is also evident by the will that he was a very fair individual. He specifically took care of two grandsons, Jonathan and David. Their father, Jesse, had left them. He also specifically took care of Gitty by willing her the house she lived in. The graveyard on St. George's Ave. in Rahway explains why. Job, her husband, was evidently very ill in July of 1843 when Jonathan wrote his will and first codicil and he purchased the house from Job before he died, which was on October 3, 1843. Gitty has four daughters at home, the youngest only 12 years of age. By the purchase of the house she then has some money and he turns around and wills her the house and stipulates that her daughters shall allow their mother the privilege to live there so long as she shall live.

Life had not been kind to Gitty who was born on November 5, 1795.

She had married Job Clark who was five years her senior. Her first daughter, Elizabeth, was born October 15, 1815 before her twentieth birthday. Mary B. was born on May 5, 1821 and died when seven years old on Oct. 2, 1828. Rachel A. was born August 24, 1823. Caroline was born June 16, 1828. Mary S. was born March 27, 1831. She died before her grandfather on January 16, 1844 and Kezia was born April 23, 1834. It appears that the girls were not the marrying kind as all are buried beside their parents on a family plot with a sizable, pyramidal monument on which are memorialized the entire family, each having a small flat headstone. It may also have been that the girls, Elizabeth, who lived to be over 75 years, Rachel, who lived for 72 years, and Keziah, who lived for 57 years, may have requested that they be buried on the family plot, even though they may have married. The only reason I say this is that a Rachel A. Clark deposited \$100 with the Rahway Cemetery Assoc. on Sept. 6, 1902 for perpetual care of Lot 56. It doesn't appear the family was destitute from the monument.

Jonathan I. Baker passed away in March of 1844. His executors, sons-in-law Ezra Drake and Gideon Ross, Esq. called upon two other citizens, Ephriam Clark and Isaac French, to assist in the inventory of his estate, which was done on April 2, 1844.

(IV-2) A true and perfect Inventory and appraisement of the personal property of Jonathan I. Baker, late of the Township of Westfield, in the County of Essex and State of New Jersey deceased, made by Ezra Drake and Gideon Ross Executors and Ephriam Clark and Isaac French two distinguished Freeholders this Second day of April in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty Four.

I do not list this inventory as it is not our direct line. However, for any reader of this history that may descend from Jonathan I. Baker and is interested in this matter, it may be found in the State Library archives in Trenton, New Jersey. It totaled \$17,863.54.

This document tells much. Jonathan I. Baker was a prominent man in the community. He was acting as a personal banker loaning money to many people, not just his own family. It also displays that he was a good record keeper. I wondered as I entered this information on April 18, 1992, just after having paid our Income Tax, what might have been the burden on the people back in those days that required a fair number of them to borrow money on April 1<sup>st</sup>. ? It is also interesting to note that two small advances were made in late February only days before his death.

Jonathan I. Baker and his wife, Keziah Clark Baker, are buried in the Presbyterian Cemetery at Westfield, New Jersey. He also married Keziah's sister after Keziah's death and she is buried there. His father, Henry, and mother, Phebe, and many other Baker family members may be found there.

At the Presbyterian Church at Westfield I found the following:

Charity Scudder Baker married William Cory, January 7, 1810. William was born at New Providence in 1785, he was the son of William Sr. who was the son of Ebinizer Cory of the Presbyterian Church in New Providence. Jesse Clark Baker married Betsy Thompson, April 5, 1812. Gitty Baker married Job Clark, May 1, 1814. Job and Gitty evidently transferred to the Presbyterian Church of Rahway as all of the family is buried in that Cemetery.

There are many Bakers buried at the Westfield Cemetery. Of the Jonathan I. Baker family we have located Jesse, buried in 1832, and his wife (her called Elizabeth instead of Betsy) buried in 1840. Also Charity and husband William Cory, for whom I do not seem to have the dates are there. There is a Jonathan and wife buried at the Rahway Cemetery, by the records. However, there are no grave markers on their lot. He could be Jesse's son by the date listed in the records. Gitty and Job Clark and their daughters can be found at the Rahway cemetery, adjacent to the site of the first church building.

Such is the information for Jonathan I. Baker, son of Henry and Phebe Baker, grandson of Daniel Baker of East Hampton, Long Island. All are part of the descendants of Thomas Baker, but not our direct line. However, I include the information in this text as someone in this line may use our history as a reference source and my efforts to locate our Jonathan will help them solve the same dilemma which I encountered.

There is a great contrast between Jonathan I., son of Henry, and our Jonathan, son of Jacob. Jonathan I. stayed in East Jersey and established a considerable estate. Our Jonathan went to the Catskills and produced little evidence of any estate and the last years of his life were spent with several of his children. His only legacy was his children, from whom we all descend.



# 16

## THE RETREAT TO THE CATSKILLS

The time is 1780, the colonies have been engaged in war with England for four years. Many have served in the battles. Their homes and property have been ravaged by the enemy and some have grown weary of the struggle. There was a movement of many people from this war ravaged area. It was not only the people of Jersey, but the relatives and friends back on Long Island and Connecticut that were seeking new frontiers. A great exodus of people was happening.

One of the only ways to track movement of people in those days was through recorded incidents, church records, and census records. The first census was taken in 1790. All census records for New Jersey were lost for the years 1790, 1800, 1810 and 1820. This made our research of the family much more difficult. No evidence was found of Jonathan at that period of our searching until we located him at Middletown, in Ulster County, New York, in 1800. This was forty miles west of Kingston, up the Esopus Creek and on over the mountain at Pine Hill to the valley along the East Branch of the Delaware River. We had now confirmed that the family history in Minnesota was correct. We had originated from a family in Shandaken, New York, which was an area east of Middletown. Was this Jonathan Baker the grand-sire we were looking for? Was he possibly the ancestor with the Quaker background?

I studied the records of the "Purchase Monthly Meeting" of Westchester County with interest, as the story that had been told to me by my father back in 1933 that we had Quaker background,

260



was possibly beginning to unfold before my eyes. This group had started as early as 1725. Then, keeping the nomadic characteristic going, a group decided to move on and established a community known as "Enock Creek Meeting" in the area of the now Hyde Park. They had the misfortune of the Meetinghouse and all its records being lost in a fire and so the group dispersed to various other communities. One of the most encouraging bits of information of this area was the following, dealing with the history of the town of Hyde Park, which was included in the colonial area called Fishkill.

"The eastern part of town adjoining Pleasant Valley and Clinton, was settled in the early days by Quakers from Rhode Island, Connecticut and Long Island. Among them were the Moshers, Waters, Frosts, Marshalls, Bakers, Briggs, Halsteads, Hoages and Stringhams. Families by the name of Bardber, VanValin and Dickinson, removed from that section to Schoharie county in 1804. The old members who removed have long since passed away, leaving their children to unite and conform to manners of discipline of other sects. The Friends' house of worship was for a long time called the "Crom Elbow meeting house." This edifice was erected about the year 1780, but we are laboring under the impression that its erection will date back a few years, at least, previous to that date. An old lady living in Schoharie County in 1856, at the age of eighty-five, attended church there when she was a small child, not more than four or five years of age, but did not remember the erection of the building. This society like all others of that faith is fast dwindling away, much to the regret of lovers of honesty, meekness and sobriety. While their life principles are admired and highly respected, their quaint garb and expressions are not agreeable to the taste of the people of To-day. The world presents too many fascinations that are antagonistical to the Friends' biblical doctrine, and hence, but few additions are made to their numbers, while death fast removes those who have "long lived in the faith." No Sect, that ever adorned the christian world goes out

of existence with so worthy a record, as that of the Friends, socially, morally and spiritually." <sup>248</sup>

Of particular interest to us in his statement, is that he mentioned two families, the Bakers and also the Briggs, which will soon become part of our family, at Middletown, where we had found Jonathan in the 1800 Census.

At exactly what date which families made the move was not possible to put together. We can confirm by future census records that some of the neighbors that had lived at Elizabeth Town, Newark, Rahway, and the Woodbridge areas of Jersey were also to be associated in the same area in the Catskill Mountains west of Kingston. Some of the families include Gilletts, Bishops, Haynes, Todds, Tomkins, and Lambs. It was likely that the Jersey people started the journey at Bishop's Dock and took a river vessel up the Hudson. They may have stopped to join others at Fishkill, or they may have lived there for a time before the inland journey to Middletown Township. We never will know.

The area these Jersey English descendants decided to relocate to had its problems. In October of 1704, the then new governor of New York, Edward Viscount Cornbury, had granted to Johannis Hardenbergh a Patent. It was to have been for 2,000 acres of what the governor had viewed as rather worthless rugged terrain. The formal papers for the grant were not executed due to the ineptness of Governor Cornbury. Hardenbergh, in the mean time, negotiated with the Indian Nisinos for another tract of land known as "The Discovery". This agreement covered a million and a half acres.<sup>249</sup>

By 1708 Queen Ann had grown tired of Governor Cornbury's mismanagement of the territory and replaced him, on

---

<sup>248</sup> Smith James H., HISTORY OF DUTCHESS COUNTY 1683-1882 p. 303

<sup>249</sup> *Indorsed Land Papers, New York Public Library, Vol. 40 p.126*

March 28, 1708, with Lord John Lovelace. England was engaged with Queen Ann's War, the American phase of the Spanish Succession, and Lovelace was involved in attempting to drive the French from American soil. With all these problems, and Lovelace becoming very ill on the crossing to New York ( he died shortly thereafter) gloom fell over New Yorkers who feared the French would conquer the territory. Hardenbergh had formed a company of patentees to overshadow the fact that his patent would be not limited to only 2000 acres.

Lovelace was replaced by Governor Robert Hunter. Speedily, Hardenbergh of Kingston, although a Dutch, got himself appointed High Sheriff of Ulster County and, by this title, was entitled to sit on the Bench of the County Court Of Sessions. His eventual Patent was given by Queen Ann, but when it came through it was listed as two million acres, not two thousand! Hardenbergh kept his mouth shut and this, along with his secret deals with the Indians, made him a land baron. The Queen's grant stated that as long as Hardenbergh was alive the land could not be sold. The family, however, laid claim to the patent by descent and continued to collect rents from the occupants. Although the Hardenberghs were Dutch, they were never accepted by the other, wealthy Dutch across the Hudson: the Livingstons, Roosevelts, and VanCourtlands.

A tract of 23,000 acres of this Hardenbergh Patent, called by the Dutch, "The Great Patent", had been deeded to Edward Livingston in 1779. In 1795 Edward had mortgaged this tract to a French 'emigre' who later returned to France and put the property in the hands of two agents, Joseph Bouchaud in New York and Anthony Laussat in Philadelphia. Livingston was in arrears on his interest and the agents foreclosed on him. The property was offered for sale by auction at the Tontine Coffee House in New York. The French owner had died in France and Bouchaud and Laussat purchased the 23,000 acres for themselves at twenty-five cents per acre.<sup>250</sup> I have brought this little bit of history in as our

---

<sup>250</sup> *Deed Book E-2, Green County, p. 67-77*

family will purchase the old Baker farm in the Catskills from this Laussat family line.

After finding Jonathan at Middletown, our search moved to Ulster County, New York. It was many trips later after several visits at the Kingston Court House, The Old Senate House in Kingston, the Ulster County Historical Society, the Ulster Genealogical Society at Hurley, and five trips to the Adraince Library at Poughkeepsie that we finally made the acquaintance of our relatives, Gertrude Lamb Haynes and her daughter Louise Haynes Flood. Our search began to solidify and take shape. It was Florence Prehn, at the Ulster County Genealogical Society in Hurley, who by the way is a distant relative, who eventually made our meeting with Louise and Gertrude a reality.

Mavis and I had driven by the home of Gertrude Lamb Haynes and her daughter, Louise Haynes Flood, just outside of Kingston many, many times on our trips out towards Margaretville, and particularly Shandaken. Our Minnesota family history had told us our grandsire, Stephen, had come from Shandaken. We were looking for any clue we could find, not knowing that Louise was the historian for the family we were searching for. On our first meeting with them, Mavis and I found that their family records went back to Jonathan and that Isaac, Ira, and Stephen had "gone west" after the Anti-Rent War. At last, we had made contact with the family from whom we, the western branch of the Baker family originated. We had finally found and substantiated that our Stephen was entered in their records as "going west". They were nearly as excited as we were that they now had a contact from part of the family that had left New York some odd 150 years ago.

What a day that was in our search process. This excitement culminated in a fantastic reunion the third Sunday in August, 1988, with seventeen cousins from the west (as far west as Phoenix, Arizona) meeting our cousins from the east, at the farm at the end of "Old Baker Road" on the top of the mountain. This was the very farm from which Isaac, Ira, and Stephen, Jr. had left to go west some 150 years ago and the farm that the

family had purchased from the Madame Laussat. The farm is still owned by a Baker cousin, Phyllis Armstrong Odell, and her husband, Donald, who hosted that first meeting of the Bakers of the west with the Bakers of the east on that Holy Ground that I wish to call "The Old Baker Farm" at the head of Old Baker Road.

To get back to our history, in the census of 1790, the first United States census, we did not find Jonathan counted at Middletown. We do know that a relative, Ephriam Baker from Jersey, and Benjamin and Seth Gillett were at Middletown in 1790 and were enumerated and would be neighbors on the 1800 census, as is also a Joshua Tompkins. However, in the 1800 census of Middletown Township, now Margaretville, we found Jonathan listed on page 1289 along with his family and wife. They had four sons and three daughters. A fourth daughter was born after 1800. Three of the sons had been established as Stephen, Isaac, and Abraham during our meeting with Gertrude and Louise. The girls' names we did not know for several years, as you will discover in another chapter.

The day we met Gertrude and Louise, they shared with us a copy of the "History Of The Family Baker", written by Orrin L. Baker.

## A HISTORY OF THE FAMILY BAKER

by

ORRIN BAKER

Sometime during the 18th century Jonathan Baker, our great-grandsire, living at Fishkill on the Hudson gathered together his belongings and with an ox team hit the trail west for the wilds of Delaware County.

Here he reared three sons, Abraham, Isaac, and Stephen; the later, our venerable grandsire, being born June 1782.

During the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup>. century he married Sallery Tompkins, daughter of Joshua Tompkins who then owned and occupied the farm on which the village of Margaretville now stands.

Stephen Baker with his wife began farming a mile above the village of Margaretville on the Platterkill road, known at the

present time as the New Kingston road, where he lived until April 8, 1826, when with his family he yoked his steeds to his car, which by the way consisted of oxen and sled (the later a very crude affair) and trekked eastward into what was at that time a vast wilderness, buying 40 acres of land from Madame Lausatte under contract on which a very small clearing had been made and a log house erected. Here he resided living on the fat of the land in every sense of the term, the forest and stream furnishing game and fish in abundance until the time of his death April 15, 1834, when the burden of caring for a large family rested heavily upon the shoulders of Orrin Baker our departed sire, then a lad of 16 years, who took up the burden laid down by his father and with courage born almost of despair fought manfully the battle of life, caring for his widowed mother until the time of her death and providing for the wants of his younger sisters until they were grown to womanhood-surely not an easy task for such a lad.

In the year 1850 Sept. 26, Orrin Baker married Eunice Rider only daughter of Barnabas and Sarah Rider who moved to this state from Fairfield County, Conn. in the beginning of the 19th century and settled on the farm now owned by William E. Avery.

Again our parent began farm life upon the parcel of land his grandsire had owned and which is now owned by G.C. Whipple, (This is the Old Baker Farm he is talking about), and by economy and hard labor saved enough to purchase several other parcels until their farm complete numbered 220 acres.

Eight children were born to make or mar their happiness - seven of whom are still living.

We have politicians and schoolma'ams galore, at the present time we boast a High Sheriff, Supervisor and Town Clerk.

We notice with pride one of our learned faculty has become somewhat of a financier having large interest in the wild and wooly west.

However should reciprocity become a certainty these holdings may be withdrawn and, the owner with Ferry and a camp Kittle explore the cold and frozen north of the State of Matrimony - most likely the latter.

Such is the history of the Baker family for nearly 200 years as tillers of the soil. {Sic}

O.L. Baker

Carol Mayda, Mavis, and I were elated, to say the least. The history, brief as it is, provided a wealth of information to a genealogist. Gertrude then produced another document she had prepared years before on the family. It was headed up with Jonathan and listed three sons, Abraham, Isaac, and Stephen, the later being born in June of 1782 and his death listed as occurring on April 15, 1834. He also had married Sallery Tompkins. Her father's farm is now the village of Margaretville. It goes on to list the children of Stepehn and Sallery as:

Ira, Stephen (went west), Lyman (died young), Sarah (married a Symons), Emaline (married a Halstead), Jane (married a Hinkley, and Orrin (married Eunice Rider). It continued with eight children of Orrin and Eunice, with spouses, grandchildren and some great-grandchildren. I only list here the eight children. You will find the balance in the Descendants List at the conclusion of this book. The children were: Lucinda, Luzern, Orrin L., Ida, Louise, Ozias, Juliaetta, and Sarah. What a glorious day!!

Orrin L. Baker's history relates to the trip inland. Following Esopus Creek was the logical path through the mountains to the banks of the Popachton Branch of the Delaware River, the Indians' name for this stream, now the East Branch of the Delaware in Middletown Township of the then large territory of Ulster County. The Esopus flows from the mountains eastward to Hurley near Kingston, and then instead of finding its way into the Hudson, suddenly swings north to Saugerties where it plunges down a fall and joins the Hudson. The water level in those days was much higher than today, so the Esopus may have been navigable for small vessels. So, after a land portage at Kingston, they may have had a water route inland. However, it was more logical the forty odd miles was by way of ox or horse travel along the banks of the Esopus.

Stephen, Jonathan's eldest son, our next grandsire, took as his bride, Sally Tompkins, daughter of Joshua Tompkins. The 1830 census shows he had moved to the Old Baker Farm, on the

top of the mountain in the Dry Brook Area above Arkville. This is in agreement with Orrin L. Baker's short history that stated they moved in 1826 to this farm. In the next chapter we will carry on with life in the Catskills.





# 17

## LIFE IN THE CATSKILLS

We could not establish exactly where Jonathan and Sarah settled at Middletown, as all we had was the census record. We can only assume it would have been in the valley along the East Branch of the Delaware River. The census of 1800 tells us they resided near Joshua Tompkins, as his family is on line 1288, and Jonathan's family is on line 1289. Here, he and Sarah with their four sons and three daughters started a new life.

Eldest son, Stephen, who had been born in 1782, courted the neighbor's daughter, Sally Tompkins, and they were married. They started their life together, from family recordings, above the village of Margaretville on the Platerkill Road, now called New Kingston Road. They had ten children born at this location. The first born was a son born July 19, 1806 who died on the 29<sup>th</sup> of July.<sup>251</sup> (He was no doubt buried on their farm above Margaretville). Son Ira was born on July 22, 1807, Elias on April 19, 1809, Stephen T. on July 25, 1811, and Bethany on December 2, 1813. She died as an infant was buried beside their first-born son. A son, Lyman, was born on March 12, 1816, Orrin on March 14, 1818, Sarah (also called Sally) on March 30, 1823, and Jane on January 14, 1826.<sup>252</sup> This is Stephen and Sally Tompkins' family which Orrin L. Baker tells about moving to the ;and later defined in legal papers as the Sally Baker property.

Jonathan's second son, Isaac, by his second wife, Sarah Jarvis, therefore Stephen's younger half-brother, who had been born in 1793, married Lena Briggs and moved to Green County,

---

<sup>251</sup> *Nora Graham's family records.*

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid Nora Graham Baker's records.*

where his in-laws lived, just northeast of Middletown, and had two sons, George born in 1819, and son Dennison born in 1822.

Third son, Abraham, who had been born in 1794, took as his bride Matilda. We never discovered her maiden name. This family stayed in the Margaretville area as late as the 1855, as recorded in the New York State census. As this family was not our line of descent, we never pursued it any further. However, I will list their children in the event anyone from this line should happen to come across our recordings of the family Baker. Charles was born in 1818, Polly Ann in 1820, Levi in 1822, Isaac in 1824, Lewis in 1826, Henry in 1834, Emily in 1841 and George in 1844.<sup>253</sup>

Jonathan also had three daughters: Rachel, born in 1785, whose mother was Margaret, Mercy born in 1791, and a baby girl born in 1792 who died as an infant, the later two by mother Sarah Jarvis. The last child in Jonathan's family was a son, Joshua, born in 1798.

We have related to Rachel and Mercy, in Chapter 15, "Who Is Jonathan Baker?". These two daughters moved with Jonathan and Sarah to the Old Baker Farm and both married neighboring sons. Rachel married Abram Canniff and Mercy a "Kelly". We never found his name, but there are still Kellys living on a farm on the road that goes over the mountain to Belleayre Ski Resort and the village of Fleischmanns on the New York State Route 28. Please keep in mind this town was called Griffin's Corner in the earlier days. It will be mentioned in a future chapter.

We have little information on Joshua, Jonathan, and Sarah's youngest son, who was born on October 18, 1798. The census of 1820 for Shandaken Township, gives us a few hints about this son. On page 48 we found Joshua Baker as a 16-26 year old male with a 16-26 year old wife. They also had a male child under ten years of age. He is listed as engaged in agriculture. As little as this tells us, it does confirm his birth date

---

<sup>253</sup> *New York Census, 1850 Middletown, Delaware County.*

found on his tomb stone later in this paragraph. It appears he may have been the first of the family to move to Shandaken Township as this is his location on this census.<sup>254</sup> We can only assume that the young couple upon marrying needed to establish a home and most of the desirable lands at Middletown were already occupied. People were becoming squatters on the mountains east of there, which were all claimed by the large land-owners of the patroon system. They had few assets, but could live on the land until the Hardenbergh circuit rider found them. At that time they would have to sign a lease. It was possible for them, by hard work, to provide a home for themselves and a growing family. The rest of the family may have helped them build a log house and a lean-to for a few animals. Game was plentiful for meat. Wild pigeons and fish were also easy to add to the table. Bears roamed the area and provided meat and their skins provided blankets and moccasins. Buttons could be whittled from the trees that were cut down for fuel and to clear the land for garden and crops. The young couple may have tired of the struggle and after a few years decided to move east out of the mountains, where more people were living. We found no additional information on this family until I found the listing of the removals, before the flooding of the Ashokan Reservoir, when the Esopus was dammed. The inscription on his tombstone in a cemetery on a hill west of the village of Woodstock gave us the following information: Joshua Baker, Oct. 18, 1798 - April 13, 1879.<sup>255</sup> There is no indication of a grave for his wife so we are left with a question mark as to their lives after they evidently leave the Shandaken area.

Orrin L. Baker's history stated the family of Stephen and Sally moved to the Dry Brook area in the spring of 1826. Was it or could it have been to the same property to which they had helped Stephen's youngest brother, Joshua, move to a few years earlier? I am convinced this is the same property they had helped

---

<sup>254</sup> 1820 New York Census, Shandaken Twp., Ulster County, p. 48

<sup>255</sup> Tomb Stone, Woodstock, Ulster County, NY

establish. I also believe that Jonathan, Sarah, Rachel, and Mercy also moved at that time, even though Orrin L. does not mention them in his short history. He also probably knew nothing about Jonathan, other than the information that he was his grandsire. Jonathan had died fifteen years before Orrin L. was born.

The basis for the assumption that Jonathan and Sarah also made the move in 1826 is that both daughters, Rachel and Mercy, became the wives of sons of neighbors the Canniffs and the Kellys, living in the area. We never attempted to establish the children for these two daughters. The most information we have for them is their involvement in the pension benefit request for Jonathan's Revolutionary War service, covered in a former chapter.

The families, I am sure, were busy building another house on the property, even though they had no title of ownership. This area was all part of the old Hardenbergh Patent. Today, in the year 2000, you will find three possibilities regarding where they may have lived. The original log house has gone through several additions and modernizations, but still stands. The property is presently owned by Donald and Phyllis Odell. Phyllis is the granddaughter of Ozias Baker, who was the grandson of Stephen and Sally Baker. We are richly blessed by her grandmother, Nora, wife of Ozias Baker. Nora transposed and recorded much of the family information, related to in this chapter. It is evident that Sarah J., wife of Jonathan, and Sallery Tompkins, wife of Stephen, Sr., had recorded births and deaths of family records and Nora had gathered these facts together for posterity. We also thank Donald Odell for searching through Nora's writings and giving us all these facts, for our Chronicles. Today you will find on The Old Baker Farm, Don's and Phyllis' new, spacious, year-round villa. It is just to the right of the old modernized log home. The views from the two elevated decks, on two sides of the home, give beautiful panoramic views of the mountains surrounding the farm site. Another modernized summer cottage is located on the mountain above these two homes. Just off this property is the former home and property of Orrin L. Baker. This possibly was the third home for our family back in the early 1800's. My assumption is based

on the fact that the 1830 census had three Baker households enumerated as consecutive dwellings.

Figure 17-01: The original house on The Old Baker Farm after expansion in about 1885. Standing just to the right of the house is Luzerne Baker and to the far right is Ozias D. Baker. On the roof towards the back is Orrin L. Baker. On the roof towards the front is Garner C. Whipple. To the left on the wall is Orrin Baker, then Eunice Rider Baker, and sitting on the wall is Luzerne Rider. Standing to the left are two children, Orrin Marks and Louise Baker.

Orrin L. Baker stated, in his history, the family moved to this farm in April of 1826. The family was saddened on October 8, 1827, when mother and grandmother, Sarah J., wife of Jonathan died. We related to her burial in the Woods Cemetery in the last chapter.

Stephen and Sallery had moved to the area with Jane, an infant three months old. On August 16, 1828 the family is increased when their eleventh child, Lorza, is born. But again, death claims one of the family, as son Elias, now nineteen years of age, died on November 13, 1828. He was buried down in the Woods Cemetery where they had buried Sarah the year before.

Stephen and Sally's family was again blessed with the birth of daughter Emmaline on October 8, 1831. However, the grim reaper again visited the family, as we find the death of Lorza on February 19, 1832. Another grave was added to the Woods Cemetery down by the Dry Brook. Life rushed on. Trees were removed and stone fences were built as they prepared the soil so they could plant more crops. Food was provided by gardening and hunting and fishing.

The area was then becoming popular as a vacation and recreational area for the people down in New Jersey, Connecticut, and the city areas. Large hotels were being built to accommodate those who came to view the majesty of the area and to hunt and fish. Some families were seeking employment in this new industry

and others were acting as backcountry guides. There is no record of our family getting into this line of activity. However, later in the 1800's, Luzerne, a son of Orrin, worked as superintendent of the farm lands of the railroad financier Jay Gould who purchased a vast piece of property above the Baker's on Dry Brook. This interest in the area does bring new neighbors to the Baker families. In the 1830 census we found Derrick Haynes, from the family back at Elizabeth Town and Newark area of Jersey, Barnabas Rider from Connecticut, and Coonrad Crook, who is a descendant from the Crook family of lawyers in Kingston. We also found several families that had been on the census records at Middletown having also moved to the Dry Brook area. Among that group will be found the names of the Utters, Wheelers, Burr and Lyman Todd, and Jonathan Kelly and John Simmons, to name a few.<sup>256</sup>

Stephen T. Baker married Delight Crook in 1832, she the daughter of Conrad and Jane Crook, who are immediate neighbors. Then tragedy again strikes. On April 15, 1834, Stephen, Sr. died. His body was carried down the mountain and laid to rest beside his mother-in-law, Sarah J. Baker. Sally was left with a family of six children still at home. Stephen and Delight were living beside her, probably on the Orrin L. property. Her oldest son, Ira, was still there with a wife and two daughters, as was son, Lyman, who was listed as head of household on the 1840 census. However, on July 15, 1841, Lyman died. Again, the family added another grave down at the Woods Cemetery along the Dry Brook stream. They now had six members of the family buried at this location. All graves are marked by bluestone slabs, but there are no inscriptions.

Life went on for the remainder of the families. They lived in an old, log cabin house, which was a two story home, with a walk out lower level on the south, that had two windows and a door. Water from a spring above the house was directed into this lower level. This provided a cool place to store food as well as water for the home. A source of income developed for the small time

---

<sup>256</sup> 1830 Census, Shandaken Twp., Ulster County, NY, p. 129

farmers. New York City had discovered the fine butter that came from the area. A few cows became a source of more from the land than just a little wheat to carry down to Griffin's Corner and have ground into flour and the vegetables for their own tables. This, however, was before the advent of cream separators. A new project, which was the women's work, was to pour the milk, after the cows were milked, into large flat bowls and cool the milk until the cream rose to the surface. They then carefully skimmed the cream from the top and churned the cream into butter. After the cream had been removed the skim milk was probably used in the home or fed to any calves they may have had, or to the pigs, if they were fortunate enough to have a few hogs. In order to have the butter shipped to New York or other towns they had to have containers. This is where the men were involved. They whittled and shaped small tubs called firkins in which the butter was placed. These firkins were placed in the cooling tank, which was part of the spring fed water in the home, until they had enough to make the journey to a collection place, which was probably at Andes, which was one of the market villages. Andes became known for butter probably because of Moses Earl, a prominent farmer, who had a butter maid of considerable renown, which you will read more about in the next chapter. After the cream had been skimmed from the milk, the women had to wash and purify the bowls for the next day's process. This they accomplished by hanging the bowls on the outside, south wall of the home, where the sun heated the metal containers and completely dried them and eliminated the possibility of a bacterial build up, which would have caused their milk to sour and not make sweet butter. The spring, which provided the cooler in the house, also provided water for the oxen and cattle just below the house on the next terrace. Don has redirected this same spring water which today supplies water for a fish pond in front of their new home.

Figure 17-02: the barn on the Old Baker Farm in 1885 On the wall to the left is Orrin Baker. With the team of oxen is Luzerne Baker. Holding the team of horses is Orrin L. Baker. Also note the ramp for loading logs and the bull tether.



Life and hard work continued on the mountainside for the Baker families. Orrin, son of Stephen, Sr. and Sally Tompkins Baker, took as his bride, Eunice Rider, daughter of Barnabas and Sarah Rider, who had moved from Connecticut prior to 1830. Eunice had an older brother named Luzerne. Orrin and Eunice's first child, Sarah Ann, is born on February 18, 1852, followed by seven more children: Lucinda in 1855, Juliaetta in 1857, Orrin L. in 1859, Luzerne in 1861, Ida in 1864, Ozias in 1866, and Louise in 1870. More information on this family and their offspring can be found in the descendant chart at the end of this book.

The families were saddened on June 2, 1860, when little Juliaetta died. A small wooden coffin was made and she was buried beside her great-grandmother, Sarah Jarvis Baker, down in the Woods Cemetery. A small bluestone slab marked her grave.

Life continued and the family started to raise more vegetables which could be marketed in Margaretville. In the spring of 1860 a large field of cauliflower was planted in a field above the log home. Mother, Sallery Tompkins Baker, the matriarch of the family, became ill. She informed the family that when she died, she wanted to be buried up on the farm above the house, overlooking the property, and not down in the Woods Cemetery. On June 30, 1860, Sally passed away. The family honored her wish, but her selected spot for her grave had a wonderful growth of cauliflower, so they buried her on the edge of the woods adjacent to the field. A new burial ground had been started.

Orrin and Eunice directed the family that they wished to be buried there when they died. They decided to go down to the Woods Cemetery and move little Juliaetta, who had been buried twenty-eight days earlier and bury her beside her grandmother, Sally, in the new burial grounds. This also clarified for me, as a researcher of our ancestors, a problem I had with the family records provided by Donald and Phyllis Odell. Photocopies of Phyllis' grandmother, Nora Graham Baker, stated that little Juliaetta had been buried beside her grandmother, Sally, yet Juliaetta had died more than three weeks before Sally. My problem with the records was now solved. There was an

explanation of how little Juliaetta could have been buried by Sally, who had died after the young child's death. Nora's recordings could now be assumed correct from this day forward.

Figure 17-03: Orrin and Eunice Rider Baker in 1885

Life in the Catskills had certain advantages. The rights of estover, in the commons of the old landholdings, allowed them to cut firewood, stone, or timber for their own use whenever they needed it. Many tapped trees in the commons each spring and made maple syrup. Trout abounded in the mountain streams. Before the tanneries developed a man could catch a hundred in an afternoon. Fur bearing animals were abundant for trapping. In the winter when fresh meat was hard to come by, even the humblest mountain family could feast on "deer meat" as they called it. In the winter deer could be killed by a method known as crusting. Sometimes an ice crust would form on the top of the snow and the snow became strong enough to support a dog or a man with snowshoes, but not the deer. They had no need for a gun, as the deer could be pursued through the snow and their legs would break through the crust and cut their legs or they would become exhausted and the people could simply walk up to them and cut their throats. Many people disapproved of crusting, but it provided food and income from the deer skins. Another source of food and money was the wild pigeons that flocked to the area to nest in the spring and feast on beechnuts in the fall. The Catskill Examiner tells about the fabulous pigeon spring of 1840 and still continuing until 1860. The mountains were literally alive with the carrier pigeons. Young squabs were taken from their nest and their necks wrung. Older birds were trapped, shot, or clubbed. Pigeons were caught in nets and shipped in crates to New York. Dressed birds were packed in ice and sent to the New York markets where they brought a high price. This demand eventually caused one of the wonders of life on the American continent to come to and end by over-hunting. The carrier pigeons are no more.

The fishing streams soon became known to the wealthy sportsmen of New York. Some farm families took in roomers and

acted as guides to help add an additional source of income. Artists came to the area and painted the natural beauty which helped the area to develop into a vacation land by 1830. The mountain houses that were accommodating the sportsmen and health seekers were suddenly hit with the "hard times" that struck the nation. So also were the Livingstons who held the patent rights of the Old Hardenbergh Patent and the Van Rensselaers who held the lands of the Helderbergs, north of the Hardenbergh lands. The wealthy and powerful Stephen Van Rensselaer found himself in the same position as his poor tenants. He was being squeezed by the economic collapse of the 1830's. In January of 1839 he died, heavy in debt. He had been a tolerant landowner and found it distasteful to press a poor tenant for rent. He had viewed it better to have a tenant who didn't pay rent, than a vacant farm. An unoccupied farm soon lost most of its value. However, his will gave his heirs an uncomfortable choice. He instructed them that they would have to pay his huge debt of over \$400,000 dollars from their inheritance or from the proceeds of the back rents owed by the tenant farmers. They, from their wealthy background, chose to take advantage of the laws that favored landlords and set out to collect the back rents.

We will continue in the next chapter with how this affected the lives of our ancestors. Several of the family leave the area and head west. However, some stay on at Shandaken. We will relate to the life in the Catskills for those that remain at Shandaken. The effects from all the years of depredation by these wealthy landlords had left its mark upon the territory. Marius Schoonmaker, the Kingston lawyer and historian, wrote of the condition of the lands of the Hardenbergh Patent.

"The lands in Woodstock, Olive and Shandaken display that the interest of the inhabitants were concerned in the present, to make the most out of the land they could, and with as little expense as possible. Their want of, care of, and interest in the future was shown by their dilapidated houses and out buildings, their common and temporary fences. Paints and paint brushes were apparently almost unknown in the locality. The tenants interest

was in the uncertain continuance of life. The whole face of the country told the sad story."<sup>257</sup>

Conditions do improve to some extent, after the actions you will read about in the next chapter, titled, "The Anti-Rent War". Squatters become landowners, but with little opportunity for education, and no church in the area until 1867, life was not much more than an existence. One of the family said they carried on, but were as poor as church mice. A letter written by Eunice Rider Baker, wife of Orrin Baker, tells us much about the simple life they lived. It is presented as written in her hand, with all spelling, punctuation, and capitalization as it was written. I believe it was written as a diary entry, as she addressed it to her children, whom she names in the letter, but the letter is never mailed:

Drybrook

April the tenth 1887

Dear children i now take this oportunity af riting a few lines to yu to let you now how we are getting along your father says tell yothat he is better i am a little ove the hooks today i halve bin up three inights running til twelve oclock or half after to help Lewisa get her things ready to go to work she works in new kingston to folksinears she gets three dollars a week for six monts if she likes it she went friday i am afraid she is sick she had the headace for two dys before she went i expect to get a letter from her tuesday Luzerne leiys on the lounge a sleep your father sets sleeping in his chair oerin L is shaving ozias is just gone out doers he is so lonely cant stay in the house since Lewisa is gone he says he shall be glad when it comes meting time today merry has just come out of the back room she has been playing on the organ she and oerin L has gone to bed Ozias has come back in he is shaving Leurezne has got up and is playing on the organ your father has wked up

---

<sup>257</sup> Schoonmaker, Marius, *THE HISTORY OF KINGSTON*, p. 100-101

and bin out ders awhile seting on a log awhiteling he says tell you  
if he gets beter he is (the next page is missing). {sic}

The letter tells us much. To me, the most revealing statement supports my father's statement that we had Quakers in our history, even though the family living in the Catskills say they are of Methodist background and not Quaker. It is more than likely that Eunice wrote this document on Sunday, as she relates that Louise left on Friday and she expects a letter on Tuesday. Everyone is also relaxed on the Sabbath. Her statement of (the meting time) could simply mean they have a home church service, or it could be the more typical assembly, which the Quakers call meeting. It is possibly a continuation of the ancestral observance of a religious meeting, we will never know. Eunice died on December 24, 1888, less than two years after recording this information.

I must return, in this history, to the year 1855. The New York State Census of that year records who is living on the Old Baker Farm at Shandaken.

Stephen T. Baker Age 43  
Delight Age 43  
Nelson Age 21  
Louisa Age 18  
Jane Age 16  
Orrin L. Age 12  
Ann Age 10

Also:

Orin Age 36  
Eunice Age 30  
Sarah Age 3  
Lusindey Age 1/12  
Sally (Mother) Age 71  
Emaline (Sister) Age 22<sup>258</sup>

---

<sup>258</sup> *New York State Census, 1855, District #2, Shandaken Twp.*

Orrin and Eunice have two children and provide a home for mother, Sally Tompkins Baker. Stephen and Delight have had letters from Isaac and Ira, now in Wisconsin, and a decision is made join them. Stephen and Delight had stayed on to assist mother Sally with the family when Ira and Isaac had gone west, at the time of the Anti-Rent War trials. Records at the courthouse in Kingston revealed that Stephen had served as a witness to land purchases on November 8, 1852, when Orrin purchased the Rider property. Stephen and Delight felt comfortable to leave the young family and his mother and sister now that the lands were secured in the family name and ask mother, Sally, Orrin, and Eunice how they felt about them leaving. Sally, Orrin, and Eunice gave them their blessings and they departed for Neosho, Wisconsin to join the part of the family that departed in the fall of 1845, as you will read about in the next chapter. To confirm their departure, which happened immediately after the census of 1855, I had to review the obituary of son, Nelson, my great-grandfather, in "The Kiester Courier" of January, 1912, which supplied me with the information on their leaving Shandaken and arriving in Wisconsin. Did they go overland, by wagon, or did they use the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes water route? We never will know.

I apologize for the "History" not following a chronological date sequence. However, if all parts are to be incorporated, it was not possible to stay in date order. I will have to return several times back to the 1700's in future chapters to make the history complete.

In this chapter I have listed the Baker family members who are buried in the Woods Cemetery, down along the Dry Brook stream. I also should include the balance of the Rider family. Just to the right of the Baker graves you will also find Barnabas and Sarah Rider and son Luzerne. There is an obelisk marker with inscriptions and fieldstone markers for each grave.

As of this date, May of 2000, you would find the following burials in the family cemetery up on the Old Baker Farm:

Sally Tompkins Baker C.1784-1860

Juliaetta Baker 1857-1860  
 Anson Graham 1864-????  
 Ida Baker Graham 1864-1935  
 Orrin Baker 1818-1894  
 Eunice Rider Baker 1825-1888  
 Lucinda Baker Whipple 1855-1937  
 Garner C. Whipple 1849-1926  
 Edith Whipple White 1884-1974  
 Arthur White 1890-1970  
 Luzerne Baker 1861-1914  
 Alice LaMoure Baker 1864-1896  
 Ozias Baker 1866-1951  
 Nora E. Graham Baker 1874-1966  
 Lionel Baker 1899-1918  
 Orrin L. Baker 1859-1934  
 Mary Avery 1860-????  
 Cecil Baker 1888-1888  
 Marion Baker 1890-1902  
 Marjorie Baker 1900-1968  
 David Burr Todd 1896-1966  
 Orrin Todd III 1927-1962  
 Vivian Baker Armstrong 1908-1993  
 George Armstrong 1908-????  
 Susan Odell Papelian 1953-1987

Reginald \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Just left inside gate.

I will at this point conclude the family information for the family who remained at Shandaken. Blank pages are provided at the conclusion of this history for families to continue with your immediate lineage after you find yourself in the Descents Listing at the end of this History.

In the 1700's, there was another family which was to become part of the Baker Family Tree living along the Mohawk River in upper New York state. My aunt, Nellie Baker, had told her daughters, Carol Mayda and Margaret that they should read "Drums Along The Mohawk", as this was a story that related to happenings of their ancestors. This bit of information was the

beginning of the research for this "History", as the first visitation to a research facility was to Fonda, the former Conojoharie of colonial times, and to Fort Herkimer on the Mohawk, which will be my focus in Chapter 19.





# 18

## ANTI-RENT WAR 1839-1845

The action in the Van Rensselaer lands soon spread to the holdings which affected our ancestors. This action prompted the start of a rebellion by the tenants known as the "Anti-Rent War", 1839-1845. The tin dinner horns that the housewives used to summon their men for meals became the warning signal up and down the valleys that the wardens and agents of the landlord were on their way to make collection.

The tenants revolted first by electing officials at Albany to invalidate the old Hardenbergh Patent rights. They attempted to claim the Patent really belonged to the state and that only the state could award title to the lands the tenants were residing on. Then, the descendants of these original Patent holders who were dancing and feasting at The Catskill Mountain House would be ejected and each tenant would become lord and master of his own acres. The legislature, however, was still in control of the wealthy land barons and by the spring of 1844 no action had been taken.

The organizers of the tenants decided it was time for action. Meetings were scheduled throughout Delaware and Ulster Counties. Pine Hill was the location for our ancestors. Anti-Rent organizations were formed with the members bound by an oath of secrecy and an oath that they would refuse to pay their rents. Allaben and other men gave lectures and held meetings at the various stores, taverns, and private dwellings throughout Delaware and Ulster County. It was, for the most part, the younger tenants who rushed to take the oath and join the mystic brotherhood of "The Calico Indians", but as you read on, you will discover many of our family were also involved. These Indians carried out their work with masks of sheepskin that they pulled over their heads like a cap. The masks had false noses and

ornamentation made from bits of tin or feathers. They also wore vests of bright, calico material whenever they were out on meetings or activities.

Members of the Baker family were involved in an event that occurred on the last day of February in 1845 which displayed how they intended to carry out their mission. The dinner horns sounded up and down the mountains to inform the "Indians" that an activity was going to take place at Shandaken Lake and they were to be there! An agent of Livingston's grandchildren was on his way to make a bold assertion of the landlord's rights. A tenant had cut some logs which the landlord had decided had been cut from the common lands, instead of from the tenant's leased land. The landlord's agent had hired John Lasher of Woodstock to seize the logs as rightfully belonging to the landlord. Quickly a group of tenants transformed themselves into "Calico Indians" and rushed to the spot where Lasher and two helpers had started to load the logs to be taken away by a yoke of oxen. A brief struggle took place between the "Indians" and Lasher and his helpers. Lasher was overpowered, his oxen took fright and ran away, and Lasher was tarred, feathered, and then released. The unidentified, masked Indians returned to their homes. These "Indians" had also broken the law, because earlier, in mid-February, there had been an arrest of Daniel Squires of Roxbury, who had violated a new law that had been passed in December which imposed heavy penalties for men meeting in disguise. Squire's arrest had proven the law had authority. Now the officials had a group of "Indians" to arrest and prosecute under the new law, but first they had to catch the them. That was no simple task. Undersheriff Osman Steele and bodies of militia roamed the area preceded by the blast of tin horns blown from every farm house window. They did round up a few suspect "Indians", but they mysteriously vanished from custody. They saw a few "Indians" who looked more like cats than men. They did find a few gowns and masks. A sample of an "Indian's" gown and mask from that time period may be viewed in the Senate House Museum in Kingston. Only a few of the men assumed to have tarred and feathered Lasher were immediately arrested. Their leader, Asa Bishop, whose "Indian" name was Black Hawk, remained hiding

in Delaware County until September. Twenty-eight other "Calico Indians" were indicted by the Ulster grand jury that spring and their trial was set for October. But most of them were still at large when the trial date came.

Five men were arrested for unlawful and felonious assembly in the Town of Roxbury on the 15<sup>th</sup>. of March, 1845, under the direction of Osman N. Steele, the Under Sheriff of Delaware County.

Zera Preston, Ezekial C. Kelly, Lewis Knapp, Anson K. Burrell and Silas Tompkins, then having each of their faces painted, discolored and concealed and otherwise disguised in a manner calculated to prevent them and each and every one of them from being identified and had thereupon been arrested and taken and confined in the jail of the said town of Delhi in the County of Delaware, to be detained until thence discharged by due course of law.<sup>259</sup>

On the 17<sup>th</sup>. day of March, 1845, at the said town of Middletown, County of Delaware an Abel Gould and divers other evil disposed persons to the number of 30 or more, as yet unknown, with force of arms at the said town of Middletown unlawfully and feloniously did assemble and gather together then and there being armed with guns, swords and other deadly weapons and did then and there march, move and ride and drive, and the said Abel Gould unlawfully and feloniously drive a certain span of horses with a load of provisions and fire arms and disguies armed as last aforesaid to and towards the Jail of the said County where the said Zera Preston and others hereinbefore named were confined in the said county upon the criminal charge aforesaid in the town of Delhi aforesaid into and through the town of Bovina in said County and from thence into the town of Stamford in said County and near the Jail of the said County of Delaware situated as aforesaid and thereby then and there at the said town of Middletown and the said town of Bovina and at the said town of Stamford forcibly and unlawfully and feloniously did

---

<sup>259</sup> *General Court Session/ #27 , p. 4*

attempt forceably to rescue and put at large to go withersoever they would the said Zera Preston and the other persons hereinbefore named from the said Jail of the said County where they were confined and detained upon the criminal charge aforesaid to the evil example of all others in the like case made and provided and against the peace of the people of the State of New York and their dignaty. J.A. Hughston, Dist. Attorney {sic}

260

These are the authorities first legal action against the "Indians".

The summer of 1845 was hot and dry. Grasses and crops failed to grow. It was at this time that an event happened which brought a fatal explosion beside the Dingle Hill Road. Moses Earle of Andes had refused to pay the \$32 of yearly rent on his farm. Delaware County was obliged to sell off enough of his cattle to raise the back rent money. The sale was scheduled for July 29th. The "Calico Indians" were there with guns tucked under their gowns. It was made plain that if any bid was received and an animal declared sold, they would shoot the animal and kill it. The animal would be paid for by a fund that the "Indians" had formed by a tax of two cents per acre on a tenant member's land. Not one bid was received and the sheriff rescheduled the sale for August 7<sup>th</sup>. If the landlords were expecting an easy victory they were misjudging the Anti-Rent cause. A day or two before the sale Moses Earle had killed two of his sheep to feed the multitude of "Calico Indians" he anticipated would come. Mrs. Earle and their butter maid, Perttena Davis, had made fresh bread and potatoes and had been prepared to add to the mutton on sale day. A large group of "Indians" were given their noon meal and they formed a large circle between the barn and the road. Their leader was young Warren Scudder of Roxbury. He was an arresting figure in black and full mask and brandished a bright sword as he aligned his men. Moses Earl brought out a flask of whiskey and each man struggled to take a swallow from under his mask, and passed the flask on down the line. The "Indians" calmed their nerves with the

---

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4 & 5

shot of whiskey and stood their sentry, waiting for the sale to begin.

Undersheriff Steele normally arrived with a posse of men in a whirl of dust from their horses, but this day he arrived only with a constable Erastus Edgerton. Sheriff More and attorney Wright had arrived earlier. Moses Earl declared he would not pay rent, but as he viewed the armed "Indians" and the sheriff, he went to the house and came back out with his purse and jestered to the sheriff to come forward. His butter maid, Perttena Davis, saw what was happening and rushed out, grabbed the purse from Earl, tucked it in her bosom, and disappeared into the house.

As soon as Steele arrived, Sheriff More and Wright went to a pasture and drove in the cattle to be auctioned. Instead of stopping at the clearing by the barn, they attempted to drive the cattle through a gate onto Dingle Hill Road. At this point William Brisbane, the Anti-Rent leader, protested. He argued the cattle could not be sold under law any place but on Moses Earle's property to satisfy unpaid rents, and not on a public highway since the official notice had stated that the sale would be held on Earl's premises. Attorney Wright went and looked at the notice posted on the side of the barn and debated the issue with the sheriff. They were aware that they should hold the sale in the clearing in front of the "Calico Indians" and that they could not hold the sale on public property. Attorney Wright however opened the bar to the roadway and proceeded to attempt to drive the cattle out. Edgerton called on all present to assist him. He drew a pistol and waved it, threatening to shoot anyone who attempted to prevent him from driving the cattle to the roadway. All that morning tension had been growing and his declaration brought forth a burst of gunfire.

Anti-Rent leaders had never suggested that their men shoot sheriffs or landlord agents. The "Calico Indians" carried guns to intimidate surveyors, writ servers, and rent collectors. They also shot cattle when sold at auctions by rent collecting sheriffs. They would pay for the animal shot from association funds, which had been collected from the 2 cents per acre assesment paid by the

290

members for such actions. "Indians" would shoot and kill the horses on which the sheriff and his company rode as they passed by on the roads that led to the auction farms. On the morning of the Moses Earle sale, a group of "Calico Indians" had been stationed on lower Dingle Hill Road with instructions that if Steele rode by with his usual large group of mounted militia, normal when he went to a forced sale, they should shoot the horses out from under them as they rode by. This action did not happen. Sheriff Steele came with only Edgerton. But now, as Edgerton flourished his pistol, and as some testified fired the first shot, the "Indians" at the farm raised their rifles and fired at the two gray horses on which Steele and Edgerton were riding. From somewhere among the "Calico Indians" two or more rifles were raised and aimed, not at the two grays, but at Osman Steele. The horses and Steele fell to the ground mortally wounded. By the heat of the day and the shelter of the mask, the action had taken the form of a deliberate murder.

Stelle was carried to the house and laid on a bed. It was evident he would not live long. Lawyer Wright sat beside the wounded man and cried. Sheriff More told Steele if Edgerton hadn't acted so rashly the "Calico Indians" wouldn't have fired. When Steele caught the eye of Moses Earle he said, "Old Man, if you had paid your rent there would have been none of this. I wouldn't have been shot." Earle replied, "I have paid rent long enough. Until I know what I pay for, I shall pay no more if I can help it. If they show me their title, I will pay every cent of the rent, but if they mean to bully me out of it I will not pay if it costs forty lives." <sup>261</sup>

The "Indians" and the crowd that had come to witness the sale all quickly dispersed and headed for their homes scattered throughout the area. Sheriff Steel died from his wound and the word traveled the valleys. In their homes, the "Indians" wondered what would happen now.

---

<sup>261</sup> PARKER, A.J., *Decisions in Criminal Cases*, 1855

Mounted militia rounded up all the "Calico Indians" they could lay their hands on, even those who were in no way connected to the Moses Earle incident. The old popular slogan of "Down with the Rent" was replaced with "Law and Order". The grand jury sat in Delhi and called hoards of witnesses. Many were former "Calico Indians" who had been sworn to secrecy. They were now willing to testify that their jailed comrades and other neighbors had taken the Anti-Rent oath and had purchased calico or paid dues to the Anti-Rent organization. However, many claimed they had not done so.

Meetings in towns all over the Anti-Rent area were held where resolutions were passed denouncing the shooting of Steele. Masks and calico gowns were burned or hidden in the attics as relics of the past. At the same time the hopes of the landlords soared as a law of January 25, 1845 had given them what seemed to be an opportunity to crush the Anti-Rent movement forever.

The authorities wasted no time in starting the court hearings. Mavis and I had visited the court house in Delhi three times searching the archives. In 1998 after the Baker Family Reunion, we stayed Monday and went for our last visit there for one more look. On entry, the County Clerk recognized us and said she had some new information for us. They now had indexed and filed all the old court hearings on the Moses Earl Case in the Anti-Rent affairs. We spent the day reading and making photocopies.

Following are records of interest and association with the Baker family and residents of the Dry Brook Area. All are presented {sic} as to the grammer, wording etc.. One must also remember the recording Clerk had no means of electronic recording and more than likely did not know shorthand. Thus, some of the testimony may not be worded exactly as spoken. However, also remember most of these people could not read or write and had not attended school, so most of the wording and presentations were probably recorded quite close to what was testified.

August 22, 1845



The first witness to be called was the lecture man, Jonathan C. Allaben. There are 3 pages of his testimony.

On Page 2 he states:

"At the time of the Sacksville battle and capture of prisoners, I saw 8 or 10 Indians from Dry Brook- They said they were going to rescue the prisoners on Saturday- I don't know that they had a baggage wagon. I heard and believe that they had come on toward Delhi."<sup>262</sup>

The next two witnesses called were John Whitson and Edward Smith of Middletown. Both men name and implicate about a dozen men, and Jehu Burr admitted he was at the Earl Sale and helped Sheriff Moore to drive up the cattle.<sup>263</sup>

August 25, 1845

The second witness called this day is John Atkins:

"I reside in Middeltown near Clovesville on the Laussatt Tract, an eject has been issued against me. Did not assemble after I was served and the order to burn the meadows, buildings or to do any injury to her property-I surrendered myself to the possee of Middletown. Do not live on leased land-(Illegible) to purchase no person has disturbed me in the possession of the land, heard no claim to the land except by the Indians. Have heard the title is not good can't tell who said so, can't tell when I joined the natives. can't answer the question Jonathan C. Allaben administered the oath 1 & 1/2 or 2 years ago, can't where it was. I met Allaben along the road & took the oath. I think the oath I took binds me. I think the Indian oath as binding as the oath I have now take. (He means the oath to tell the truth regarding his testimony). Cant tell who belong to the association,(meaning Calico Indians). Graham was chief. When Squires was arrested last spring when the Indians were at Clovesville did not know a man there. Saw a

---

<sup>262</sup> ANTI-RENT WAR TESTIMONY #8, p. 1,2 & 3

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.* pgs. 3-4 & 7

good many in disguise-went to Patawas & saw several in disguise at Harvey Keaters. Isaac Baker, Hoze Jenkins-(thinks John Tiffany & Orrin Baker-went with him-their object was to recue the prisoners at Delhi. Some said they ought to burn Delhi instead, understood they were going to Shacksville from Keaters-Met Doct. Street between his house and Keaters-Street told Wit we must hurry up for they were taken off the Indians-& they must be rescued-Street Said he had been to Keaters-Wit carried a gun as far as the turnpike & an indian took it by the name of George Platt-Hozea Jenkins came & notified Wit. Said they must all turn-out-Wit did not take his mask or dress, with him, Thoms Dury told wit. of Earls Sale-Stephen Baker asked wit for a horse-started to go to Earls-got within 1 1/2 to 2 miles of them and met Alfred Nox with a drove of sheep who told me what had happened about 2 o clock in the afternoon-only one went over with me-that was Fred Forguson-I rode Alton's horse and did not go disguised; nor did Forguson. I think Martin Dorie rode my horse was disguised-I stopped at Sloots-returned home-I did not carry any arms nor did Furguson-Soon after I met the drover I met five or six others-We were leading our horses when we heard the news-when the sheriffs force came after me I run and hid in the woods because I thought I was guilty but because I could not leave home well at that time."<sup>264</sup>

As incoherent and mixed up as this WIT (Witness) appears, he had definitely established for the court that Isaac and Orrin Baker were involved in the attempt to free the prisoners. He also attempted to establish that he, himself, was not at the Earle sale.

It was not until page 17 of the report which covered the testimony of the P.M. of August 25<sup>th</sup>. made by David P. Boughton he implicated many of the Dry Brook residents.

David P. Boughton:

---

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid*, p. 13& 14

"I reside in Dry Brook, Shandaken. Am a man of a family I was not at Earles either day. Robert Utter told me 12 or 14 went past his house to attend the sale of the Dry Brook-

Hiram Graham - Chief Bullet Hawk

Richard Clark

Thomas Dreury

Ira Baker

Stephen T. Baker

Elnathan Close

John Crook

Henry Cook

John Tiffany

Orrin Baker

William Kelley

David Hinkley

James Hays (Haynes)

Cornelius Tompkins

George Platt

I did belong to it-Warren W. Scudder administered the oath-He swore me at Fuller's tavern in the evening-of the 15th March-by the uplifted hand He swor David Hinkkley at the same time-I came out in disguise that night Graham furnished me with it. He gave me a sword-

I got to Fullers at 4 or 5 o'clock-names Hiram Graham & all above named."<sup>265</sup>

His testimony goes on for 7 more pages:

"Clark Brown, chief of Brush Ridge tribe I saw D.W. Squires at Fullers that night-He Scudder was head commander & Squires had considerable talk with him-they talked by themselves at the corner of the house. I heard the Indians were going out to Roxbury to fight the posse-In 1/2 hour Graham came to me-& asked me if I did not want to go along-

#### Oath

You do swear by thee uplifted hand-and by the penalties of your life-that you never will reveal no indian secret whatsoever-

---

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid*, p.17

Scudder after he swore me said now you are indian.

After supper ordered a march for Roses Brook-60 started-Indians started-started 8 saturday night-We went to Nathaniel Higbie's and there we staid till morning-

His son was at home-He saw many of us with bare faces-

We marched next morning to John Gemmel's-We took breakfast & dinner both- He reported that there was no danger in marching to Bloomville-Said he had got a good place to stop at, that it was one Thomas where he calculated to go- We turned to march towards Bloomville & got most to the bridge & Forman came running after us & said we had better not go into Bloomville in the night as there might be a posse there-& that we had better wheel about & go back to his house. We went back there his folks-were up shortly after we got back there, we all went in- We slept there till morning-We roused at day break on monday morning-The old man & family were up. Scudder & Forman went out the door together & were gone some time-They then told me they had sent a spy down to Delhi to see how strong we were. Nicholas Blish was the spy. came on horse back-It was thomas horse.I went straight to Scudder-& told him I start for home-Bay horse, good horse.

At 2 or 3 we formed a line Abel Gould of Middletown brought a load of provisions-He said we will march for home there were 250 to 300 indians there at Forman's/Blish reported there were 400 or 500.

Welcomed-One large tribe came about 10 A.M. they calculated that they could raise 100 in Schoharrie-they thought they would raise about 100 in Kortright-A large man there twice in the course of the day called Thomas a red faced man-He said he was glad to see so many soldiers. I saw Doct. Forman there. He said he hoped we would come down to Delhi & do our duty & take the prisoners out- Abner Thomas' Jr. when we passed up said he was in hopes they would raise force enough in Schoharrie

so that we would hear of it before we got home and come back and take the prisoners out-The company was staid at Fullers were 4 had their bundles with them & all had guns-We made no stop from Hull's till we got to Nicholas Blishes We met Elder James Mead-He asked what luck we had I told him we could not raise strength enough to go to Delhi. Mead said well I am sorry-& we

went on-We saw his son Jacob-We went from Blishes to Vandermaks store-he treated us-his clerk did-Thomas Kelley-I saw Allaben 3rd day after I got home-I saw him at Asa Griffin's Store-Asa or David Decker were there-Allaben asked me who went with me over to Bloomville-I told him-He asked me what was the reason the rest of the natives of Dry Brook did not go with us, I told him I did not know-Allaben said he did not want any cowards who were afraid to go.that they must give up their dress & we will put in new ones-I have heard Allben preach down on rent 3 times twice at Asa Griffin's Store once in Dry Brook. At Dry Brook-Allaben said he would not encourage them to wear their dress but if they did wear them to be careful not to be caught persons at Dry Brook meeting

Herman Landon  
Hiram Graham  
John Atkins  
Orrin Baker  
John Tiffany  
Friend P. Ferguson  
Stephen T. Baker  
Thomas Deurey

This meeting was last spring-since I was over at Bloomville-the three men

Henry Crook  
John Tiffany  
Stephen T. Baker  
All armed and disguised  
Armed with rifles"<sup>266</sup>

This ended his testimony,but implicated many of his comrade "Indians". The Moses Earle sale had only been held on August 7<sup>th</sup>. and now, by August 25<sup>th</sup>., the Bakers and neighbors at Dry Brook were all considered suspects.

The next testimony which included Dry Brook residents took place a week later on September 2, 1845. The authorities were moving swiftly.

---

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid*, pgs. 18-24

Noah E. Bouton- residing in Ulster Co. testifies-

Reputed Indians Hiram Graham Chief

Henry Crook

John Crook

Thomas Dury 2nd Chief

Martin Dury

George Platt

Cornelious Tompkins

William Kelly

John Aitkins

Peter Kettle (Kittle)

John Parsal

"my brother in law, Joseph Todd, said that he had seen a shirt which was cut with a bullet & he thought by the direction it must be lodged in his left shoulder-Todd lives in Green Co. about 3 mile back from Horace Ellis-he not say how he came to see the bosom of the shirt-thinks the wounded man lives in Lexington three or three half miles from Mat. Griffins-have never heard J.C. Allaben address meetings Last spring James Hayes came and borrowed my gun & said he wanted to go a rabbiting, rabbit hunting-he was gone some days I suppose that they had been over to Delhi About the time Hayes must have returned I saw five or six Indians came along there-Orrin Baker can probably tell who those Indians were & who others were."<sup>267</sup>

Again the Dry Brook people have been named in the testimony.

Another testimony was made on Tuesday, September 2, 1845:

"Samuel A. Close- reside on Dry Brook, son of Ezra Close. I have worked for my brother since last April 8th. I am 25 years old. Jonathan C. Allaben swore me in, by my uplifted hand, was not to reveal any secrets. was at Vandermarks when I was swore in, Thomas Dury was there, he was chief No. 2 of Dry Brook tribe

---

<sup>267</sup> ANTI-RENT WAR TESTIMONY #14 p. 7

about a year ago. i cant read nor write. The dress was at my brother Edmonds & mask & I went & got it in the evening. got a dress of my brother Eli. I paid nothing for the dress understood it came from the funds of the Soc. first appeared General training day last fall, went down to Col. Dimmicks bridge-Hiram Graham, Thomas Deury, John Crook amd Henry Crook. The horns started us out.

The next time we were out was at Dan Squires'-

Graham's tribe

John Crook

Henry Crook

Thomas Deury

Hiram Grahamchief

Ira BakerWilliam Kelly

Stepehn BakerDavid Hinkley

Elnathan CloseJames Hayes

John TiffanyGeorge Platt

Orrin Baker

Nicholas Blish told us Corbin was tarred and feathered & we could go home.

I went down to Shandaken in disguise last spring, below Smith, along last March.

went along with Hiram Graham

Ths Deuryrifle

John Crook

Ira Baker

Stephen T. Baker

Elnathan Close (espontoon-spear with hook) James Hayes  
gun

I carried a tomahawk, might have been 5 or 6 guns, more or less. Horns blowed at Deurys and I went up there & he persuaded me to go & I put the disguise & I went they said the posse from Kingston was turning up. went down below Humphrey's went below Wispals 2, 3 or 4 miles, found a lot of Indians at Brookstreets, 15 or 20, out of Townsend Hollow, Clark Burns was chief up there, said he was there, chief of Brush Ridge tribe. A few days after I heard the possee were in Beaver Dam,

heard horns blow, didn't go. Heard Thomas Deury out with Indians reinstates Beadle."<sup>268</sup>

This testimony placed the Baker boys at the Corbin affair and the next testimony implicating the Dry Brook people occurred on September 3, 1845 when David Hinkley was called to testify.

David Hinkley: "I was sworn in by Warren Scudder last February at Fullers Tavern in Roxbury the night after the Indians were taken at Sackville. Orrin Baker gave me dress, Erastus Duvry the cap the same day before I was sworn. Hiram Graham went up to Fullers & was chief Saturday night we came to Higbys-Sunday night we stayed to Gemmels-David Boughton was sworn in at Fullers-Alfred Alston, William Vandervort were sworn at the same time-I had John Todds Rifle-

W. Scuddersword

Orrin Baker

James Haysgun

David Boughtonsword & gun

Ira Bakergun

John Crookgun

Henry Crookgun

Clark Brown

Wm Townsendgun

Haynes Denton

Dennison Bakergun

William Tompkins"<sup>269</sup>

The next testimony also came on September 3, 1845 by fellow Dry Brook resident James Haynes. This was the first time the recording clerk had the Haynes name correct. All references to a James Hayes should be read as Haynes, a Baker neighbor living in Haynes Hollow.

---

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid*, p. 15

<sup>269</sup> ANTI-RENT WAR TESTIMONY #15, p. 12



James Haynes: "lives in Dry Brook-Would not take the oath-only promised I would be an indian-Graham furnished me with disguise-the first time I came out was at Corners-Went up to Keator's the same day-from there to Fullers-eat there-there were some sworn in there-from Fuller's we came to Higby's and stais there all night-on Sunday night we staid at Gemmel's-took supper there-Came on in night to the Corners-or opposite-in a large white house-went to the bridge when some one called us back-50 or 60 masked men staid there-Abel Gould bro't one load of provisions-on our return we passed, no we met two waggons (James and Simon Blish) with waggons containing baggage and food. Dont know why we didn't come to Delhi-the head chief said we could'nt come for the want of more force-said he meant to come and take out of jail the prisoners-if he had force enough-Blishs tirmed about at Higby's-crossed over to Meeker's Hollow-staid there all night-met a man;the chief asked to stay there all night-the (Explain the Broomstick business as before sworn to)

Martin Duvry, Hiram Graham-these two told me they were at the Earle Sale, and said the following were there,

Cornelius Tompkins  
Stephen Baker  
Ira Baker  
William Kelly  
John Persell  
Peter F. Kettle  
William Vandervort  
John Crook

when we came to the corners the following persons came

David Bouton  
Dennman Baker [no doubt meant Dennison]  
Ira Baker  
Haines Denton  
John Crook  
George Platt  
Henry Crook  
John Brown  
Clark Brown  
William Vandervort  
Alfred Akerly

Hiram Graham

Graham requested me to go to the Earle Sale the first day"<sup>270</sup>

Court continued on Thursday September 4, 1845.

Alfred Akerly testified: "I live in Dry Brook in Ulster-Martin Kelly swore mein-Graham was my chief & furnished me with disguise and dress-I came as far as Fuller's on the way to Delhi in March last when I was told the Law by Nat Higbie & I faigned myself sick & went back & never have been disguised since-I think there was at the Earle Sale.[he is saying he was not at the Earle Sale but thinks trhere were indians in disguies there]"<sup>271</sup>

Squire L. Knapp: "I live in Shavertown-I was at the Earles Sale in Andes on the 7th August-I heard there was goin to be opposition-Philip Barnhart told me"<sup>272</sup>

Coonrod Crook: "I live in DryBrook my sons are reputed to be Indians."<sup>273</sup>

Orrin Baker: " Martin Kelly swore me in as an Indian-I have never been out in Disguise but once & that was at Squires last fall."<sup>274</sup>

It is evident that Orrin had not been in the Court Room the days prior to his testimony, and did not know that many of his neighbors statements had placed him, on many occasions, with the Indians.

William Tompkins: "James Blish swore me in and gave me dress & cap, I was out in disguised the day Corbin was tarred. I was

---

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid*, pgs. 14-15 & 16

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid*, p 3

<sup>272</sup> *Ibid*, p 4

<sup>273</sup> *Ibid*, p 4

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid*, p 4

near Noah Dimmick when Indians were taken at Shacksville-I went to Harvey Keators from there to Fullers-thence N Hibbies sunday went to Gemmels-from there to Furmans went as far as Gemmels disguised-I had a rifle I was not out to the Earls Sale. I was at home in the meadow with Nicholas Blish-John Craft-Birch Hammond-Ezekiel Kelly-Luther Bellows."<sup>275</sup>

Clark Ellis: "Martin Kelly swore me in as an Indian-James Blish furnished me with a disguise, Hiram Graham was my chief-my name was "Jumbo"

Stephen BakerHiram Grame

Orin BakerClark Ellis

John CrookThs Dury

Henry Crook

Wit- Started for Bloomville Saturday 7 or 8 o clock

armed and disguised had a rifle

Hram GrahamDenison Baker

Ths DuryGeorge Platt

Ira BakerJohn Brown

John CrookClark Brown

Henry CrookWm. Vanderwort

Elnathan ClarkWm. Tompkins

Clark Ellis (continued) Staid one night at N Higbies one at Gemmels & one at Formans understand Nic. Blish had gone to

---

<sup>275</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4

*Clark Ellis-Martin Kelly swore me in as an Indian-James Blish furnished me with a disguise, Hiram Graham was my chief-my name was "Jumbo" others-*

*Stephen BakerHiram Grame*

*Orin BakerClark Ellis*

*John CrookThs Dury*

*Henry Crook*

*wit. Started for Bloomville Saturday 7 or 8 o clock*

*armed and disguised had a rifle-Came to Bloomville-*

*Hram GrahamDenison Baker*

*Ths DuryGeorge Platt*

*Ira BakerJohn Brown*

*John CrookClark Brown*

*Henry CrookWm Vandervort*

*Elnathan ClarkHenry Morse*

*Wm TompkinsBen Jenkins*

*Smth JenkinsEben Morse* <sup>275</sup> *Ibid*, p. 6

Schoharrie after forces Abel Gould had a team loaded with provisions at Bloomville

Johnathan Ballard Peter Tiffany

Nathan Travis Darius Jenkins

James Hill Joseph Morse <sup>276</sup>

John Hull: "Don't belong to A.R. Assn-never  
(note: attached to the previous page is a long narrow strip of paper on which the following names are listed)

CORNERS

Henry Crook

John Crook

Ira Baker

Ths Dury

Stephen T. Baker

George Platt

Hiram Graham

Richard Roberts

Elnathan D. Close

Eliphlet King

Haynes Denton

Richard Clark

David Hallock

James Denton

Martin Dury

Morris Swain

George Garston

Hiram Griffin

Nicholas Blish

Martin Kelly"<sup>277</sup>

John Ferguson: "Lives in Middletown-Belongs to A.R. Assn. sworn in by Martin Kelly-a year ago last July-was last disguised a year ago last August-I put the disguise on to keep the flies off!!! I went

---

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid*, pgs. 7 & 7a

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid*, p 7a

down to Shandaken the first time I was out-to drive off the  
surveyors-Had provisions on the road, at Mr. Kelly's-there were 12  
014 Indians in our company

Hiram Graham, Chief  
Henry Crook  
Alfred Akerly  
Orin Baker  
Stephen D. Baker  
Ira T. Baker  
John Tiffany  
John W. Atkins  
Nicholas Blish (not disguised)"<sup>278</sup>

The trial goes on without any Baker being named, but on  
Thursday, September 11, 1845, the Dry Brook community was  
again named as being in association with the Anti-Rent War.

Eben Merwin: "Lives in Ulster County-Wit horse was taken out of  
his barn the night of the 6th of Aug-& was not brought back-the  
Thursday night after- distance from Wit home to sale 15 miles-  
does not know who had the horse-Alfred George told Wit he saw  
his horse with two Indians on it. at or near David Osterhouts-did  
not ask who the Indians were- Luzern Riderhd Wit. gun at the  
time of the Sale-Wit saw John Tiffany the 7th August at home-  
Has heard went to the sale-

Wm. Kelly  
L.T. Baker  
H Graham  
Martin Dury  
Ths Dury  
Ira Baker  
John Pershall  
Peter F. Kettle"<sup>279</sup>

On Friday September 12, 1845

---

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid*, p. 8

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10

Peter F. Kettle: "Sworn Lives in Shandaken Ulster Co. The day that Steele was murdered I was mowing with John persall-was not in Andes that day John Persall is reputed to be an indian also John Crook and others already mentioned- I am an indian- have been sworn J.C. Allabinn Swore in Wit, at Clovesville in the street - above Vandemark Store Witness wanted to be an indian, wanted to See what it was little, lives about 1/2 a mile from Eber Merwins owns a gray mare about 9 years She was not fit to ride to Earls in Andes that day as she had some shoes off was not out at Andes at the time Steel and Parker was at Andes at Huntings Saw John Pearceal Tuesday of last week at the Huntings Saw John Pearceal Tuesday of last week at the Jarvis house between Dry Brook and Beaverkill in the woods-

Hiram Graham<Stephen Baker<

John Persall<Ira T. Baker<

Wm Kelly<Henry Crook<

John Crook

was there- Wit Staid there 2 nights - Graham, Kelly & Stephen Baker left the rest of the Company Has staid out in the woods Several nights - Wit Lives at Persalls - has not been out since last fall John Crook was taken in Kingston left home so as not to be taken - Went with John Atwood to Kingston - Staid at Hinkly's Saturday Sunday & Monday nights - Friday night at Moses Wislows. last week Staid at David Roberts Thursday night - Wednesday night at John Tiffanys Staid at the old Jarvis house 2 nights week before last - those marked with < above were with him - was at home the day Steele was murdered"<sup>280</sup>

John Crook con.: "Started at Bloomville last spring - came as far as Fullers - was disguised - Martin Kelly Swore Wit as an indian The committee furnished me with disguise Graham gave it to Wit. James Blish gave Wit. a pistol - Has heard:Hiram Graham

Martin Dury

Stephen Baker

---

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid*, p. 14

Cornelious Tompkins was at the Earle Sale"<sup>281</sup>

I have listed only Witness Testimony that had future implications to the Family Baker and associates living in the Dry Brook area. The process had now been going on for over a month.

On September 24 and September 25, 1845, the Court took action. Indictments were brought against the accused in two lengthy documents. I chose only to extract part of these documents, as the language is very repetitive, and is not needed to inform you of the outcome. In total, the two documents are identified as Account No, OT/IND-4, which deals with the "Indians" and OT/IND-5 with the Indictment of Moses Earle for Murder.<sup>282</sup>

On September 24<sup>th</sup>. the judges of Delaware County, along with the jury which was composed of the following: Orrin Griffin, Fitch Ford, Gersham H. Bradley, Platt Townsend, James W. Knapp, Daniel S. Smith, Samuel Scudder, Edmund Crocker, David M. Smith, Warren Dimmick, Amasa Birch, John Townsend, Abraham Shell, Reuben S. Smith, Milton Bostwick, Gabriel S. Mead, Edwin Smith, John Axtell, all good and lawful men of the County of Delaware, being jurors sworn and charged to inquire for the people of the State of New York were called upon to render a verdict.

The proceedings cover many pages which I shall condense, as District Attorney, J. A. Hughston, was a lawyer who repeated his statements over and over again.

First, Moses Earle had to be charged with not paying his rent.

In brief form: "Moses Earle on the seventh day of August in 1845, possessed occupied and enjoyed and for a long time previous thereto, to wit three years next proceeding the said seventh day of

---

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid*, p. 15

<sup>282</sup> *Anti-Rent War Indictments, Delaware County, NY Court House*

August 1845 had possessed occupied & enjoyed a certain lot or farm of land situated in the town of Andes in the said County of Delaware which said lot or farm of land possessed as aforesaid by said Moses Earle, was subject to an annual rent thereon due from and payable by him the said Moses Earl to one Charlotte D. Verplanck- And the said Charlotte D. Verplanck by John Allen her agent for the purpose of collecting the rent due thereon to wit the sum of sixty-four Dollars." This statement goes on in repetitive style to outline the reason and process for a sale to collect said back date, which is all on file in the Delhi Court House for those interested.

On page 14 the Jurors are presented five men whom they are charging with the murder along with the unknown "Calico Indians". "Baxter Travis, Lawrence VanDusen, John VanSteenburgh, Levi Warren and Henry D. Wickham, along with other Evil disposed persons to the Jurors unknown."

[ I will not list all the Attorney statement here, but it follows identically with what you will find under the charges of the Evil disposed persons, unknown, which follows.]

The next issue he deals with is the "Calico Indians":

"And the Jurors aforesaid upon their oath aforesaid do further present that on the said seventh day of August 1845 - at the town of Andes in the said County of Delaware divers evil disposed persons, to the Jurors aforesaid unknown, to the number of ten or more, with force of arms did unlawfully wickedly wilfully & feloniously assemble & gather together - and did then & there cover & conceal their each & every of their persons, as to prevent themselves from being identified - and did then & there arm themselves with swords dirks guns rifles pistols & other offensive weapons. [ He goes on after repeating much of this on the next page with the following.] The said other Evil disposed persons to the Jurors aforesaid unknown so being then and there assembled together as aforesaid, and so having their each & every of their faces covered & concealed, & their & each & every of their persons so disguised as aforesaid, and being so armed as



aforesaid unlawfully wilfully wickedly & feloniously intended to pervert & obstruct Justice, and to prevent the due administration of the laws - did unlawfully wickedly wilfully & feloniously, conspire combine confederate & agree together wickedly, wilfully unlawfully forcibly & feloniously to resist the further Execution of the said process & distree warrent by said Sheriff"

A lengthy statement follows regarding the murder charge:

"and that they, the said Evil disposed persons to the Jurors unknown, a certain gun of the value of ten Dollars then and there loaded and charged with gun powder & one leaden bullet, which they, the said persons to the Jurors unknown then and there had, and held to against & upon said Osman N. Steele, then and there feloniously wilfully & of their malice aforethought did shoot & discharge and that they the said persons to the Jurors unknown, with the leaden bullet aforesaid out of the gun aforesaid then and there by force of the gun powder aforesaid, did discharge send forth and shoot- [I skip some further explanations], did strike and penetrate & wound, passing thence obliquely through the body of said Osman N. Steele and making its exit from the body of the said Osman N. Steele. [Skipping more explanation] -for the space of six hours then next ensuing did languish & languishing did live: and of which said mortal wound the said Osman

N. Steele on the said seventh day of August One Thousand Eight Hundren & forty five at said town of Andes in the said County of Delaware, did die: and so the Jurors aforesaid upon their oath aforesaid do Say that the said Evil disposed persons whose names are to the Jurors unknown, him the said Osman N. Steele in the manner & by the means aforesaid, feloniously wilfully and of their malice aforethought did kill and murder, against the form of the Statute in such case made & provided, and against the peace of the People of the State of New York and their dignity" We now have the "Indians" charged with murder !

The District Attorney went on for several more pages and on the 4th Count he also charged Moses Earle in the same fashion as he had the "Indians".

Two were sentenced to hang at Delhi, one being Van Steenbergh and some published reports say a man named O'Conner, yet in the records I have from Delhi there is no mention of an O'Conner. The two hanging charges were reduced to life imprisonment. Moses Earle was also sentenced for murder, which on 1845, was reduced to manslaughter in the 1<sup>st</sup>. degree and was sentenced to life imprisonment. After a change in the state officers in Albany, which you will find reading on, this was also amended and he later returned to his farm and died there in 1863. Perttena Davis was still making butter for him. About sixty others were given sentences ranging from terms in prison to fines, though most of the sentences were suspended.

The convicted men and all Anti-Renters had good reason for feeling despair on September 25, 1845. Then the family Baker had some worries. Many of the former "Indians" had broken their oath of silence and many of Bakers had been named in their testimonies. The elders of the family Baker all gathered together after September 25<sup>th</sup>. and had some serious decisions to make. Were they going to be imprisoned or fined because of the testimonies at Delhi? They probably all met at mother Sally's log cabin. She was a widow, 61 years old, with 4 children at home, son Orrin 27, and three daughters Sarah, 22, Jane 19, and Emaline 14 years old. In another house was son Stephen T. and Delight with children, Nelson 12, Louise 9, Jane 6, another Orrin L. 3 and a baby, Elizabeth Ann. Ira (38) was in another house with his family. However, the Shandaken family had no records of his members. I had only the 1840 census. There he was named the head of house with a wife of 30 to 40 years and two daughters 15 to 20 years, and a young male under five years of age. It was not until much later, when I found him on a Minnesota census in 1880, that I could name his family. Ira, by the 1840 census, was too young to have two daughters 15 to 20 years of age, and then in his home was this young boy under five years of age, and his wife is in an age bracket ten years older than him. This tells us he had married a widow with two teenaged daughters. Isaac, now 41 and his family, Dennison 23, Elias 15, Abram Charles 10, Mary 8, and Stephen J., 2 years old. They had heard about the land

opening up by the government in the west, which was rich prairie land, with few trees and no mountains. I think the conversation went something like this. Isaac remarks that he had come back to help care for his mother when his brother Stephen, Sr. had died. Lyman had filled Stephen's shoes until his death four years ago, and now Orrin at 27 was assisting his mother with the family.

"Our families are barely able to exist, even with all working together. None of us know what the court may do to those of us that have not been fined or imprisoned, from our actions in the Anti-Rent War incidents."

Should he consider leaving, not so much because of his concerns of any future consequences for his activity in the "Indians" activities, as he had not been out to many activities, but with consideration that if his family left, the farm would have one less family to support. He and his family would go west, and see what the land situation was.

Ira, who had been very active in the activities of the "Indians" and had been named in many of the testimonies, said he feared he would be imprisoned, or maybe even worse, that if his uncle Isaac's family was going west, he would like to consider going also. His teenaged daughters, however, now in their twenties, said they are not interested in leaving with their father-in-law. Their mother also is not in favor if the daughters were not coming with them. Ira could not leave without his wife to care for his young son, so he conceded that he would then have to stay. Stephen and Delight, with an infant baby, and her mother Jane, living alone near by, said they would stay and assist his younger, unmarried, brother Orrin, and mother Sally with the family and the work on the farm. Aunt Rachel Canniff, who lived in the area, had come to sit in on the family decision. She offered that if Ira was worried about imprisonment and his family would not leave with him that she would take the young boy and care for him until Stephen and Delight felt they could also go west. Then, he could go with them and join his father in Wisconsin at that time. Ira, his wife, and daughters agree to the separation, and all the rest of the family all agreed. With all due haste, Ira, alone, and

Isaac, with his family left everything behind and secretly departed. They probably went go up the Scoharrie River route and took the Erie Canal west to the Great Lake route to Rubicon and Neosha, Wisconsin. There will be more on their lives in a future chapter, as they live near Alexander Gillett mentioned in Chapter 5.

As preparations for the hangings at Delhi went forward, actions of a very different kind were underway throughout the state. The leaders of the Anti-Rent movement organized a different approach to the problem. In November an election would be held. The voters would have a chance to call for a constitutional convention which could consider many reforms and among them would be the issue of land tenure. The people would have a chance to send new representatives to the legislature. The new push was to get out the vote. On election day the constitutional convention was overwhelmingly authorized and more Anti-Rent men than ever were elected. News of the election returns reached the Anti-Rent counties. Bonfires were lit and tin horns were brought out of their hiding places blown in triumph. Hope again returned to the tenant farmers of New York State.

Some landlords still tried to hang on to their titles and rents. Others were more willing to consider it wise to sell their lands, as the low cost land which was opening in the west might have left them with property they could not sell. Among this group were two of the old Hardenbergh Patent Chancellor's grandsons, Eugene Augustus and Montgomery Livingston, who owned immense tracts of lands at Woodstock, Olive, and Shandaken. They were among the Hardenbergh Patent landlords who had offered some of their land to their tenants before the death of Osman Steele. The affects of all the years of depredation by the landlords was evident by the condition of the farms in the area. The farms of Dry Brook and others in Shandaken clearly displayed that the residents were only concerned about the day to day existence. They took what they could from the land for survival. They had little income and lived a simple life. Their concern for the future was evident by the condition of their homes, and lean-to outbuildings. Paint was an unknown commodity and today many of the old barns still stand without

unpainted. On our first meeting with Louise Flood and her mother, Gertrude Lamb Haynes, they made the statement, "Our ancestors lived on the mountain and were as poor as church mice."

The mountains surrounding them were covered with trees which provided fuel and lumber provided good subsistence after they had cleared some of the land. On a whole the ancestors in Shandaken, though crudely housed, ate heartily and cheaply. Deer, bear, and fish from the Dry Brook, along with vegetables they could raise, and probably some eggs from a few chickens and milk from the cows, provided their daily needs. They, however, had to yearn to get out of their log cabins and lean-to out buildings, as the elders among them remembered the homes they had left behind in Jersey, Connecticut, and Massachusetts.

Life continued with a smaller Baker clan, there on the mountainside after the Anti-Rent War. We located no documentation until the 1850 census. Living as adjoining neighbors we found: "Family # 336 as Charles Hinkley a 71 year old male with wife Hester and a daughter Elizabeth age 12. Family # 337 was Delight Baker's mother Jane Crooke, as a widow 61 years old. Family #338 was Stephen T. Baker Age 38 and wife Delia, (Delight) age 37, Son Nelson, age 16, Lorenzo, age 13, (later verified this is Louise), Jane, age 11, Orrin, age 8 and Eliza A., age 5. Family # 339 is Orrin Baker, age 30. wife Eunice age 25, her mother Sarah, age 60 and Emaline age 19, (This is Orrin's youngest sister). Next door at family # 340 is Alfred Ackley, age 39."

The end of the Anti-Rent War gave the family the opportunity to at last be free of the landlord's agent. Orrin procured the property defined as the Sally Baker property from the Laussat heirs discussed in an earlier chapter. The courthouse in Kingston also produced a document dated November 8, 1852 whereby he purchased the Rider property from his wife's family. It was a five-acre tract of land with all the buildings. This document was witnessed by Stephen T. Baker using his "mark", an "X". Sarah also signed by her "mark".

This meant they could not write. Luzern and Eunice did sign their names. For me, this document established that Stephen T. was still at Shandaken in the fall of 1852. Several more transactions were recorded at later dates for Orrin Baker land transactions. Of interest to this family is the recording on July 25, 1890 where Orrin sold to Orrin L., his son, 64 acres for five hundred dollars. Another recording done by Orrin L. established the cemetery on the Old Baker Farm as a deeded property from the Whipple in-law family for the sum of \$1.00 for one-half an acre. Later another one-half of an acre was added to the cemetery.

The next recorded information located was in the 1855 census of New York. It was of particular interest as we could then establish several things. First, at residence #51 was Stephen T., my great, great-grandsire and Delight and family still at Shandaken. All members of the family were there, just five years older than on the federal census of 1850. At residence #47 was Orrin and Eunice, now married, with a daughter Sarah, three years old and a one month old baby identified as Lusindey. In their household was mother, Sally, 71 years, and her youngest daughter, Emaline, 22 years old. At residence #37 we found Abram Canniff, age 74, and wife Rachel, age 70. She was the former Rachel Baker, sister of Isaac, born in Massachusetts. However, the most important listing on this census was in the Canniff home. There was Lony Baker, age 9 years. When I observed this, I said how can Rachel Canniff have a grandchild named Baker? She no doubt had told the enumerator that this child was her father, Jonathan's, grandchild, but the entry was made as her grandchild. This confirms the young boy in Ira's 1840 census record as his son, being cared for by his great-aunt, waiting for the time he could join his father, Ira, in Wisconsin. He was nearly two years old when his father left. All this information on Ira will be confirmed in a future chapter, when we find Ira and his son in Minnesota in 1880. While looking at the New York state census of 1855 some other information substantiated family records. Orrin and Eunice now had six children. Sarah Ann at 13, Lucinda at 10, Orin L. at 6, Luzern listed as 5 and 8/12, indicating Orin L. was near 7 years of age, Ida 1 and 1/12th, and also in the household was Eunice's mother, Sarah Rider, age 77, a

314

widow who had been married once and who was the mother of two children. Also in the household was Eunice's brother, Luzern J., a forty-three year old, unmarried, brother-in-law. While I am recording census information, I will also relate to the last year we searched Shandaken Township. This was in the 1870 federal census. Here we found Orrin, age 52, Eunice, age 48, Sarah, age 18, Lucinda, age 15, Orin L., age 11, Luzern, age 8, Ida, age 6, Osiah, age 4, and Sarah Rider, age 82. You will note that Louise, their last child, is not enumerated, as she was not born until October 16, 1870.

Jonathan's son, Abraham, has left us with some unanswered questions. His family was still at Middletown on the 1850 census, with the family you will find listed in the Descendants List at the conclusion of this history. We did locate son Lewis at Shandaken on the 1865 New York state census. He was on the 1850 census at Middletown, with a wife Sarah and 7 month old child, George. He was again on the 1865 census at Shandaken with wife Sally, (which is not an error, as Sally was a typical name used for Sarah in the area at that time), son George, age 10, Warren, age 8, Emily, age 6, Orson A., age 4, and Mary Ellen, age 6 months of age. For any person who descends from Abraham we have left blank pages at the end of this history where you can supplement this book with your own family notes.

The struggle to survive is described in "Life in the Dry Brook in 1867". On a crisp, October day in 1867, Mrs. Eunice Rider Baker left her hillside home in Rider Hollow, made her way over a trail to the present Warren Todd farm, then picked up the Old Tappan road around Harmon's (now know as Hiram's) Knob, reaching shortly her destination in Haynes Hollow. Her purpose was to get a special pattern for weaving a bedsheet from Mrs. Margaret Rodgers Haynes, widely known for her skills in this field. In fact, a handsome blanket woven by her is now one of the choice possessions of John O'Kelly. After a cup o' tea and - of great importance-an exchange of news, Eunice started her walk back home. All of this was part of her responsibility for providing warmth for her family. A section of the sheet she made is still in the possession of her granddaughter, Mrs. Edith Whipple White.

Harvest time was over when, one day in 1867, William Graham set out from his home at the foot of Eagle Mountain, a 100 pound bag of buckwheat on each shoulder, en route to a grist mill in Griffin's Corners (Fleischmann's). Family legend has it that when a neighbor referred to "such a heavy load", the rugged settler replied, "Oh no! When tired, I put one bag down, go on a piece, and rest, going back to get it." Thus, he met part of his responsibility for providing food for the family, a provision that had to be at any cost.

Along with farming, the Seager family, by 1867, was operating "the first house of entertainment" in the valley. The "kindly hospitality" of the house is warmly attested to in the Registry of Guests of the Balsam Lake Club House. Some quotations from New York City folk who came to tramp these woods, hunting and fishing, show the travel problems of the epoch. "6/16/67 Left Pine Hill 8 A.M. Arrived Seagers's 11:15. The road is rather better and shorter than via Arkville. On over the mountain to Balsam Lake, 45 minutes." Another- "8/5/67. Roads viler than ever . . . walked from Seager's to Balsam Lake via footpath." "11/5/67. Team of Gray's by way of Seager's through foot of snow on Graham (now know as Old South.) Had to cut a fallen tree."

In addition to the limited farming of the day, single and hoop making engaged the attention of some of the settlers. Some local men were employed in the cooper shop which produced firkins, tubs, and barrels, and in the tin shop which made buckets and cooking utensils. However, lumbering was most vital to the life of the community. So, by 1867, there were several sawmills. The first "privilege approved" one, located just below where the church now stands, was built and operated by Lysander C. Tubbs. In 1867 the Dry Brook Methodist Episcopal Church was built. It was built on the land of L.C. Tubbs who agreed to give a deed for said land as staked out by Judson Haynes and Hiram D. Cook. The church was to be built after the plan of the Pine Hill Church, or about the same, being three feet longer with a steeple ready and purposely made for a bell. The bell

316



never became a reality until 1955 when Dry Brook inherited the bell from the Arena Methodist Church, which was about to be swallowed up by the approaching waters of the Pepecton Reservoir on the East Branch of the Delaware River, below Margaretville.<sup>283</sup>

You will remember that Orrin and Eunice had purchased her family's property from her parents on November 8, 1852, witnessed by Stephen J. before he left for Wisconsin. They thereby had increased their holdings and gave evidence that they were going to carry on with their lives. Mother Sallery Thompkins Baker died sometime in 1860 and was the first to be buried in the Baker Cemetery. She was 74.

We have provided blank pages at the end of these Chronicles for the families of Orrin and Eunice as well as Ira and Isaac and other families to add to this history with their own notes and pedigree extensions.

At the same period of time that the Baker Family was residing in New Jersey and the Catskills another family which was to become a part of our family tree was living along the Mohawk River in upstate New York. My aunt, Nellie Baker, had told her daughters Carol Mayda and Margaret that they should read "Drums Along The Mohawk", as this was a story that dealt with happenings of their ancestors. Our next chapter we will relate to this part of our history.

Figure 18-01: road sign at Upper Dingle Hill Road near  
Andes, New York

Figure 18-02: bronze plaque on Upper Dingle Hill Road at  
site of Moses Earl Sale, August 7, 1845.

---

<sup>283</sup> LIFE IN THE DRY BROOK 1867 p. 4 -5 and p. 10  
*This footnote covers the last four paragraphs.*



# 19

## UPPER MOHAWK VALLEY AND FORT HERKIMER

The family Baker and other English families were the predominant settlers in the western parts of Ulster and Delaware Counties. The area inland on the Mohawk River was settled predominantly by Palatine families from Germany. My maternal great-grandmother was Mary Elizabeth Woolever, who originated from this area, according to the history of the family that my aunt Nellie had learned from her mother, who was a daughter of Mary Elizabeth. We therefore began our first genealogical search at Fonda (formerly called Conajoharie).

As this was the very start of our search process, and being beginners in the field, we searched for Bakers with no success. We then tried Gilletts and had little success. The next name we looked for was Godding and again we had no success. The next family name searched was Bishop and this proved somewhat informative. At least we thought so. We then turned to Woolever and at last our efforts proved rewarding. Why we spent time on the other names I cannot tell you. It was just that these other families meant more to me as I was familiar with these names and Woolever was actually not of my knowledge until we looked at my grandmother's parents. The search continued, and the finding of a History of Herkimer County proved highly informative.

Biographical sketches of the Palatine Families:  
The Welleven Family or Wolleavers!

This name is found written Wolleben and Wohleban in the statement of the heads of Palatine families on the westside of the Hudson River in 1710.<sup>284</sup>

"Nicholas W., the patentee in Burnetsfield, who was also one of the patentees in Staley's 1st and 2nd tracts, died in 1773, leaving six sons, Henry, Peter, Richard, John, Abraham and Jacob; and six daughters, Catherine wife of Frederick Shoemaker, Mary Sophia the wife of Peter Flagg, Elizabeth who married Frederick Schute, Lany who married with Frederick Bellinger and Hannah the wife of John Emgie (or Empie). Empie was a Tory and went to Canada with his family. Richard, John, Peter and Abraham were in the Oriskany Battle. The two former were killed and the two latter returned. Peter was slightly wounded."<sup>285</sup>

"Nicholas Wollever, from whom I, Nathaniel S. Benton, had this account of the family, stated that he was the son of Peter and that he was born August 1st, 1769 and was now nearly 85 years old. He relates that his father, Peter, was born March 9, 1732 and died November 17, 1829, having attained the age of 97 years and 8 months. Peter had been taken prisoner during the French War in 1757 and was sent to England for exchange. Nicholas also told him he had been at the Mill in Little Falls when it was attacked and burned by a party of the enemy, which Nicholas assured him was June 1782, and he had made his escape."<sup>286</sup>

"Peter Wollever lived on a farm at Manhiem, since known as the Christy place, which he hired from Joseph Brant, the Mohawk Chief. Brant sent word to him in 1777 that he would come and tomahawk him if he did not leave the farm immediately. Peter

---

<sup>284</sup> Benton, Nathaniel S., *A History Of Herkimer County Including The Upper Mohawk Valley from the Earliest Period To The Present Time* 1856

Chapter VIII BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE PALATINE FAMILIES  
THE WELLEVEN FAMILY, or WOLLEAVERS

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>286</sup> *Ibid.*

then moved to Fort Herkimer with his family, in the fall of 1777, after the Oriskany battle, where he remained until the close of the war. My informant stated, his father once borrowed money from General Herkimer to pay the rent to Brant. He goes on to say that his father Peter had three sons who attained the age of manhood. Nicholas, John and Henry. His daughters were, Elizabeth, wife of Henry Shoemaker, Catherine the wife of Garret Van Slyke. Her father was John Van Slyke, who was killed on Fink's Flats during the war, Susan, the wife of Jacob Edick, Hannah, who married a Mr. Furman, and Mary, now living who married a Mr. White and Eva, the wife of Stanton Fox."<sup>287</sup>

"Abraham Wollever, one of the patentee's sons, was taken prisoner, in October, 1781, with Henry Staring near Fort Herkimer. Soon after he was taken, he was knocked down, tomahawked, scalped by his captors and left. The enemy with their other prisoner, Starling, pursued their course towards Oneida. Abraham survived his horrid treatment, was out for two nights, his feet having been very much frozen, and near sunset of the third day after his capture was brought to the fort. He lived a number of years after this event, to recount the story of his sufferings. He was discovered by a party from the fort who had gone out after horses which had strayed away. When first seen, he was trying to mount one of the horses, and being covered with blood he was taken for an Indian, and would have been killed by his friends, if he had not clung so close to the horse, that if they could not shoot him without killing the animal. Jacob Wollever, the youngest son of the patentee, shot the Tory or Indian who killed Mr. Hess. This family had a tradition that their ancestor came into this country directly from Schoharie. This tradition is supported by the fact, that the name is found among those Palatines who were scattered on the west side of the Hudson, from whence the first German settlers of Schoharie came. This name is now extinct in the county."<sup>288</sup>

---

<sup>287</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>288</sup> Benton, Nathaniel S., HISTORY OF HERKIMER COUNTY, INCLUDING THE UPPER MOHAWK VALLEY FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE PRESENT 1856  
*Excerpt Paragraphs from Chapter VIII*

The Battle of Oriskany mentioned was an engagement of the American Revolution in the Mohawk Valley fought on August 7, 1777, during the campaign against Burgoyne. General Nicholas Herkimer, while leading a force of about 800 militia to the relief of besieged Fort Schuyler, was ambushed about two miles west of Oriskany Creek by a detachment of loyalists and Indians under Sir John Johnson. At first the Americans were thrown into confusion and Herkimer was mortally wounded. But the Americans stood their ground, directed by their dying commander, who lit his pipe and calmly gave orders to his men. Then came a planned sortie from the fort, compelling the loyalists to retire. Each side lost about one-third of its force. Although the Americans were unable, because of their losses, to proceed to the relief of Fort Schuyler, the British officer Leger was forced to abandon the siege of the Fort. The American victory was important since it prevented the British from sending reinforcements to Burgoyne and was therefore a factor leading to their surrender at Saratoga.<sup>289</sup>

The British campaign had been centered above the Hudson Valley. Burgoyne had swept down from Canada by way of Lake Champlain and he was to be joined by Howe, coming up the Hudson, while Leger was to leave from another point in Canada and come down the Mohawk Valley. Burgoyne had established himself at Saratoga but was running out of supplies. He sent out a detachment to Bennington, Vermont to seize stores, but met with defeat there by the Vermont Militia. This, coupled with the defeat at Oriskany and no word from Howe, supposed to be coming up the Hudson, caused him to surrender in October, 1777 at Saratoga.<sup>290</sup> In a future chapter we will relate to this surrender and this campaign which involved one of our own Baker youth from Steuben County.

---

<sup>289</sup> *THE AMERICAN PEOPLES ENCYCLOPEDIA - Vol. 15 p.15-068*

<sup>290</sup> *THE AMERICAN PEOPLES ENCYCLOPEDIA - Vol. 16 p.16-718*

General Howe had other ideas and was eager to capture Philadelphia. He had gone south and defeated Washington at Brandywine Creek and captured Philadelphia in September. Washington was defeated in October in an attempt to drive Howe out of Philadelphia at Germantown, but at least this had delayed Howe so he could not go north and meet up with Burgoyne and avoid his surrender.<sup>291</sup>

Burgoyne's surrender, together with the influence of Benjamin Franklin, the American representative to Paris seeking alliance with France, played an important part in the outcome of the war. The king saw a chance to seek revenge against the British who had seized many of the richest French colonies and destroyed French prestige in Europe. He gave secret aid to America for two years and in February of 1778 he openly allied himself with America. In a short time Spain and Holland were drawn into open war with England. Other European nations, enemies of England's maritime code, entered into a league of armed neutrality which was hurtful to England's interest. All these actions assisted the American Colonies in the future signing of the Treaty of Paris on September 3, 1783 in which England acknowledged American independence. On November 25, 1783 the British forces were withdrawn from New York.<sup>292</sup>

This brief summation of the Revolutionary War relates how it affected our family living along the Mohawk River. Let us now return to the family Woolever.

Mavis, cousin Carol Mayda, and I visited Fort Herkimer, which is now Fort Herkimer Church. The doorstep stone is set with brass letters that state that the ground for this Fort and Church was donated by our ancestor, Nicholas Woolever in 1737. This is the only building in the area that survived the French and Indian War.

---

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.* p. 16-718

<sup>292</sup> *AMERICAN PEOPLES ENCYCLOPEDIA - Vol. 16, p.16-719*

Figure 19-01: Stepping stone at Fort Herkimer Church.

"Two Early Churches on the South Bank of the Mohawk River, on Nicholas Wohllaber (Wolleber) land he and Johannes Hess and Rudolf Caring became trustees for what is known as Fort Herkimer Church located 1 mile east of the village of Herkimer. It was later fortified by William Johnson and withstood Indian Raid of 1757 when the village of Herkimer was totally destroyed."<sup>293</sup> (There seems to be some error in this inscription, as the edifice is located just east of the now village of Fonda, and the county seat town of Herkimer is some 20 plus miles west of Fonda on the Mohawk, however the writer of this article when this inscription was created may have confused the location of the two churches, one at Herkimer and the second at Conajoharie, -now the village of Fonda).

Figure 19-02: Interior view of Fort Herkimer Church in 1984

The exterior view of the church today displays the height of the stone walls and the gun slits in the wall. The walls were made higher at some time, as you will observe the slight change in the stonework.

Figure 19-03: Exterior of Fort Herkimer Church as it as it appeared in the year 2000

We have determined from research that the Woolever pedigree for our great-grandmother, Mary Elizabeth Woolever, reads:

Nicholas (the Patentee)	Died 1773
Had 12 children One son named Peter-	
Peter Born March 9, 1732	Died Nov.17, 1829 Age 97y

8m

Had nine children One son named Nicholas-	
Nicholas II Born Aug.1, 1769	Died after 1854

---

<sup>293</sup> Berkenmeyer - THE ALBANY PROTOCOL, p. 91



Had son Peter II born C 1795

Peter II

Had family with daughter Mary Elizabeth born July 7, 1831  
who became wife of James Godding, my maternal GG  
Grandfather.

The statement, earlier in this chapter, that the family was extinct in the Mohawk region is because the family moved to Tioga in northern Pennsylvania and then north, across the state line to Penn Yan, in the Finger Lake area north of Steuben County, New York. It was there they resided side by side with the descendants of Thomas Baker, the eldest son of Thomas Baker, the emigrant.

The family featured in this Chronicle, however, descends from Nathaniel, who was the emigrant's second son. For those of you that may be from the line of the eldest son, Thomas, I refer you to the work of Justice Frank Baker of Chicago, written in 1914 titled, "Ancestors of Samuel Baker of Pleasant Valley. Steuben County, New York". There was also another early English, emigrant family living in the area - the John Godding family from Littleton Parish, in Wiltshire County, that had come to America and found their way to this beautiful area. It was the John Godding family, who had a son, James Henry, who married the Woolever daughter, Mary Elizabeth. Our next chapter will then pick up the history of this Godding family that came from Wiltshire County, England in the early 1700's.

Although, I am jumping ahead of chronological order of this history, I believe this is the place to insert the obituary of Mary Elizabeth Woolever Godding, as it adds credence to the information contained in this chapter.

#### ONE OF MINNESOTA'S OLDEST PIONEERS DIES

Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Woolever Godding Passed away at 93  
Years Past

#### SETTLED NEAR WELLS IN 1865

Husband helped haul some of the first lumber to build  
town.

The death of Mary Elizabeth Woolever Godding who passed quietly away at Fountain, Colorado, February 14, at the age of 93 years, 7 months and 7 days, marked the passing of one of Minnesota's oldest pioneers, and one who saw the making of the village of Wells.

Mary Woolever was born at Arkport, Steuben County, New York, July 7, 1831, where she lived until grown to woman-hood.

She married James Henry Godding, January 1, 1852, near there, where they resided until the birth of their daughter, Flora, who came to gladden their home on Christmas day.

Later they removed to Wisconsin, residing near Sheboygan, where their eldest son, Johnny, was born, who remained with them but seven short months.

While in Calumet County, Wisconsin, another son, Myron L. Godding, who was formerly well known in Wells, was born.

They then moved to southern Minnesota, near Chatfield, where their daughter, Ida, and son Charlie, were born, and all endured the ever hardship of pioneer life.

The year 1865 found them removed still farther west in a new country and settled on a homestead five miles west of where Wells now is. Mr. Godding helped to haul some of the first lumber for the town of Wells. At that date the country was new and settlers few. Roads wound around in any direction to avoid sloughs. Roads on section lines were hardly thought of and "good roads" were unknown. The early pioneers endured privations that those who now live here cannot imagine, much less comprehend. The markets were far away and the little that the early settlers had to have was not easy to acquire. About 1875 they removed two miles east of Wells, where the youngest child, Jay was born, making nine children who grew to manhood and womanhood not far from the vicinity of Wells, the eldest daughter having married in 1874.

They lived several places later, some of the time on and near where Kiester now stands, but about 1901 built their home in Wells, near the school house where it still stands at the end of the street on the edge of what used to be "the old peat slough". Here they celebrated their golden wedding anniversary January 1, 1902, all of their family being present but their son, William, who had gone to his home of rest in 1898, and one son-in-law. Twenty

326

eight grandchildren with their parents and one great grandchild met together, most of them from near Kiester, and it was winter weather with no swift way of conveyance those days like they now have and only moments instead of hours are spent going that distance. In 1916 the home was sold to Lloyd Allen and is still owned by the Allen's.

Grandpa Godding, who suffered much his last year, went to his rest November 5, 1906, and "Grandma" went north to make her home with her son , Charlie, at Clarissa, Minn.

While she lived there her eldest daughter Flora Salsbery died April 6, 1909 and also laid to rest in Rose Hill Cemetery where her brother and father rest.

In 1912, two daughters, Emma, who later married a Curl, and Nellie, Mrs. Edward A. Conrad, of Kiester, moved to Rush, Colo., where "Grandma" went to make her home after visiting her relatives there.

About 1919 she removed to Fountain, Colo., where she lived with her son Walter, until called to her heavenly home, having contracted pneumonia from an epidemic of colds it was thought, from which she was no longer strong enough to recover.

Until shortly before her death she was able to write letters to her loved ones and was still able to knit until her last illness- the mittens which gladdened the hearts of her children, great grand children, and even her great-great grandchildren. Many were the beautiful gifts she pieced for many of them, also after her more active life was closed.

She was ever a loving mother and friend to all who knew her, leading a beautiful Christian life of patience although a sufferer from complicated diseases of age and was glad to go to her heavenly home.

She was laid to rest Sunday, February 15, 1925, at Colorado Springs in the shadow of Pike's Peak, and leaves seven children, namely, Myron L. Godding of Rapid City, S.D., Ida Mae, Mrs. H.H. Baker of Kiester, Minn., Charlie L. Godding, of Clarrisa, Minn., Walter A. Godding, of Fountain, Colo., Mrs. Emma Curl, of Hayden, Colo., Mrs. E.A. Conrad of Rush, Colo., and Jay L. Godding of near Rapid City, S.D.

Also 35 Grandchildren, 55 great grandchildren and one great, great grandchild.<sup>294</sup>

I, Lee Clyde Baker, your genealogist, am one of those 55 great-grandchildren. I will continue with the Godding family history in the next chapter.

Figure 19-04: Mary Elizabeth Woolever Godding, at age 93 years, 7 months, and 7 days

---

<sup>294</sup> *THE WELLS MIRROR, Faribault County, Minnesota*  
*Thursday - February 26, 1925 Vol. XII No.28*



# 20

## The Godding History

In the last chapter I stated that James Henry Godding married, on January 1, 1852, Mary Elizabeth Woolever in Steuben County, New York. This marriage brings me to my paternal, great-grandparents. I have enough information on the Goddings to fill another book. However, I shall attempt to condense information on the family Godding until we find the John Godding, Jr. family, my great-great-grandparents, and my Godding great-grand parents arriving in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, as related to in Mary Elizabeth Woolever Godding's obituary in the last chapter.

Family tradition and information indicated the Goddings had come from Littleton Parish, which was located in Wiltshire County in England. An informative book I had purchased when I started the genealogical search of our family history had information on how to search for your British & Irish roots. This book had informed me that the County Record Office for Wiltshire was located at Trowbridge. During our 1990 trip to England Mavis and I visited that location. Here the archivist informed us that Littleton Parish had families living in several bordering counties and that we might have to search for family records in several CRO's. Having spent over two weeks on the Bakers in London, County Kent, and Oxfordshire, we decided we would do a limited search for John Godding there and confirm the family records, which had our ancestor coming to America from Littleton Parish. Hopefully we would find who his parents were. We did find that John Godding was born in 1720, but there were no extended, family records. We had at least confirmed the family was from this location and decided we would not search

any longer for the Godding family in England. We knew John Godding, born in 1720, had come to America through Boston, and we made the assumption that he was the father of the firstborn in America.

John Godding the emigrant came in through Boston. He settled at Attleboro, Massachusetts, which is northeast of Providence. We have never searched for his children, other than his son, John, who was born at Attleboro on September 15, 1755. For clarity we shall identify him as John Godding, Sr., the first Godding to born here in America. Cousin Carol Matteson had sent for the Revolutionary War records on John Godding, Sr. our firstborn Godding in America. The following record:

John Godding was born at Attleboro, Mass. on 15 Sept. 1755.

In June of 1776 he still lived at Attleboro, Mass.. I volunteered to serve one month & marched to Roxbury. Served in Capt. Richardson Company, Ensign Page- the other of his officers he has forgotten. Served out his time at Roxbury and was dismissed. The 1 July 1776 he enlisted for five months serving in Capt. Richardson's Company in Col. Cary Regt., Lt. Col. Stephen Richardson, Major Paine, Lt. Benj. Twigley, Ensign Wm.Swatland and marched to New Haven, then to city of New York by water.

Remained there until driven out by the enemy in Sept.. Genl. Fellows commanded the Brigade, retreated to Harlem then to White Plains & Croton Manor where he was dismissed. He was taken sick 14 days before his time was out & was obligated to stay six months. When on the left wing, when the battle was fought and was not called into action. In 1777 he enlisted one month to go on the expedition to Rhode Island under Gen. Spencer, marched to Providence to Waisen, [not readable], where he was discharged.

Received into Capt. Geo. Peck's Company, Lt. Wilkensen, Ensign Brown. In 1778 he served one month at Rhode Island under Genl. Sullivan, Capt. Robinson's Company, & was dismissed at Providence.

He also served about a psnight [not readable] as volunteer at the time Genl. Sullivan's attempt to drive the enemy from Rhode Island & retreated across New England. He never received any written discharge.

He served at N.Y. with Coln. Sergeant's Regt., Ensign Gotel Daryol Brigade but cannot identify other Regts.

He knew Genl. Washington, Pectuum Lafayette Green and others who's names he does not remember. He has no documentary evidence, but he has the affidavit of Wm. Sweetland who was his Ensign in 1776.

He was born at Attleboro, aforesaid the 15 Sept. 1755 his age is recorded there, & also in his Bible. Since the Revolution he lived at Fitchwilliam, N.H. over twenty years, & for the last 22 years has lived at Wallingford, Vermont. He is Known to the Rev. Frederick Page & Joseph Randall Esq. & most of the residents of Wallingford.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatsoever to a pension or annuity except the present, and declares that his name is not on the Pension Roll of the Agency of any State.

Sworn to and subscribed the  
day and year aforesaid. Signature: John Godding

Signed: Rodney C. Royce, Registrar  
of the Court of Probate.

The document is also attested to by Rev. Frederick Page and Joseph Randal, Esq., with their signatures affixed. {sic}<sup>295</sup>

A reply to Rev. War Claim of John Godding follows:

---

<sup>295</sup> *Revolutionary War Pension Claim Mass. Godding, John # S.13160 p. 1 & 2*



Date of application for Pension: July 21, 1832 His claim allowed.

Residence at date of application: Wallingford, Rutland County, VT.

Age at date of application: Born Sept. 15, 1755, at Attleboro,

Died in June 1847.

Remarks: Wife name not stated, died in Vt. prior to Sept. 10, 1834

Children's names not stated, residing in Greenwood, Steuben Co.NY  
in 1834.<sup>296</sup>

The Claim papers continue:

BRIEF in the case of John Godding  
of Rutland Co. in the State of Vermont  
(Act 7th June, 1832.)

1. Was the declaration before a Court or a Judge? Probate Court
2. If before a Judge, does it appear that the applicant is disabled by  
bodily infirmity?
3. How old is he? 76 years
4. State his service, as directed in the form annexed.  
(This area has listed his two enlistments in Jan and July 1776, and the  
one in 1777 and the final in 1778, along with  
months of service and officers under who he served.) These all agree  
with his deposition on a earlier page of this claim.
5. In what battles was he engaged?
6. Where did he reside when he entered the service? Attleboro, Mass.
7. Is his statement supported by living witness, by documentary  
proof, by traditionary evidence, by incidental evidence, or by the rolls?  
Living traditionary

---

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid, Reply page to S.13160 Pension Claim of John Godding, p. 3*

8. Are the papers defective as to form or authentication? and if so, in what respect?

I CERTIFY that the foregoing statement and the answers agree with the evidence in the case above mentioned.

(Signature) D. Brown

Examining Clerk<sup>297</sup>

On page 5 of the Claim are these three documents:

- a. Acknowledges his service of 8 months and 14 days.
- b. Certificate of Pension issued the 17th day of April. 1833  
and sent to R. Templu [not distinguishable]
- c. Recorded by W. L. Williams, Clerk  
Book E , Vol. 3, Page 66  
E 4 176 [smudged date]<sup>298</sup>

The Revolutionary War Pension papers give us a great deal of information. We can now make many positive statements about our ancestors.

John Godding Sr. was born in Attleboro, Massachusetts on September 15, 1755. He served in the Revolutionary War for a period of eight months and, by his deposition, was detained because of illness another six months. His service was in five, short periods of time as was customary for enlistments in this war. His first enlistment was in January of 1776 and his service ended in 1778. He was then twenty-three years of age.

---

<sup>297</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5

After the war he returned to Attleboro and then moved to Fitchwilliam, New Hampshire, where he confirmed he lived for twenty years and then moved to Wallingford, Vermont. His deposition tells us where he lived, but other things happened in his life. He was married and had a family. The only positive information we have for this period of time is that he married Betsy Bishop and had two sons, John, Jr., born on June 3, 1790, and a second son, Levi, born about 1792. We can establish their birthplace as Fitchwilliam, New Hampshire by his statement that he lived at this location for 20 years after his discharge, which would place the family there until 1798.

We have no marriage record for his marriage. He must have made a return to Attleboro and the Connecticut-New York in 1798-99 to retrace his earlier youth and war service. He may have been introduced to a Bishop daughter, Betsy, visiting many of her relatives at New Haven, or he may have gone on to New Jersey and met her in the Elizabeth Town or Rahway area. We never will know how they met or how these colonial people made their long journeys in light of the hardships they had to endure while traveling. After marriage, he returned to Fitchwilliam where they resided until 1798. Then they moved to Wallingford, Rutland County, Vermont.

I have records which were done by my grandmother's sister, Alma Godding Salsbery, back in the 1930's, stating that John Godding, Jr. had been born in Rutland, Vermont. This information must now be adjusted. She was interested in joining the DAR and had located the Revolutionary War records of Hulda Eliza Fulkerson's father, Joseph Fulkerson, Pension Certificate #7620. Hulda became the wife of John Godding Jr., which qualified, so she did not need to look further.

John Godding, Sr. lost his dear wife, the former Betsy Bishop, who died in 1833 at Wallingford, Rutland County, Vermont. She is no doubt buried there. This information is confirmed on the Revolutionary War deposition, where her death was recorded as being in Vermont prior to September 10, 1834.<sup>299</sup>

John Godding, Sr. left Wallingford, Vermont per the Remarks area of his pension claim. The examining person working on his claim stated, "He is residing in Greenwood, Steuben County, New York in 1834, as are his children."<sup>300</sup>

We now had confirmation the family was living in Steuben County, which confirmed family tradition. Now I had to establish his childrens' family. This had already been put in my files before we had the Revolutionary Pension facts of this chapter, so our history now returns to New Jersey.

Son, John Godding, Jr., had evidently returned to the East Jersey area for a period of time, as on April 19, 1820 he married Hulda Fulkerson at The 1st Reform Church, at Raritan, East Jersey.<sup>301</sup>

The Fulkerson family also has historical value to anyone interested in joining the ranks as descendants of a Revolutionary Soldier.

Here at Raritan, East Jersey, another family name appeared, which would eventually end up in Minnesota with the Baker and Godding families.

---

<sup>299</sup> *John Godding Rev. War Record # S. 13160, p. 3*

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid p. 3*

<sup>301</sup> *1st Reform Church Records, Raritan, New Jersey*

This was a family from Scotland. The father of this family was Andrew Oliphant. In Scotland the name was Olivard. Andrew fathered Andrew II, who had a daughter, Betsy Oliphant, born at Raritan, on October 30, 1764. She married in 1789, after the Revolutionary War, at the 1st Reform Church in Raritan, Joseph Fulkerson, who was the son of a family of record at Raritan under the earlier name of Volcherse. His parents were Philip and Margaret Volcherse. Later, this family changed the name to Fulkerson. The Church records at the 1st Reform Church, of Raritan, New Jersey show that Joseph was baptized on April 20, 1755.<sup>302</sup>

Joseph Fulkerson enlisted in the Jersey Line in the fall of 1775 for one year under Captain John Polhemus, in Colonel William Winds 1st Regiment and was discharged by Winds at Ticonderoga in the fall of 1776. He enlisted again at the same place in the spring of 1777 for three years under Captain Andrew McMeyers, in Colonel Ogden's Regiment of the Jersey Line. He was discharged by Lt. Col. Frances Barbber at Mendham Huts, near Morristown, New Jersey, in January 1780. He was in the battles of Brandywine, Monmouth, and Germantown. He was wounded in the battle of Germantown, near Philadelphia, and Captain McMeyers was killed. He then served under Captain William Angle in the same Regiment. He was first a private and then a sergeant. After this he served as a sailor on an American privateer of unknown name. This ship was captured by the British. He was a prisoner for over a year on a British prison ship and suffered from hunger and cold. He was released at the end of the Revolutionary War.<sup>303</sup>

---

<sup>302</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>303</sup> *Pension Certificate 7620 - Joseph Fulkerson pensioner of Revolutionary War.*

The marriage of Betsy Oliphant and Joseph Volcherse (Fulkerson), produced the following children, born at Raritan, New Jersey:

Hulda, April 17, 1801

Letitia, 1806 (Married a Johnson)

Margaret L.

Tobias

Sally Ann (Sally Ann Godding Hallack named after her)

Joseph

Jarred

John

Talmai

Joseph and Betsy (Oliphant) Fulkerson moved to Steuben County. The young, married daughter Hulda and her husband, John Godding, Jr., went with her parents, brothers, and sisters. Later, sons Joseph and Jarred moved to Woodsfield, Ohio on the Ohio River, in Monroe County. When their father was 84 years old and their mother was 74 years old, both moved to Woodsfield and rented a small tract of land near their sons. Joseph died there on July 11, 1840 and Betsy on July 15, 1840.

We now have recorded the parents of Hulda Eliza Fulkerson, the bride of John Godding, Jr., who had been married on April 19, 1820, at Raritan, New Jersey. The young couple moved to Steuben County with her parents. While in Steuben County, John, Jr. and Hulda had the following children:

Joseph Oliphant Godding (Born 22 Feb., 1821 at Reading-Steuben Cty. NY)

Sally Ann Godding (Born 1 April, 1823 at Reading)

Tallmai Farrell Godding (Born 10 June, 1825 at Reading)

Jared Colbert Godding (Born 8 Oct., 1827 at Reading)

James Henry Godding(Born 29 July, 1830 at Reading)

John Theodore Godding(Born 11 March, 1832 at Greenwood-Steuben  
Cty, NY)

Asa Robins Godding(Born 10 May, 1834 at Greenwood)

Margaret Albina Godding(Born 19 Nov., 1838 at Greenwood)

Emily Rosemond Godding(Born 27, Oct., 1842 Allegheny  
County, NY)

John Godding, Sr., who had lived alone at Wallingford, Vermont after Betsy's death in 1833, chose to join his son and family in Steuben County. Per his Revolutionary War Remarks area, we find he was living with his children in Steuben County, New York in 1834. Here he lived until his death in June of 1847.<sup>304</sup>

On January 1, 1852, James Henry Godding married Mary Elizabeth Woolever, daughter of Peter Woolever II. She was introduced to you in the last chapter. On December 25, 1852, James and Mary's first child, Flora Ellen Godding, was born in Steuben County, New York. .

You will see Hulda named several of her children with the same names as her parents. The birth records of her children also inform us they lived at several locations in Steuben County before heading west. My father told me, when I was a child, that our family ancestors had made a brief stop in Ohio on their move west. This did not fit with the Baker movement west, as it was more than likely that the Bakers had made the move west from Shandaken by way of the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes route. The Ohio stopover was with the Goddings, my father's, mother's family, and was probably only to await the next vessel that would take them from Lake Erie to Lake Huron and on to Lake Michigan and their next home at Sheboygan,

---

<sup>304</sup> *John Godding Rev. War Pension Papers, p. 3*

Wisconsin. The move from Steuben County did not happen until sometime during 1853 or the summer of 1854. We can determine this from their childrens' births. Flora was born on Christmas Day in 1852 in Steuben County and their next child, Johnnie, was born in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, on September 12, 1854.

If you look at a current map of the state New York you will not find any placed named Reading. It may have been a township. Family records do, however, list Reading for the children listed above. Greenwood is in the southwestern corner of Steuben County not too far east of Allegheny County.

I will leave the Godding Family at this point in history and return to them when we find them at Sheboygan, Wisconsin in a future chapter. However, I must give credit to those of my relatives who, back 40 to 50 years ago, compiled much of this history for us. I became the benefactor of many pages of family history when in 1984, Mavis and I brought back to New Jersey, a cousin from Minnesota, Carol Mayda Matteson, who was in the throes of a devastating, divorce situation. She brought with her the work of two of our elders, Grace Oliphant Timmons and Alma Godding Salsbery. I bestow posthumous accolades on my two ancestors who became members of the DAR years ago and to our dear cousin, who shared their information and started me on this sixteen year assembly of these Chronicles.

At the conclusion of these Chronicles you will find the descendants chart which lists all the Godding descendants. As this may be somewhat confusing, I list here the early generations of my Godding ancestors and their spouses:

#### THE GODDING EARLY GENERATIONS



1. John Godding - Born 1720 Wiltshire Cty., England by Littleton Parish records. The emigrant coming through Boston. No ID on Spouse.
2. John Godding, Sr. - Born 15 September 1755 at Attleboro, Mass.  
m- Betsy Bishop, daug. of Noah Bishop, son of emigrant John Bishop
3. John Godding, Jr. - Born in Wallingford, Vermont on 3 June, 1790.  
m- Hulda Fulkerson at Raritan, New Jersey on 19 April, 1820.
4. James Henry Godding - Born at Reading, Steuben Co., NY 29 July, 1830  
m. Mary Elizabeth Woolever, daug. Peter Woolever II, 1 Jan., 1852
5. Ida May Godding- Born Nov. 22, 1860, near Chatfield, Minnesota  
m. Henry Hudson Baker, Jan. 1, 1885 at Kiester, Minnesota  
These are my grand parents.



# 21

## RUBICON AND NEOSHO WISCONSIN IN 1850's

In Chapter 18 we related to the first Bakers to make the exodus to the western lands that were attracting the colonists from the east. Jonathan's son, Isaac, and his family and Stephen's eldest son, Ira, had left Shandaken in the Catskills at the conclusion of the Anti-Rent trials.

To clarify some unsolved situations in the life of Isaac we can return to the census of 1830 at Shandaken. Isaac's first wife, Lena Briggs, had no doubt died in Green County, as we found no information on her death at Shandaken. He married as his second wife, Abigail Webb, and moved to Shandaken to The Old Baker Farm, as referred to in Chapter 14, where he, with his new wife, had returned to care for his aged father, Jonathan, after Jonathan lost his second wife Sarah on October 8, 1827. Isaac at that time had two sons, George and Denison. Both had been born in Green County. I list here his family, which may help with the problem of solving his life history at this time. Green County is just north and east of Middletown and Shandaken.

Isaac m. Lena Briggs about 1818

George        b. 1819 b. Green County

Denison      b. 1822 b. Green County

Isaac m. Abigail Webb

Elias        b. 1830 b. Shandaken

Abram Charles b. 1835 b. Shandaken

Mary E.    b. 1837 b. Shandaken

Stephen J.   b. 1843 b. Shandaken

Lucretia b. 23 Sept. 1852 at Rubicon

Isaac's children's births tend to substantiate the life of Isaac at the time of his return to the family at Shandaken. The eight-year gap in his children's birth dates I believe also bears this out.

For Stephen's first-born son, Ira, I have little information. There was a male child 20-30 years of age on the 1830 census at Shandaken who was determined to be Ira. Family records made by Nora Graham Baker list Ira as son of Stephen Sr. and Sally, born July 22, 1807. All other members of Stephen, Sr.'s family listed on that census are also confirmed by Nora's records.

The Anti-Rent War testimonies show that Ira was still living with the family on The Old Baker Farm. In Chapter 18, which related to that testimony, Isaac and Ira indicated their desire to leave Shandaken. Ira left with Isaac and family. He was a single man 38 years of age. Shortly after he arrived in Wisconsin he married Sarah and his first daughter, Deborah, was born in 1848. Sarah was evidently the daughter of another family from the state of New York as the census tells us she was born in there.

I list here the new family of Ira Baker. I did no research on Ira, but was given the 1870 Dodge County, Minnesota census which lists his family at Milton Township:

Ira Baker Age 64 Born in New York  
Sarah 52 Born in New York  
Deborah 22 Born in Wisconsin  
Sarah Jane 18 Born in Wisconsin  
George 12 Born in Wisconsin

As mentioned in Chapter 18, we assumed Isaac and Ira had taken the Erie Canal and Great Lakes route westward to Wisconsin. They probably landed at Port Washington on the western shore of Lake Michigan. They went inland about 30 miles from the landing and encountered a lake which had a river running from its western shore. They followed this stream and

reached a second lake. They probably built a log cabin in a township called Rubicon in the late fall of 1845.

Mavis and I then concentrated our search for the Baker family in the state of Wisconsin. We went to Juneau, county seat of Dodge County. When we approached the clerk and informed her of our search interest, we were given bad news that the courthouse had been destroyed by fire in 1877. A few records of deeds and plat books had been saved, as they were near the door. The last two tax sale record books, which were in the treasurer's office, were also saved. However, most records were lost. We were directed to an annex building to see what we might be lucky enough to find there.

There was a sawmill in Section 35 and a Federal Land Office in Juneau, as Wisconsin was still a territory at this time. In the spring of 1846, Isaac and Denison scouted out the area and on July 16, 1846 they procured their first land. We found on page 119 of a Dodge County Deed Book that the United States of America issued two land patents: the NW 1/4 of SW 1/4 of Section 17, containing 40 acres to Isaac Baker and the SW 1/4 of SW 1/4 of Section 17 to Denison Baker, in Rubicon Township.<sup>305</sup>

The cost of the forty-acre tracts was \$50 each. The purchase was finalized by Letters of Patent on February 10, 1848, under James Polk, President, and recorded in Volume 47, page 434.

We also found that Isaac, spelled Isaak, and wife sold this tract on August 13, 1853 to a John Hein.<sup>306</sup> Denison also sold his and started purchasing land in Section 29, near the lake, at the location of the future village of Neosho. The Plat Book of 1873 displays 450 acres owned by D. Baker. Isaac does not appear on

---

<sup>305</sup> *Dodge County, Wisconsin Deed Book, p. 119*

<sup>306</sup> *Dodge County Deed Book, Line 188*

this map, so we probably can assume he was living on one of Denison's tracts.

Figure 21-01: 1873 Map of Rubicon Township, Wisconsin

Denison married Eunice Persons on November 24, 1847 and had the following children:

Alma 1849  
Ruby A. 1852  
George 1854  
Adelbert J. 1855  
Sarah A. 1857  
Hiram E. 1860

We return to the family still residing in Shandaken in the 1850's. Isaac and Denison had been in communication with the family back at Shandaken informing them of the fine land they had found in Wisconsin.

The 1855 New York state census shows Stephen T. Baker still in residence in Ulster County.

Stephen T. Baker 43  
Delight 43  
Nelson 21  
Louisa 18  
Jane 16  
Orrin 12  
Elizabeth Ann 10

Stephen and Delight decided to go to join the families of Isaac and Denison in Wisconsin. Stephen's younger brother, Orrin, had married Eunice Rider and was caring for her mother, Sally, and his youngest sister, Emaline, and they also had their first child, Lucinda. The reason for Stephen and his family not going west with Isaac and Ira in 1845 no longer existed. Orrin and Eunice were now a family and ready to take over the property in Shandaken. Stephen and family left for the west, probably taking

346

the same route Isaac had told them about on his exodus in 1845. This was the Erie Canal and Great Lakes route to Port Washington on Lake Michigan. They joined Isaac and Denison in Rubicon Township and arrived in the late fall of 1855 or the spring of 1856.

They became neighbors of the Alexander Gillett family. Nelson, a young man of 22 years, courted the Gillett daughter, Laura, and they were married circa 1856-57. A daughter, Emma, was born in August of 1858. We never found a marriage certificate for Nelson and Laura. They were probably married in one of the neighboring counties and we did not have the time to search every county 1000 miles from our home.

During this same time period it appears that Isaac and Abigail separated, although no record or statement was found to confirm this fact. However, it is substantiated by a marriage certificate which shows Abigail married Alexander Gillett, who had probably lost his wife, Lorena Berry, before he left Royalton, or enroute west.

Alex Gillett, son of Eliphalet and Abigail Gillett, farmer of Rubicon, born in Vermont, married Abigail Webb, daughter of Jas. (or) (Jos.) and Mary Webb, on 23 Sept. 1857 in Rubicon. Both white. Judicial ceremony, D.D. Woppock (or Hoppock) officiating. Certificate dated 22 Sept, 1857 and filed Sept. 28 1857.<sup>307</sup>

Isaac and Abigail's daughter, Lucretia, who had been born September 23, 1852, was taken from her father, Isaac Baker, and she and her mother became part of Alexander Gillett's family in 1857. This happened on her fifth birthday.

Prior to this, we also found Isaac's son, Elias, married on May 16, 1852 at Rubicon to Mary P. Gillett, daughter of Alexander. They had a daughter, Alma I., born in April of 1856.

---

<sup>307</sup> #02470 *Dodge County, Wisconsin, Registration of Marriages, 1852-1859*

She will end up with other members of the family at Lyndon Station, Wisconsin, as does her sister, Harriet, born in 1857-8. A infant daughter, Alvira, died and a son, Elias E., born July 30, 1860, died January 15, 1862. Father and son were buried side by side in Woodlawn Cemetery at Neosho.

Figure 21-02: Tombstone Elias E. Baker, July 30, 1860 –  
January 15, 1862

Figure 21-03: Tombstone of Elias Baker Mar. 1, 1839 –  
June 10, 1860

All these happenings had to leave Isaac Baker a despondent man. He no doubt spent his years after 1857 living with his son, Denison. His wife had left him for a neighbor, taking his last child with her. His son, Elias, died in 1860. His grandson, Elias E., died in 1862. His own demise came on April 16, 1872. Denison and Eunice purchased a sizeable lot in the center of Woodlawn Cemetery and buried his father on the right-hand side of the lot. They also purchased a ground level stone engraved with a hand holding an open bible.

His personal life record: Isaac Baker - Died Apr.16, 1872 - Aged 79 Yrs. 6 Ms. 7 Ds..

This confirms his birth date of October 9, 1793. He left no will, no property, and there were no court proceedings or news documents to record his demise.

Figure 21-04: Isaac Baker Tombstone-Woodlawn Cemetery,  
Neosho, Wisconsin

During this time period one of Isaac's sons, Abram Charles, also married a daughter of Alexander Gillett.

Abram C. Baker, son of Israel C. Baker and Abigail Baker,  
farmer



of Rubicon, born in New York State, to Alvira Gillet, daughter of Alex Gillet and Lorena Gillett, married on 7 March 1858 in Rubicon. Religious ceremony performed by Timothy Palmer of Lisbon, Wauk. Co.(Waukesha County). Certificate dated March 7, 1858 and filed on April 13, 1858. #02643<sup>308</sup>

While searching for marriages, an interesting find was made. We introduced you to the Godding family in the last chapter, along with information that a daughter of this family became my grandmother when she married a son of Nelson Baker and Laura Gillett. The Gilletts, the Bakers, and the Goddings, all originating as colonial emigrant families, came together in Wisconsin in the mid-1850's. The following wedding certificate:

John T. Godding, son of John and Hulda Fulkerson ], Godding, of Williamstown, to Rachell Streeter daughter of Henry and Susan Streeter ( ? ), married on 18 September 1859 at Mayville, Dodge County, J.C. Crawford officiating at a religious ceremony. Certificate filed 4 November 1859. (#02949)<sup>309</sup>

Denison's wife, Eunice, died in 1884 and Denison purchased a white, sandstone, obelisk as a grave marker which he placed on her grave just to the left of center at the front of the lot he had purchased for his father, Isaac's, burial in 1872.

Denison married Nancy Clarke in January 1885 and life continued at Neosho until Denison wrote his will four years later on February 15, 1897.

I Denison Baker of the Town of Rubicon, in the County of Dodge

and State of Wisconsin, being of sound mind and memory do make publish and declare this my last will and testament in manner following, viz:

---

<sup>308</sup> #02643 Dodge County, Wisconsin, Registry of Marriages, 1852-1859

<sup>309</sup> Dodge County, Wisconsin, Registration of Marriages, 1852-1859

First-I give and bequeath to my Grand children, Grace and Joyce Rector the sum of two hundred and fifty dollars each within one year from the time of my demise.

Second-I give and bequeath to my son Adelbert Baker the sum of fifty dollars.

Third-I give and bequeath to my daughter Ruby the sum of One hundred dollars.

Fourth-I give and bequeath to my Grand children, Adelbert, Frederick, Thomas, Alice and George, children of my son George,

the sum of ten dollars each.

And lastly I give and bequeath to my wife Nancy, all the rest of

my real estate and personal property of whatever nature or kind soever, and appoint her sole executor of my estate without bonds.

In witness whereof I have hereto set my hand and seal the 15th

day of February 1897.

D. Baker (Legal Seal)<sup>310</sup>

The above instrument was at the date thereof signed, sealed published and declared by the said Denison Baker as and for his last will and testament and in the presence of us who at his request and in his presence and in the presence of each other

have subscribed our names in witness thereof.

J.W. Martin, from Hustisford

C.E. Annis, Rudolf Herman<sup>311</sup>

Denison died on February 22, 1897, seven days after writing his will, which I confirmed by his tombstone in Woodlawn Cemetery in Neosho, Wisconsin.

Figure 21-05: Tombstones of Denison Baker and also his

---

<sup>310</sup> *Abstract Book Dodge County, Wisconsin, p. 549 - Item 31*

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid, p. 550*

wife, Eunice (obelisk just left of his stone)

On close observation you will also see Isaac Baker's stone on the right side of the picture.

On January 11, 1898 a judgement was filed in the matter of the will of Dennison Baker, deceased.

Jufgement Dated Jan'y 11, 98. Filed in Circuit Court- Dodge County. At a General term of the Circuit Court of Dodge County, Wisconsin, held inthe aforesaid county, at the Court House in the city of Juneau, in said county, commencing on the 28th day of September A.D. 1897, and on this 11th day of January A.D. 1898, during the said term. Hon. James J. Dick, Judge.

In the matter of the Last Will and Testament of Dennison Baker, deceased.

The above enlisted matter having come on to be heard at this term of court upon the appeal of Adelbert J. Baker andRuby Rector, children and heirs at law of Dennison Baker, deceased, and the appeal of H. K. Butterfield, as guardian ad litem of Fred D. Baker, Thomas J. Baker, Alice Baker and George Baker, infant children of George D. Baker, deceased, a son and heir at law of said deceased, from the decree of the County Court od Dodge County, Wisconsin, dated and filed July 7th, A.D. 1897, allowing and admitting to probate the last will and testament of Dennison Baker, late of the town of Rubicon, Dodge County, Wisconsin, deceased, and on the 8th day of November A.D. 1897, before the Court and jury, and M.L. Lueck, S.W. Lamoreux and E.F. Van-Vechten Esqs., apperaing for Nancy Baker, proponent of sdaid will and widow of said deceased, and M.L. Lueck, Esq., special guardian of Josie Recror minor legatee named in said will, so appearing and H.K. Butterfield, Sawyer & Sawyer and J.E. Malone Esqs., appearing for Adelbert J. Baker and Ruby Rector, contestants, and H.K. Butterfield and Sawyer & Sawyer appearing for as guardian ad litem for the afore said minor heirs of said Geo. D. Baker, deceased, and the evidence having been taken herein, and the Court having submitted to the jury a special verdict for their determination, as follows, namely:

Circuit Court -----Dodge County.

In the Matter of the estate of Dennison Baker, deceased.

First Question, Was the paper writing presented for proof, allowance and probate as the last will and testament of Dennison Baker, deceased, executed on conformity with the provisions of the statute related to wills? Answer.

Second Question. Had the said Dennison Baker, deceased, testamentary capacity at the time of the execution of the said alleged last will and testament? Answer.

Third Question. Was the said alleged last will and testament of said Dennison Baker, deceased, his own voluntary act and deed or was it the result and product of undue influence? Answer.

And counsel having been heard and the jury having been charged and the court having directed the jury to answer the first question "Yes", and the jury having returned their special verdict herein in which the first question is answered "Yes", as directed, and having answered the second question "No", and the third said question "It was the result and product of undue influence", and the said verdict having been duly signed by the foreman, and the same having been duly filed herein, and thereupon the contestants having duly moved the Court that the findings of the jury upon the second and third questions of such special verdict be confirmed, and upon the verdict and the evidence herein the Court render judgement herein denying the application to admit to probate the said alleged last will and testament of Dennison Baker deceased, and vacating the said decree of the said County Court, and that the case be remitted to the County Court for further proceedings pursuant to such judgement of this court, and the said proponents having moved the court that the said verdict of the jury as to the said second and third questions be set aside, and for judgement affirming the order of the said County Court, notwithstanding said verdict, and the case be remitted to the County Court for further proceedings in accordance therewith, and also having moved the Court for an order setting aside the special verdict of the jury and for a new trial herein, and said motions having come on to be heard on the 27th day of December A.D. 1897, and the parties having appeared as aforesaid and counsel having been heard, and the Court having thereupon

ordered that the motions of the said contestants be granted, and the followinh judgment be enter herein, Now therefore, upon motion of the attorneys for the said contestants, and upon the said Court,

It is Ordered and Adjudged: That the paper writing presented for proof, allowance and probate, as the last will and testament of Dennison Baker, deceased, was executed in conformity with the provisions of the statute related to wills.

That at the time of the execution of the said alleged last will and testament the said Dennison Baker, deceased, did not have testammentary capacity.

That the said alleged last will and testament of Dennison Baker, deceased, was not his own voluntary act or deed, but was the result and product of undue influence.

It is Further Ordered and Adjudged: That the application to admit to probate the said alleged last will and testament of Dennison Baker, be and the same is hereby denied.

It is Further Order and Adjudged: That the decree of the County Court of Dodge County, Wisconsin, in Probate, admitting to probate the said alledged last will and testament of said Dennison Baker, deceased, be and the same is hereby vacated, and the said case is hereby remanded to the County Court of Dodge County, in Probate, for further proceedings therein in accordance herewith.

It is Further Ordered and Adjudged, that there be allowed and paid to the proponent of said will as attorney's fees herein the sum of Nine Hundred Dollars, and the sum of One hundred and Seventy Three and 22/100 Dollars, her necessary disbursements, to be taxed, and to the said contestants, as their attorney's fees herein the sum on Nine Hundred Dollars and the sum of Two Hundred Thirty Four and 75/100 Dollars, their necessary disbursements, to be taxed, out of the said estate, which amounts are adjudged to be reasonable compensation, and the special administrator of the said estate, D.B. Greene, is hereby ordered and directed to pay said amounts from the siad estate to such respective parties.

By the Court,  
E.E. Kirkham,

Clerk<sup>312</sup>

After this long and costly debate over Denison's will, it was finally ruled that the will be vacated. The cost of these hearings had now cost the estate \$2,207.98, yet it was not settled. It was ruled that Nancy had had a part in the way the will was worded and the distribution of his estate. However, Nancy appealed the hearing's rulings and the case went on to Madison, the capital of Wisconsin, where the Wisconsin Supreme Court heard the case on February 21, 1899. The Supreme Court upheld the ruling of the Dodge County Probate Court.

State of Wisconsin  
Supreme Court

I, Clarence Kellog, Clerk of the Supreme Court of the State of Wisconsin, do hereby certify that I have compared the above and foregoing order and judgement of the Court in the above entitled cause, [ refereced to the will of Dennison Baker, dec'd, Adelbert J. Baker, etal (Respondents -vs- Nancy E. Baker Appellant ] , and that it is a correct transcript therefrom, and of the whole thereof in Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Court, at Madison, this Fifteenth day of May A.D. 1899.

Clarence Kellog,  
Clerk of the Supreme Court  
of the State of Wisconsin<sup>313</sup>

The case was then returned to the Probate Court of Dodge Couty for the distribution of the estate of Dennison Baker.

On November 20, 1900 the distribution was made. The cash in the estate had been reduced to \$2702.82. The widow, Nancy, son, Adelbert J. then residing in Montrose, Henry County,

---

<sup>312</sup> *Dodge Couty Probate Cour Records- Item 31 pgs. 549 -552*

<sup>313</sup> *Transcript Dodge County Probate Court Item 33 pgs. 552 & 553*

Missouri, and daughter, Ruby Rector, living in Minneapolis and the children of son, George, were awarded the remaining assets of the estate.

Nancy was also awarded \$514.39 for her allowance of personal property that had been seized by the administrator and sold at auction. Attorney Butterfield, attorney for the minor children of George Baker, was paid \$1,200.00 for his fees and the children's legacy. Nancy E. Baker was paid \$675.70, her portion of the cash assets. Adelbert J. Baker had been advanced \$682.54, so he paid back \$6.84. Ruby Rector had been advanced \$317.54, so she was paid her balance of \$358.16. The five grandchildren, one of whom was Adelbert H. Baker and not then a minor, was paid his 1/5th share, \$135.14. The other four grandchildren's shares had been paid to attorney Butterfield. Acting as guardian ad litem, he was instructed to disburse the other four children's shares, each \$135.14, from his previous payment.

The real estate was assigned to the heirs at law in common and undivided subject to the widows homestead right and right of dower, to-wit:

to Adelbert J., son of said deceased and Ruby Rector a daughter of said deceased, to each an undivided one third thereof, and to the said Adelbert H. Baker, Fred D. Baker, Thomas J. Baker, Alice Baker and George Baker by right of representation as heirs of said deceased to each an undivided one fifteenth thereof. It is further Ordered and Adjudged that upon the payment of the sums aforesaid to the persons entitled thereto and upon his filing receipts therefore that said administrator be discharged from his said administration and from the bond given by him as such administrator.

By the Court, J.A. Barney, County Judge.<sup>314</sup>

The Exhibit of the real estate totaled 193 3/4 acres and (other lands) not defined, which were all listed but I shall omit here.<sup>315</sup>

---

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid* Part of Item 34 pgs. 553 554 & 555

<sup>315</sup> *Ibid*, p. 555

The homestead and dower rights of Nancy was further defined in Item 37:

We the undersigned Commissioners duly appointed by the Court and sworn to, to lay out the homestead for Nancy E. Baker, widow of the deceased Denison Baker, of Neosho, Dodge County, Wis. and also an addition thereto of dower in all the lands of said deceased over and above said homestead, except the grist mill, report to the Honorable County Court, as follows: We designate for the homestead, the SE 1/4 of NE 14 Section 30, Town 10, Range 17, E., less 3 acres of NW corner, and also the North 3/40 of NE 1/4 of SE 1/4 Section 30, Town 10, R,17,E., and N 1/2 of NW 1/4 of SW 1/4 of Section 29 Town 10, Range 17 N, Dower right 57 acres according to Government survey.

Dated, Neosho, February 12th, 1901.

John Steele) Commissioners

John Herberg) of

Chas. Lenta) Denison Baker Estate

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 12th day of  
February

A.D 1901 John Mertes, Notary Public Dodge County, Wis.

316

This closes the affairs of Denison Baker, son of Isaac Baker.

In Chapter 5 I also placed the family of Alexander Gillett in Rubicon Township, which will soon become a part of our history.

The next information on the residents was a newspaper listing:

Another pioneer has gone. The funeral of A.H. Gillette, an old and respected citizen of this place, took place at the M.E. Church, D.B. Coffeen, officiating, on Monday afternoon.

Deceased was among the early settlers, and was in his 85th

---

<sup>316</sup> *Ibid*, p. 556



year. His aged wife survives him. John Johnstone and his wife, of Kendall, Monroe County, were called here by the death of Mrs. J.'s father, Mr. Gillette, also, Mrs. N. Baker, Mrs. A. Baker, and Mrs. Stratton, of Whitehall, Trempealeau Co., children of the deceased. <sup>317</sup>

Alexander was buried on his lot in Woodland Cemetery which he had purchased when his son-in-law, Elias Baker, died in 1860. He is buried beside Elias Baker and his son, Elia E. Baker.

Alexander's stone carries the following inscription:

ALEXANDER GILLETT  
Died June 8, 1889  
Aged 84 Yrs.

Figure 21-06: Alexander Gillett Tombstone, Woodlawn Cemetery

Alexander's will written the 12<sup>th</sup>. day of January, 1887:

I Alexander H. Gillett of the village of Neosho, County of Dodge and State of Wisconsin, being of sound mind and memory and mindful

of the uncertainties of human life, do make, and publish and declare this my last Will and Testament in the manner following.

First after the payment of all my just debts and funeral expense, I give devise and bequeath to my wife Abby Gillett Eight hundred dollars in money and one quarter of what my house and lot is sold

for which is in the village of Neosho, and all the house hold goods, furniture, bedding, etc., 2nd And I further give, devise and bequeath to my daughter Laura Baker, wife of Nelson Baker the sum of Three hundred and Twenty dollars. 3rd I give, devise and bequeath to my daughter Alvira Baker, wife of

---

<sup>317</sup> *The Dodge County Citizen* Vol. XXXII Beaven Day WI p.3 Col. 8

Abraham Baker, the sum of Fifty dollars. 4th I give, devise and bequeath to my daughter Lucretia Johnstone, wife of John Johnstone, the sum of Forty dollars. 5th And I further give, devise and bequeath to my grand daughter, Alma Pickel, wife of Mr. Pickel, the sum of One hundred dollars. 6th I give, devise and bequeath to my grand daughter Lara Elmira Lawton, the sum of Fifty dollars. 7th And to my grand daughter Roda Lawton I devise and bequeath the sum of Fifty dollars. 8th And I further give, devise and bequeath to the heirs of my son Ezra Gillett the sum of Ten dollars each. The rest, residue, and remainder, if any, all my property, both real and personal shall be equally divided between my Three daughters Laura Baker and Alvira Baker and Lucretia Johnstone or their heirs, share and share alike. 9th I hereby nominate William Kendall of Neosho, Dodge Co as executor of this my last Will and Testament and hereby authorize and empower him the said William Kendall to compound, compromise and settle any claims that may be for or against my estate. In witness whereof I hereunto set my hand and seal, 12th day of January, 1887. A. H. Gillett

The above instrument consisting on one sheet was signed, published and declared by the said testator to be his last Will and Testament in the presence of us who have signed our names at his request as witness in his presence and in the presence of each other.

Martin Leicher, Neosho, Dodge Co., Wis.

Nicholas Leicher, Neosho, Dodge Co., Wis.

John C. Marshall, Neosho, Dodge Co., Wis.<sup>318</sup>

The will tells us a great deal. Alexander was a very successful and astute person. An inventory of his estate taken by William Kendall also tells us more. Alexander held four mortgages:

Step Daughter Mary Stratton for \$500.00

Interest due 131.96

Ole Matson & wife \$300.00

Interest due 17.00

Henry Truman & wife \$800.00

Interest due 39.67

---

<sup>318</sup> *Registry of Dodge County Wills - Madison, Wisconsin*

Frank Williams & wife	500.00
Interest due	18.13
and a note w/ August Wagner	50.00
Interest due	1.00
another note indistinguishable	100.00
Interest due	2.50
His house and lots 2,3 & 4	
Block 6 Village Neosho	\$ 600.00
Cash in hand Mrs. Gillett	170.00
Total	\$2945.14 <sup>319</sup>

The next legal document deals with Alexander's wife Abigail.

Estate of A. H. Gillett deceased- Abby Gillett being duly sworn depose and says that she was the wife of A. H. Gillett who died on the 8th day of June 1889, that she married him in September of 1857 and that at the time of her marriage to him she was possessed of the sum of (\$250.00) two hundred and fifty dollars, said money being her own individual property. - that she gave the said two hundred fifty dollars to her husband, she said A.H. Gillett.

She therefore ask that she be allowed out of the estate of A. H. Gillett, deceased the sum of (\$250.00, two hundred and fifty dollars, with interest since September 1857. her Abby X Gillett

In the presence of D. Baker (His signature) mark<sup>320</sup>

Abby's claim created a problem for William Kendall. The interest from 1857 to 1889 would wipe out much of the estate value. Abram C. Baker, who's wife Alvira would inherit a fair sum of money, took action. He was then living in Minnesota, but returned to Winnebago County, Iowa to a former acquaintance who was a Notary Public.

---

<sup>319</sup> *Probate Court Records Dodge County Wisconsin 18 July 1889*

<sup>320</sup> *Subscribed & sworn to me 8th day November A.D. 1889  
J.K. Douglas, Justice of the Peace*

State of Iowa  
Winnebago County

I Abram Baker first being duly sworn do depose and say that I am a resident of Faribault County-Minnesota, - am fifty seven years old. I am son of Abigail Gillett who now resides in Dodge County, Wis. I further say that my mother the said Abigail Gillett was married the second time, her last husband being A. Gillett. At time of this said second marriage of my mother I was living in the same neighborhood in Wisconsin as my said mother lived and was I that time a grown up young man was well acquainted with my said mothers financial circumstances before and after the time of her marriage to said Gillett, and know of my own personal knowledge that she could not have had to exceed Fifty-Dollars worth of property - at the time of her marriage. I further say that my mother told me she had about - Fifty-Dollars at time of her said second marriage. Abram Baker (signature) Subscribed, sworn to before me by the said Abram Baker this 23rd day of October 1889. W.E.(Pil?????) Notary Public<sup>321</sup>

---

<sup>321</sup> *Archives-Latter Day Saints, Utah - (Copy in LCB files)*

William Kendall had to counter this letter if he was to be able to close the Estate of Alexander Gillett. As he pondered the situation he decided one way might be to look at what assets Abigail may have had at the time she left Isaac. On checking land sales he found the sale of Isaac and Abigail's land to J. Hain in 1853, three years before her second marriage. He knew Mr. Hain before he moved to Dakota. He wrote Mr. Hain, informed him of the situation, and asked if he could shed any light on the matter, or testify if needed. A letter came back.

Canton, Dakota Dec. 26, 1889  
Wm. Kendall  
Neosho, Wis.

Dear Sir and Bro

Yours of the 22nd is at hand and noted in reply would say. My information was in regard to the matter of said nature that I could not make answer to it, but I am satisfied in my own mind that Abram Baker is wrong for Mr. Gillett to pay Dowry when they were married as furnished money for it before.

---

So I have been to Mr. and Mrs. Arnold (name not clear) for \_\_\_\_\_ Monday. Our snow all gone. Mercury has not reached zero yet. Coughs and colds are very fashionable just now, Sandy got home yesterday, all OK.Yours, J.P. Hain<sup>322</sup>

The mention of Dowry in his letters prompts Mr. Kendall to seek information from Alexander's daughters. Four small notes are on file and I have photocopies in my file. Dates on two are not clear:

Neosho, Nov. the 2 18??  
Received of A H Gillett  
the sum of 70.00 Seventy  
dollars for part of my  
Dowry this day of Nov  
the 2, 18?? A.D.  
Mrs. Laura Baker

Whitehall Nov. 17 1885  
I received of A H Gillett  
the sum of \$100.00 One Hundred  
dollars for part of my dowry this  
17 day of Nov. 1885 A.D.  
Mrs. Laura Baker

February 16, 1889  
Received of A.H. Gillett  
Two hundred and fifty dollars  
as Dowry.  
Mrs. Laura Baker

Whitehall Nov 17 1885  
I received of A.H. Gillett the  
sum of \$500.00 (Five hundred  
dollars for part of my dowry  
this 17 day of Nov. 1885 AD  
Alvira Baker

---

<sup>322</sup> *Later Day Saints Archives - Utah*

\$159.63 cents Neosho Wisconsin 11 Dec'ber  
Received from my Father  
Alexander H. Gillett the sum  
of One Hundred and Fifty Nine  
Dollars and Sixty Three Cents  
which amount is to be deducted  
from my portion at the final  
Settlement after my Fathers death.  
Lucretia Johnstone<sup>323</sup>

The final document filed by William Kendall regarding the  
final accounting and distribution of the estate of A. H. Gillett:

The petition of William Kendall respectfully shows to the  
Court  
that he is the executor named in the last will of said A.H.  
Gillett deceased and has duly qualified as such. That he  
has filed an inventory of the estate - That the appraiser in  
finality- value a certain mortgage from Mary E. Stratton- to  
said deceased charging said executor with principal and interest  
in the sum of 631.96 .

That when the will was drawn and he was named as  
executor, said  
deceased instructed said executor to compromise said claim  
with  
Mary E. Stratton for \$550.00 she being a step daughter of  
said deceased. Wherefore petitioner prays that the order be made  
authorizing him to compensate said claim for said sum of  
\$550.00.

[ Final charges- for posterity I extract a few items:  
Burial Suit 9.00 Casket 35.00 Grave Stone 28.00  
Appraisers 2.00 Taxes 7.46 Attorney 25.00  
Mrs. Gillett's Legacy 800.00  
" " on Claim 100.00  
" Weekly allowance 208.00 end of examples ]

---

<sup>323</sup> {sic} Latter Day Saints Files, Utah

It concludes on the last page-  
The homestead valued at 600.00 and divided in equal shares to

Mrs. Gillett, Laura Baker, Alvira Baker and Lucretia Johnstone, and is in the possession of the widow and undivided. The legacies in the will to Laura Baker, Alvira Baker and Lucretia Johnstone were all paid by the deceased before his death, except 37 cents to Lucretia Johnstone. The residue of \$1393.00 is to be equally divided by the will between Laura Baker, Alvira Baker and Lucretia Johnstone. <sup>324</sup>

There is still one unsolved mystery in the life of our ancestor, Alexander H. Gillett. A census of 1880, enumerated on June 17, 1880

Page 375 Family # 172

Gillett, Alexander White Male 75 Years old b. NH, Parents b. Conn Gillett, Martha (Wife) White Female. 70 Yrs. b. NY Parents b. NY

<sup>325</sup>

There was no mention of this person in the Probate papers or in the affairs of Abby Gillett which follows. The marriage must have dissolved and Alexander returned to Abby.

Figure 21-07: Alexander Hannah Gillett

Abby Webb Baker Gillett wrote her will on April 20, 1981.

Known Amen by these present that I Abby Gillett of the town of Rubicon in the County of Dodge and State of Wisconsin being of

sound mind, do make, declare and publish this my last will and testament:

---

<sup>324</sup> *Final Probate County Court Dodge County re- A.H. Gillett estate*

<sup>325</sup> *1880 Census, Wisconsin, Dodge County, Rubicon Township*



First: I give to Mrs. Nancy Baker of Neosho, Dodge County Wisconsin one feather bed together with pillows, pillow cases sheets and other covering belonging to said bed, she the said Nancy Baker to make her own selection from such beds as I may leave.

Second: I give to my son Abrahm Baker the sum of five dollars.

Third: I give to Alma Pickle, daughter and only heir of my deceased son Elias Baker the sum of five dollars.

Fourth: I give to my daughter Mary E. Stratton all of my clothing and my household goods that I have not otherwise disposed of by this instrument.

Fifth: I give to my Grand Daughter, Florence Stratton the feather bed that shall be left after Nancy Baker shall have made her selection.

Sixth: All the balance of my property either real or personal,

I give jointly to my son Stephen J. Baker and my daughter Mary E. Stratton to be divided equally between them.

Seventh: Should any of the legator's mentioned in this instrument die antecedent to me, then their legacy or legacies as the case may be shall go to their lawful heirs.

Eighth: I do nominate and appoint J.K. Douglass of the town of

Lebanon, Dodge County, Wisconsin to be the executor of this my last will and testament.

her

Abby X Gillett (Seal)

mark

Signed, sealed, declared and published by the said Abby Gillett

as and for her last will and testament in presence of us, who, at her request and in her presence, and in the presence of each other

have subscribed our names as witness hereto-  
James H. Goodwin  
June N Goodwin  
J. K. Douglass<sup>326</sup>

The next news in the Neosho area is Abby's death.

The widow of the late A.H. Gillett, of Neosho, died at her home in the village on Monday August 15, at the advanced age of 85 years.

Her death resulted from paralysis, she having been stricken down on Friday previous while walking in her garden. The deceased and her husband, who died two years ago, were among the very earliest pioneers who settled in the town of Rubicon, about the year 1845. She was twice married, her first husband being Mr. Baker, and by whom she leaves one son. By her late husband she leaves a daughter, Mrs. Stratton, who was with her at the time of her death. Both children now reside near Whitehall, Trempealeau County.<sup>327</sup>

Abby Webb Baker Gillett is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery beside her last husband Aleander Gillet. Her tombstone inscription:

MRS. ABBY GILLETT  
Died Aug. 15, 1892  
Aged 86 Years

Figure 21-08: Tombstone Abby Gillett, Woodland Cemetery

---

<sup>326</sup> *Will Index, Circuit Court Dodge County, Juneau, Wisc.*

<sup>327</sup> *The Beaver Day Argus Vol. XXXII 25 August 1892 #44 p. 3 Col. 6*

## Neosho

J. K. Douglass failed to act as administrator as requested by Abby in her will. On October 18<sup>th</sup>. her son, Stephen J. Baker, filed a petition in the County Court of Dodge County. He stated that on or about the 13<sup>th</sup>. day of September, 1892, the said J.K. Douglas duly qualified as such executor and made and filed his bond therein in the sum of Sixteen Hundred Dollars with Chas. Uhlman and Wm. A. Ives, sureties and letters testamentary were thereupon duly issued to him therein: that on or about the 13th day of September, 1892, an order was therein duly made limiting the time within which creditors of said deceased and her said estate might file claims therein against the same: That on or about said date an order was duly made therein appointing J.W. Davis and J. E. Mason appraisers therein as appears in said court. Petitioner further alleges upon information and belief that on or about October 18th, 1892, that due proof of publication of notice to creditors was made and filed in court, together with receipt of Geo. W. Sloam for \$31.40 for attorney fee and printers fee and also the receipt of J. K. Douglas for \$13.23 for services and disbursements.

Petitioner further alleges upon information and belief that on about the said 18 day of October, 1892, the said J. K. Douglas as such executor tendered his resignation to said court in writing his resignation as executor of said estate which was received and filed on or about the said 18th day of October, 1892, and which said resignation was accepted and granted by said court as, appears from the record thereof, a copy of which is hereto annexed marked exhibit "A" and made part of this petition.

Petitioner further says upon information and belief that no inventory or appraisalment of said estate was ever made by said J. K. Douglas as such executor and that non has been filed in said court: that no judgement was ever made in said court assigning said estate or any part thereof; that no account was ever made, rendered or filed therein by said J. K. Douglas as such executor and that no receipts for specific legacies of for any part of said estate has ever been filed therein: that said estate has not been fully or finally administered and that there still remains property and assets thereof uncollected and undistributed in a sum of

money, amount unknown and other personal property and towit a claim against Mary E, Stratton and Henry C. Stratton amounting to a sum of Eleven Hundred Dollars, the said claim being a mortgage for the sum of \$800 together with the note the indebtedness secured thereby, which said mortgage was executed by one Henry Freeman and wife to one Alexander Gillett on or about the 31st day of October, 1885, bearing date on that date and drawing interest at the rate of 7 per cent, per annum, the said mortgage covering and being secured in the county of Trempealeau and State of Wisconsin, to wit, the North-east quarter of Section No Sixteen (16) in township Twenty-two (22) north of Range Eight (8). [ The petition goes on two more paragraphs until we find the following.]

Wherefor petitioner prays that R. S. Cowie, Esq., of the village of Whitehall, in the county of Trempealeau and State of Wisconsin, be appointed the administrator de bonis non of the estate of the Abby Gillett. Dated, this 15 Day of April, 1901

Ach??????? Richmond Attorney for Petitioner<sup>328</sup>

The court acted on the petition and granted approval of attorney Richmond as executor of the estate of Abby Gillett.

With the next legal document the closing of the estate may begin:

#### DODGE COUNTY COURT IN PROBATE

In the matter of the Estate of Abby Gillett Deceased.

On application of Stephen J. Baker, of the town of Burnside, Trempealeau County, Wis., representing among other things that

---

<sup>328</sup> *Circuit Court Dodge County, Juneau, Wisconsin*

Abby Gillett an inhabitant of, Neosho, of Dodge County, residing at the village of Neosho on the 15th day of August A.D. 1892 at said village died intestate, leaving estate to be administered; that J. K. Douglas, the sole executor of said estate heretofore appointed and qualified therein on October 18, 1892, resigned said trust by resignation in writing, which resignation was accepted by said court as of said date.

That the Petitioner is a son of said deceased, and prays that administration of said estate not already administered, be granted to

R. S. Cowie, Esq., of village of Whitehall, Trempealeau County, Wisconsin.

It is ordered, that said application be heard at a special term of said county on the Third Tuesday, being the 21st day of May A.D. 1901.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED:, that thereof be given to all persons interested, by publication of such notice at least three weeks successively, previous to the time in The JUNEAU TELEPHONE, a weekly paper published in Juneau, in said county.

Dated this 16th day of April A.D. 1901

By The Court J.A. (B???????) County Judge<sup>329</sup>

There is one gross error in the closure of the Abigail Webb Baker Gillett estate. The above legal document under footnote 23 states she died intestate, yet within the court records of Dodge County is the will of Abby, documented in footnote 20 in this chapter, as being on file in the court records. I believe the court allowed the oversight of her will since this estate settlement had been going on for nine years and the heirs had already disposed of her real property. Rather than create a true mess for the judicial system, they allowed the newly-appointed administrator to close the estate to the satisfaction of the heirs. No distribution of this estate is on file.

---

<sup>329</sup> *Circuit Court Dodge County Probate Records, Juneau, Wisconsin*

The affairs of the Baker and Gillett families were a sequence of tumultuous happenings beginning in 1857 and going on until 1901.

A brief review of these acts: In 1857, Abby deserted her husband Isaac Baker for a man of greater position and wealth, taking their 5 year old daughter with her to her new husband, Alexander Gillett. In 1872 Isaac died with little acclaim. In 1880 Abby's husband, Alexander Gillett, left her and married a Martha (?), but evidently this marriage does not work out and he returned to Abby. In 1884 Denison's wife, Eunice, died, and he, as probably the wealthiest man in Rubicon Township, was found by a lady who just happened to be in the area. She married him. In 1892 Abby died, but her estate was never settled. In February 1897 Denison was in failing health. His second wife, Nancy Clarke, manipulated his thoughts and mind and assisted him in his last will and testament. The heirs contested the will and a long and nasty legal battle ensued. Most of this dissension was the result of two, financially successful men who attracted two women who valued money and assets over family and morality. The old adages of: "Where there is money there are relatives." and "Money can not buy happiness." are well displayed in Dodge County in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup>. century.

Many of the family moved from the area, probably because of better potential for employment and a better way of life elsewhere, rather than just the legal matters of some of the elders. Some of Isaac's family moved to Trempealeau County and a larger group moved to Juneau County, in the area of Lyndon Station and Kilbourne (now Wisconsin Dells) which we shall relate to in the next chapter.



# 22

## KILBOURN CITY AND LYNDON STATION

This area along the Wisconsin River had been the home of the Winnebago Indians for generations. The area had many Indian mounds. These people did not have to roam from one area to another as some of the Indian tribes that lived in more arid areas did. The forests, streams, and wildlife in this location were plentiful. There were bears, deer, sturgeon and other fish, as well as the passenger pigeons so numerous in the early days they blackened the sky when in flight. You may remember this was the same story for our ancestors back in the Catskill mountains of New York.]

The white settlers kept coming and the Indians resisted giving up their lands. Fort Crawford garrison had been moved to Fort Snelling in Minnesota leaving the area unprotected. Many incidents are on record of the Winnebago incidents in Wisconsin. In September of 1832 a treaty was forced upon the Winnebago natives in by which they ceded all their tribal lands between the Rock and Wisconsin Rivers in exchange for lands west of the Mississippi. The nation was supposed to receive annual payments, but most were never paid. One of the sorriest chapters in the nation's history followed.

Nearly 2000 Winnebagos were rounded up and transported by boat and railroad to the Crow Creek Reservation in central South Dakota. They were taken by boat to Hannibal, Missouri, then by rail boxcars to St. Joseph, and then up the Missouri River to Crow Creek, all of them in one boat. They were fed hard bread and raw pork. Sixteen of them died on the way because of poor



diet and mass confinement below deck, much like the slaves that were brought to America. They were in such poor condition when they arrived at Crow Creek that several died every day until 150 more had perished.

They lived all summer on pork and flour. Even when other food arrived it was of extremely poor quality. After a year they were nearly starved and without shelter, clothing, or medical supplies. There was no timber, hunting was poor, and there were no fish in the river. The land could not be farmed. Smallpox broke out and several hundred more died. Seeing only death and disaster at Crow Creek, members of the nation began to trickle southward to the Omaha Reservation in Nebraska. By 1863 1,200 Winnebagos were in the Omaha Reservation where living was better, schools were available, and each family received 80 acres to farm. In 1874 all the Winnebagos were moved again in Nebraska, but about 500 promptly returned to Wisconsin and still remain in the area. A Nebraskan reservation remains the tribal lands today, with half the Winnebagos living on it. Most of the remainder are in Wisconsin, with some scattered in Chicago, South Dakota and Minnesota and other mid-western states.<sup>330</sup>

An article found in The Kilbourne Mirror files states:

"As a whole the Winnebago's have been a credit to their race, their leaders have furnished examples of gentleness, courtesy and strength of character which might well be emulated by all."

A railroad tycoon, Bryon Kilbourn, had laid tracks west from Lake Michigan until they reached the Wisconsin River where a village bearing his name was ormed, as he prepared to build a one-track bridge across the river. He finished this bridge in 1857 and it was used until it burned in 1866. He built another bridge, but as rail traffic increased it proved not strong enough and a steel bridge was built in 1875. His railroad increased the flow of new settlers to the area.

---

<sup>330</sup> *Excerpts gathered from American Peoples Encyclopedia, Wisconsin History and American Indian History.*

History records the winter of 1855-1856 as an unusually severe one. Stephen, Delight, and family survived this, their first midwestern winter, in some rather crude house they had hastily put together on their arrival at Rubicon. Nelson had married Laura Gillett and a daughter. Emma. had been born in 1857. They decided to move on to the area they had heard about on another river. There was a sizeable town there with many stores and life surely would be more desirable there than in this little village where Isaac and Denison and Elias lived. They probably did not use the railroad to move since they had a team of horses and a few possessions they had put together since arriving in Wisconsin.

The timber industry farther north had created a new industry for the area. They cut the timber, fastened the logs together in rafts, and floated them down the river to the sawmills along the Mississippi. Most of the scenic narrows on the river in this area still carry the names these rafters gave to the river bends and whirlpools. Riverboats plied the river. However, our family members were farmers and this was the main reason some of them made the move to this area that had all these other possibilities.

By 1857 Kilbourn had three public houses for travelers, two drygoods stores, a cigar factory, and hardware store. There was also a clothing store, a grocery store, a drugstore, a shoemaker, a livery stable, a barbershop, a blacksmith shop, a meat market, a carpenter shop, and two milliner shops. Two sawmills had been built and a machine shop was being constructed.<sup>331</sup>

Kilbourn also had a very large farming industry and was the nearest market. It was a busy, growing village, with riverboats and now the new railroad by which to ship its crops to Milwaukee and Chicago. All this news was no doubt why the Bakers(Stephen, Nelson and Elias) made the move to Lyndon Station about three miles above Kilbourn City. Exactly when they all moved from the Neosho-Rubicon area we can not confirm. However, the census of 1860 tells the story.

---

<sup>331</sup> *The Wisconsin Mirror of June 10, 1857*

On page 135 of the Census for Lyndon Station we found:

Dwelling #1079 Family #965

Elias Baker	30 yr Male	A farmer	Estate \$160	b. NY
Mary Baker	25 yr Female			b. NY
Alma I. Baker	4 yr Female			b. Wisc.
Harriet Baker	2 yr Female			b. Wisc.

On page 136

Dwelling #1086 Family #972

Nelson Baker	26 yr Male	A farmer	Estate \$220	b. NY
Laura	"	22 yr Female		b. NY
Emma	"	2 yr Female		b. Wisc.

Dwelling #1089 Family #975

Stephen Baker	47 yr Male		Estate \$200	b. NY
Delight	"	46 yr Female		b. NY
Jane	"	22 yr Female		b. NY
Orrin	"	16 yr Male		b. NY
Eliz. Ann	"	15 yr Female		b. NY
Louisa P.	"	23 yr Female		b. NY
William	"	33 yr Male	House Carpenter	b. England
Wilbur	"	8 yr Male		b. Wisc.
Pauline	"	5 yr Female		b. Wisc.
Arnold	"	2 yr Male		b. Wisc. <sup>332</sup>

The land at Lyndon Station was an answer to a prayer the family members said as they had prepared to leave The Old Baker Farm on the mountain top at Shandaken. There were no rocks in the soil, it was a soil easy to till, and Isaac and Ira had not misinformed them of the areas great potential. For the most part, farming meant raising the typical grain and forage crops such as wheat, corn, and barley, plus each family's vegetables.

---

<sup>332</sup> *US Census Lyndon Station, Juneau County, Wisc.  
Enumerated Aug. 10, 1860*

However, a new crop was becoming an article of commerce. There was an increased demand for hops for the breweries of the state, especially since a hop louse was infesting the hopyards of the East. A boom developed in 1860! Farmers in Sauk, Adams, Columbia, and Juneau counties rallied to the new market. The hop louse had not reached the midwest yet. Kilbourn City, because of its site at the point where the four corners of these counties meet, suddenly found itself a center market and shipping point for the surrounding area. The soil conditions and climate were excellent for the new crop. Prices for hops continued to rise as this small area became the source of hops for the entire brewing industry.

The State Agricultural Society of Wisconsin in its annual report for the years 1867-68 reported: "Cases are numerous in which the first harvest has paid for the land and all its improvements." Farmers all rushed to plant the new crop, hops!

Previously, a farmer planted large acreages of corn, rye, and barley and toiled laboriously, tilling and harvesting these crops, then hauling his production to market over bad roads by ox or a team of horses to a discouraging indifferent market. Now things were different. Hops are an intensive plant to culture. A small plot of ten or eleven acres produced enormous returns. However, the preparation of the soil, the planting and pole setting, and harvesting all required detailed and critical attention.

Hops belong to the mulberry family. They are characterized by heart-shaped leaves covered with yellow, resinous grains. These grains give a characteristic bitter taste and aroma to the plant. The twining stem of the hop is prickly and bears dioecious flowers with female blossoms appearing in scaly glandular catkins. Cultivated species are grown on trellis-like poles. Harvesting occurs in fall and consists of gathering the drying female catkins. The dried inflorescence contains a group of narcotic principles. The chief use of hops, however, is in the brewing industry, where they are used to flavor beer.<sup>333</sup>

---

<sup>333</sup> *American Peoples Encyclopedia Vol. 10 p. 10602-603*

In the fall the men cut the hop vines at ground level and lay the poles and arrange them for the convenience of the pickers, who are all girls. There were also men who looked after the drying of the hops in the hop houses, which they kept heated to a certain temperature by means of big stoves. The hops were placed on a wire racks some feet from the floor. This "curing" had to be done by someone who understood the work, as the quality of the crop would be poor due to inattention or mismanagement. Sulphur was burned to hasten the curing and to whiten the hops. The fumes passed out the queer, little ventilating shaft at the top, of the building.

The next step was baling for which special presses were required. They were operated by ox or horse power. Many farmers owned presses to do their pressing. Those who did not employed those who did. Sometimes the owners of large hop houses would also do the curing of hops for the smaller owners. Today we call this a custom farming service. A factory for the manufacture of hop presses was built in Kilbourn, but operated for only a short time.

As prices soared and demand increased, the farmer could contract his crop in his own hopyard. The agents sought him. He no longer sought the buyer. Hauling the crop was less burdensome than hauling grain or potatoes because of its light-weight, compact form. The harvest extended over a period of three weeks. Generally speaking, the hop grower ran a race against the first frost. If the frost won the race, his crop was damaged, discolored, or spoiled altogether.

During this season every hop grower's farm was the scene of busy activities. Where, formerly he had undertaken the total task of harvesting his produce alone, or maybe with one hired hand, now he employed help in large numbers. The country, even with help from the towns and villages, was unable to supply the demand. Railroads ran special trains to bring in help. It was estimated that in the 1867 harvest 15,000 pickers were required, with 10,000 of them being imported. Trains originated in

Milwaukee and stopped and picked up workers at stations along the route.

For three weeks the hum of busy life went on. Open-air work amid the tonic fragrance of the hop flowers, communal spirit engendered by the large group of workers, and the charm of new scenes and places robbed the labor of every element of drudgery and converted it into a kind of annual frolic to which the employed as well as the employers looked forward with real pleasure. The hop harvest brought in both male and female employees. In the evening, barns or other buildings were made ready for dances. The local fiddlers were in much demand. These characteristic dances of hop-picking time gradually spread to higher circles of society and the term hop dance, or "hop", was applied to the amusement of dancing for a number of years. The smooth glide waltz-step went out of use and the downright, vigorous style of the "hop-step" became in fashion.

The hop laborers were sometimes as many as a hundred on one farm and were housed in every available quarter. The farmer's wife, with what help she could find, devoted her time and energies to supplying three meals a day. "They expected good fare too, I can tell you!", said one, old hop grower. They usually ate at a long, common table in the dwelling, the kitchen often being enlarged for the purpose.

It is plain to see that to pay such manner to laborers and to furnish them with bed and board for over three weeks, the farmer needed money or credit. He had more than he needed of both. Money was never before or since so plentiful with the people in this vicinity. His credit was never before or since so good. A farmer who had a flourishing hop-yard could get credit to the amount of \$5,000 from the Kilbourn merchants.

The standard of living rose dramatically. Expensive furniture was purchased and after the slump they often had no houses to furnish. Some families thought the merchandise for sale in Kilbourn was not good enough. They sent East for silverplate and linens, etc. People who had never handled money

found themselves in possession of large sums. For many banking accommodations were either unfamiliar or inconvenient. The farmers often hid money in mattresses or other out of the way places about the house. Others carried enormous amounts on their persons.

During the fall of the year the streets were lively with traffic, especially about the time the hop-pickers arrived or departed. The teams and vehicles temporarily congested the street and neighborhood of the depot like the traffic of a busy city. Banks thrived and local dealers in groceries, hardware, and household supplies did a flourishing business.

There was only one warning note sounded in the general excitement of the "boom". This came from an old gentleman of Sussex, England, who had passed through a similar period of the "hop fever" in his native country, with the same "slump" in prices which later ruined so many farmers in this section. It is hard to arrive at a definite understanding of this sudden fall in prices of hops. Some alleged it was over-production; others claim that a discovery of a new method of extracting a greater quantity of its beer-making properties from each pound of hops caused a fall in demand. Doubtless both conditions were a factor entered in the "crash".

Whatever the cause, much of the enormous crop of 30,000 bales in the year 1868 could not be sold at any price. It was stored in warehouses and finally became worthless. Instead of the \$3,000,000 which the producers expected to realize, \$600,000 was about the sum total, half of which went to the pickers.

Figure 22-01: Historical marker at Lyndon Sta., Wisc.  
Relating to Crash of Hop Industry 1868

The hop failure was one of the greatest blows the economic life in Kilbourn and vicinity ever sustained and its effects lasted for many years. Farmers, many of them having mortgaged their farms to engage more extensively in hop production, now found themselves loaded hopelessly with debt. Some surrendered their

farms to the mortgagees and hired out as day-laborers; others, with such credit as they could get, remained, only to abandon the struggle later on. Those who succeeded in paying their debts after receiving such a stunning blow were, ever afterward, cautious and without enterprise in their activities.<sup>334</sup>

What role our family, the Bakers, had in this climate of boom and crash, we do not know. There are no family legends about how they were involved in this exciting and disastrous environment. I can only make assumptions. First, they were new comers in the area, and more than likely, squatters on the land on first arrival. They probably were employed by others and had the opportunity and benefit of having income from the labor they provided in both the farm and domestic areas.

Shortly after they arrived at Lyndon Station, Nelson and Laura built a large, log house. A son was born on Christmas Day, December 25, 1860. He was Henry Hudson Baker, my grandfather. A second son, Nelson Warren Baker, was born on June 24, 1863. These two brothers join Emma, their firstborn, who had been born at Rubicon. Sometime in the 1930, my aunt, Nellie, and husband, Kyle Matteson, took Henry Hudson back to the log cabin in which he was born.

Figure 22-02: Log Cabin House, Birthplace of Henry  
Hudson Baker and Nelson Warren Baker  
Lyndon Station, Wisconsin

Elias Baker, son of Isaac Baker, who was a near resident to Nelson and Laura, died June 15, 1860 and his remains were taken back to be buried on his father-in-law's lot in Woodlawn Cemetery at Neosho, Wisconsin.

---

<sup>334</sup> *This History of The Hops Industry was excerpts selected from the History of Columbia County. (1915)*



Stephen and Delight Baker and their family as well as William Pilling and his wife, Louisa, their daughter and family left Lyndon Station before the hop industry crashed. The departure was probably in the spring of 1865, as we will find them at Wasioja, in Dodge County, Minnesota on October 6, 1865, as I shall relate to in the next chapter.

Nelson and Laura decided to stay on at Kilbourn. Evidently they had not saved their money from their labors in the hop industry, as they wrote his father, Stephen, and borrowed \$300 with which they purchased two lots with a house in Kilbourn.

"THIS INDENTURE, made the Ninth day of September 1869, Daniel Hurd and Emilie Jenie Hurd his wife of Kilbourn City, Columbia County, Wisconsin parties of the first part and Nelson Baker of Juneau County, Wisconsin party of the second part, Witnesseth as parties of the first part in consideration of the sum of Three Hundred Dollars, do sell to the party of the second part his heirs and assigns forever: All the following described real estate, situate, lying and being in Columbia County and State of Wisconsin to wit: A piece of land 100 feet East and West by 150 feet North and South formerly Known and described as Lots No. six (6) and seven (7) of Block No forty two (42) of the Village of Wisconsin according to the official plot of said village of Wisconsin on record in the office of the Register of Deeds of said Columbia County, said piece of land being on a part of Lot No five (5) in Section No ten (10) in Township No thirteen (13) North of Range No six (6) East.

State of Wisconsin-County of Columbia: Be It Remembered that on the Ninth day of September A.D. 1869 personally came before me the above named Daniel Hurd and Emily J. Hurd his wife to me known to be the persons who executed the above Deed, and acknowledge the same to be their free act and deed for the purpose therein mentioned. Thomas B. Caun

Notary Public

Columbia Co., Wis."<sup>335</sup>

---

<sup>335</sup> *Columbia County Deeds, Baraboo, Wisconsin*

In searching for Wisconsin City on today's maps we had no success. It is my assumption that in the transition of the name change for Kilbourn City, it may, for a short period of time been called Wisconsin City, before it was renamed Wisconsin Dells, which is now the name of this popular vacation area on the Wisconsin River.

Nelson, Laura, and family evidently changed their minds and also left the area soon after. They, however, did not go to his parents' in the area of Dodge County, Minnesota, but rather he and a single fellow by the name of Zebedia Kelly, more than probably a descendant of the Kellys back at Shandaken, went to a city in Freeborn County, Minnesota which was reporting rapid growth. This is more than an assumption. Checking the deed records in Albert Lea, Minn. I found that on July 5, 1870 Nelson Baker and Zebedia Kelly purchased from Francis and Maggie Hall Lot #5 - Block #4 in the Railroad addition of the village of Albert Lea.<sup>336</sup>

All the Baker-Gillett families did not leave the Lyndon Station area, as the 1880 census shows:

Fred Pickel	W	Male	30 yr.	Farmer	b. Wisc.	
Alma	"	W Female	24 yr.	Keeping House	b. Wisc.	
Lawton Rhoda	W	Female	9 yr	Sister/wife	b. Wisc	<sup>337</sup>

Alma was Alexander Gillett's daughter and Rhoda, a granddaughter called Roda in his will, was the daughter of Alex's daughter, Laura Elmira, who had married a Lawton. From this it may indicate the Lawton parents had died, or was Rhoda just visiting her aunt. Temporary visitors were not to be enumerated as residents, so we assume the parents may have died.

---

<sup>336</sup> *Freeborn County Deeds, Albert Lea, Minnesota*

<sup>337</sup> *1880 Census Lyndon Station, Juneau County, Wisconsin*

The 1900 census records also lists the Pickle family:

Pickle, Frederick M. b. Sep. 1849 Age 50 b. Wisc.

owns a farm

" Alma E. F b. Apr. 1856 Age 44 b. Wisc.

" Glen E. M b. Feb. 1882 Age 18 b. Wisc  
farm laborer

" Frank E. M b. Jan. 1885 Age 15 b. Wisc

" Lena M. F b. Nov. 1890 Age 9 b. Wisc  
at school

This concludes most all of the documentation of the family in the state of Wisconsin. However, James Henry Godding and his wife Mary Elizabeth Woolever and their family did not get down to the Rubicon, Neosho, or Wisconsin Dells area, so they will be our opening of the next chapter. After we have their family brought up to date, we shall move on westward into Minnesota. We shall relate to the families living at that time in Fillmore, Dodge, and Freeborn counties, in southern Minnesota.



# 23

## SHEBOYGAN AND ON TO MINNESOTA

Some time during the summer of 1853 or 1854 John Godding Jr. and his wife, the former Hulda Eliza Fulkerson, and their entire family decided to leave Steuben County and relocate in Wisconsin. They had nine children, two of them married - Sally Ann, who had married Samuel Ayres Hallack on January 12, 1846 and now had two children, Milo, born in 1848, and Cora, born in 1850, and James Henry, who had married Mary Elizabeth Woolever and had a daughter Flora Ellen, born Dec. 25, 1852. The family of twelve probably started west with two teams of horses and two covered wagons. After days on the trails, which by the crow flies, would be over 120 miles, they crossed three rivers, the Genesee, the Allegheny, and Conewango Creek. At the first harbor they came to on Lake Erie they sold the horses and wagons and got on a ship for the rest of the journey. They reached the harbor at Ashtabula, Ohio. Here they disposed of the horses and wagons, sorted out the personal goods they could take with them and waited for the next ship going west to Lake Michigan. This is a conjecture, as they left us no personal memoirs. This also supports my father's statement to me when a child of 9 or 10 years of age that our family made a stop in Ohio on their way west.

A ship finally arrived and the sale of the wagons and horses made passage a possibility. Upon finally reaching the Straits of Mackinac they decided to tell the captain they wanted to disembark at the first harbor that he recommended where they could procure land and start to farm. He informed them they would be arriving at a port the Indians call Sheboygan in a day or

two. There they left ship and probably built a log cabin or two. Mary Elizabeth was due to deliver a baby by fall and on September 12, 1854 a new son Johnnie is added to James Henry and Mary Elizabeth's family. The winter was severe and the infant died the next spring on April 25, 1855 and was buried at Sheboygan. The family decided to move inland and relocate to the next county to the west, Calumet. Here fifteen months later another son is born on July 22, 1856. They named him Myron Lafayette Godding. The history of our ancestors has demonstrated they all had a nomadic urge or were constantly looking for something better than they had found thus far. Possibly it was the glowing reports that were sent back by the first to move on to new areas. A typical example follows:

The Root River in southeastern Minnesota is a beautiful stream with its thousands of shady nooks, narrow babbling rapids, and broad expanses of quite flowing majesty among the low hills. One of the choicest spots in its valley is the very place which, in 1853, a few pioneers selected for the site of their new settlement which became Chatfield, Minnesota Territory. These men had banded together, traveled on foot about forty miles west of Winona, on the Mississippi, and finally came to this spot on a shelf of land between the Root River and a hill to the northeast, which they chose as exceptionally beautiful and favorable for a settlement. The requirements for living in such an area were water and timber for building and for fuel. Thus, this location made a gracious appeal. The Root River was crystal clear and numerous springs poured from the limestone hillsides. It was protected against possible floods that might occur on the river bottom and it was sheltered from the strong, north winds of winter. Logs were obtainable for building cabins and for ample firewood and a big spring on the northside of the proposed village site would produce water for the entire village.<sup>338</sup>

In 1856 there was active movement of settlers toward Minnesota Territory. At Brownsville, on the Mississippi, there was an agency of the United States Land Office. Here prospective

---

<sup>338</sup> Haven, George A., *CHATFIELD MINNESOTA TERRITORY* p. 1

settlers crowded to obtain and register their land office warrants and to travel westward from the river to locate the lands which were to become their homes. The government land surveyors had just completed laying out the meridians and parallels describing the parcels of land on which the settlements were to be made and from the Brownsville office all the lands of Fillmore county had been allotted. The iron stakes marking the section corners had been placed and from them the location of every piece of land could be accurately determined.<sup>339</sup>

Such glowing reports evidently were received back in Calumet County, Wisconsin. James Henry and Mary Elizabeth were inspired by the news. All the members of the John and Hulda Godding family had a meeting. If anyone was to move to Minnesota Territory, it should probably be done shortly before all the good land is occupied. Most said they preferred to stay in Calumet county for the present, as they were not ready for another long move. It was then agreed that James Henry and his family should be the ones to check out the Minnesota Territory. The exact date of departure is not known, but was probably in the spring of 1857, as baby Myron had only been born in July of 1856. Considering they arrived in the late fall and had to build a log cabin before winter, the early spring departure in 1857 was probably planned.

The rest of the John Godding, Jr. family bade them farewell. The parents, John and Hulda Godding, continued to live in Calumet county until their deaths in 1873. They were buried in Gravesville, Wisconsin. Son Jared and daughter Margaret eventually moved to Kansas. Emily stayed in Wisconsin. Talmi ended up in Colorado and Joseph in Montana. Sally Ann went to Minnesota later, but her death occurred in Illinois. Such is the information on where the family lived in later years. The spouses and children of all the Goddings may be found in the Descendants List at the conclusion of this history.

---

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2

The Territory of Minnesota opened a road, if you could call it such, from Winona to Chatfield and farther west and the stage line followed this road. The stage coach business did a flourishing business for many years. Chatfield was the crossing point of two stage routes: the stage route from Winona to Chatfield continuing on west to the edge of civilization and a north-south route that ran from Dubuque, Iowa, to St. Paul, Minnesota. Chatfield had a large corral and stables for the horses and mules where the tired teams were replaced by fresh animals.<sup>340</sup> Traveling on the stage was long and tiresome and most of the trip was made with the team walking, contrary to the movies' depictions of life in the west. As the driver approached town he would flourish and snap his whip, the horses would come to new life, and the stage would come rolling into town with great gusto. The driver would jump down, the coach doors would be opened, and the passengers would alight with great enthusiasm to be met by their friends. The mail pouch would be hustled to the Post Office and there other citizens would be waiting anxiously for letters from friends back home. When the railroad came to Chatfield in 1878 there was no further use for these stages, except one which was to connect Chatfield with the Southern Minnesota Railroad in Fountain. That stage ran until early 1900.<sup>341</sup>

What James Henry and Mary Elizabeth found on their arrival at Chatfield at the time of the birth of my grandmother, Ida May, born there on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. of November, 1860, is best explained in *The History of Chatfield*.

"One can but imagine the quiet and solemnity of the great forrest with its massive oaks and towering elms, its clusters of birch trees and in fall its bright sugar maples and sumac adding color to contrast with deep shades of almost impenetrable vegetation. The only sounds were the ripples of the rivers or of the springs that burst from the hillside, the signing of the birds in the daytime, the croak of the frogs and the shriek of the owls at night.

---

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid*, pgs. 9 & 10



But the white man wrought great changes in this primeval forest. The first scars of the wilderness were made when paths were cut so that man could enter these great woods and set the government land marks, in the form of heavy iron posts, on the section corners. From these, measurements were made and lines projected marking the boundaries of the settler's homestead lands. Then when his claim was staked, came the laborious work of felling trees to make way for log cabins and clearing spots for little potato patche and building enclosures for the family cow and perhaps a shelter for two or three hens. There was a large selection of logs for the building of cabins and the slashing were accumulated into sizeable piles of wood for fuel. The first fences were of split rails in zigzag fashion, as the settlers' ancestors had traditionally built fences in New England. The corners where the rails crisscrossed were laid on large permanent rocks as they zigzagged across the terrain, the property line being drawn halfway between the rows of stones."<sup>342</sup>

James and Mary's family of four was increased on October 28, 1862 when Charles Leroy Godding was born near Chatfield, Minnesota. We have no record of why the family decided to move from this area that had been described in such complimentary overtures. Possibly, it may have been the thought of clearing all his land to raise more crops. The word had come from farther west that the prairie land was covered with tall grass and the trees were for the most part growing along the streams, except for some hardwoods, which were clustered around lakes. These would provide lumber to build their homes and the land would not have to be cleared for crops. Again, they decided to move on west where their next child was born on August 1, 1865.

However, before we leave Fillmore County we have a Baker family also living in this county, south of Chatfield, near Preston.

In Chapter 18 Ira Baker had left Shandaken in 1845, leaving a one-year old son with his aunt Rachel Canniff to care for until Stephen and Delight would be coming west in a few years.

---

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid*, p. 11

We found no information regarding Ira at Rubicon or Neosho, Wisconsin. However, he appeared in a Minnesota census of 1870 at Milton, probably a township in Dodge County, just northwest of Fillmore county.

An 1880 census of Fillmore county, sent to me by a cousin, placed Ira's son, whom he left in Shandaken in 1845, at Fountain. Father and son had been united when Stephen and Delight came to Rubicon. We found no information on Ira and son in Wisconsin, but now from these two census records we find them living rather close together. These two census listings fill in a long gap in Ira's life. Ira had married a Sarah, who had also been born in New York, and had the following children, all born in Wisconsin: Deborah, born in 1858, Sarah Jane, born in 1862, and George, born in 1869, as we disclosed in Chapter 21. His son was listed on the 1855 census in Shandaken, New York, as being a nine-year old named Lony who lived with his Aunt Rachel. The 1880 census at Fountain, Fillmore county, with a Post Office address of Preston, identifies him as L.S. Baker. My assumption is his name was probably Lony Stephen Baker. He is identified as a thirty-five-year old male, which confirms he was Ira's son, who was a whole one-year old in 1845 when his father left him at Shandaken. He had married in Wisconsin, a wife, Eliza, born in 1842.

Ira's son Lony's family in 1880, at Fountain, Fillmore county:

L.S. Baker M 35 Farmer b. NY

Eliza Baker F 38 b. NY

Catherine F 11 b. Wis.

William M 9 b. Wis.

Jens (not clear) M 5 b. Wis.

John M 3 b. Wis.<sup>343</sup>

The 1870 & 1880 census records tell us Ira was probably involved in the Hops Crash and may have made the move to Minnesota at that time. His son and grandchildren did not move

---

<sup>343</sup> 1880 Census Records for Fillmore County, Minnesota.

to Fillmore county until the late 1870's, as son John was born in 1877 in Wisconsin.

This then confirms again the historical facts that my Aunt Nellie had related to her children. She had evidently been very interested, while growing up, in the history of the family, as her mother, Ida Mae Godding Baker, told her about the early history of the family. We have already related in former chapters that her history was confirmed by our research. First that "Drums Along The Mohawk" was relating to where our ancestors lived and this became fact when we located the history on the Woolever family, and my great-grandmother, Mary Elizabeth Woolever Baker. The second proof from Aunt Nellie, that her father had been born in a log cabin at Lyndon Station, was confirmed by the picture in an earlier chapter, when she took him back to his birth site. Aunt Nellie again had told her children more historical information which becomes reality here in Fillmore county. She had told her children that the Baker boys played and explored the caves in Fillmore county at Preston and Harmony, Minnesota. The stories my grandmother, Ida May Godding Baker, had related to her daughter Nellie, have come full-circle. And to add more credence to grandmother's tales is the fact that she was born just a short distance north of Ira and L. S. Baker.

Ira, Lony, and families probably made the crossing into Minnesota at the ferry crossing of the Mississippi, at La Crosse. This was the next place south of Winona to cross the Mississippi. They went inland along the Root River. This river is a twisting stream as it winds its way west, through a very rough terrain until it swings north towards Chatfield. I am sure Ira felt like he was back in the mountains at Shandaken, as the area is a series of sandstone hills and bluffs. He, being a farmer, went on along the Root River and found land more suitable for farming in south-eastern Dodge county. When his son and family came in the late 1870's, they stopped southwest of Preston where the land had leveled out.

We never searched the graveyards or courthouse records for any more information on these two families. However, if any of

you reading this history trace your ancestry to Ira's families, here is where you need to go.

In Chapter 22 I briefly mentioned that my great-grand-parents, Stephen and Delight, and their daughter Louisa and family had also moved to Minnesota from the Lyndon Station area of Wisconsin. They no doubt followed the same route that the Goddings had taken, described in this chapter. The difference was that when the two stage routes left Chatfield, one headed north and the other headed on west to the wilderness. This was what they did - continued on westward.

They may have been on the stage or they may have been following their ox or horse cart. Family records do not tell us. The trail led them to a village called Mantorville, a village that was named after the Mantor brothers who had settled there in 1853. The county was established on February 20, 1855 and named in honor of Henry Dodge, governor of the Wisconsin Territory. At that time Minnesota was part of that territory. As they approached the village, nestled in a picturesque setting in a valley along the north branch of the middle fork of the Zumbro River, they could see the construction of the courthouse just beginning in 1865. It was not finished until 1871. The local limestone in the area was being used. When mined, the stone was very soft and easy to mold and work into buildings and bridges. As it endured the elements the stone became harder with each passing year. The courthouse today stands, with its 40" thick native stone walls, as the oldest, working courthouse in Minnesota. Mavis and I never go to Mantorville without having a lunch or dinner in "The Hubbell House Restaurant", which was built in 1856, from the local limestone quarries.<sup>344</sup>

Figure 23-01: 1871 Dodge county courthouse at Mantorville

---

<sup>344</sup> *Captions from Dodge County History, by Dodge County Historical Society.*

Mavis and I visited the courthouse in 1993 to see what we could find:

"This Indenture made this Sixth day of October in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and sixty five between M. C. Churchill & Abby B. his wife of the County of Dodge and State of Minnesota party of the first part and Stephen T. Baker of the County of Dodge and state of Minnesota party of the second part. Witnesseth. That the said party of the first part and for and in consideration of the sum of fifty Dollars to me in hand paid by the said party of the second part the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged - purchased the South East Quarter of Section No. Nineteen in Town One Hundred & Seven North of Range Seventeen West. <sup>345</sup>

Stephen and Delight had a home in which to live, along with their daughter Louisa's family who had also come to Minnesota with them. However, on March 9, 1866 Stephen T. Baker sold the same quarter-section to James B. Miller. The sale price was \$200.00.<sup>346</sup>

Mavis and I traced down this piece of property which Stephen and Delight and the Pillings lived at for a short period of time. It was located about three miles west of Mantorville on the corner of Highway 14 next to a Dodge county maintenance garage. Turn north about 1/3 of a mile, farmstead on the left. This is straight south of the village of Wasioja. I believe they sold the farm. They realized they had little money to buy equipment, and William Pilling was now a saloon keeper and needed to live in the village. The 1870 census places them in Wasioja, Dodge county, Minnesota:

Stephen Baker M58 Farmer \$375 b. NY  
Delight F 58 Keep House b. NY  
Arnold Pilling M 12 At Schoolb. Wis.

---

<sup>345</sup> *Dodge County Minnesota Deed Book L, p. 534*

<sup>346</sup> *Dodge County Minnesota Deed Book L, p. 535*

William Pilling M 40 Saloon Keeper \$500 b. England  
Louisa F 38 Keep House b. New York  
Pauline J. F 16 b. Wis.  
George M 9 At School b. Wis.  
Alice F 7 At School b. Wis.  
Sophrona F 4 b. Minn.<sup>347</sup>

Figure 23-02: Stephen T. and Delight Baker about 1873-74

Stephen and Delight had five children. Nelson had stayed on at Lyndon Station and purchased a home in Kilborne City after the Hops Crash. He moved west in 1870 and arrived in Albert Lea, Minnesota which we will relate to in the next chapter. Daughter Louisa is accounted for above.

Jane, their daughter, born in 1839 at Shandaken, married George Rapp, a baker by trade, who had been born in Bavaria. It appears, from an 1870 census at Mantorville, that he had a wife, Josephine, and two children from this former marriage. This census goes on to also lists two younger children, Delight and Grace. Dates are somewhat confused as well. I have in my files a note relating to his marriage to Jane Baker. George loaded Jane into an emigrant wagon (a covered wagon) at Mantorville and drove to Pikes Peak, in Colorado. The note goes on to say George Rapp was buried at Mantorville and Stephen T. and Delight Baker are buried on the same lot, but in unmarked graves. This note, at least, tells us where Stephen and Delight were buried. However, we have tried to locate their graves and the cemetery records for that date are no longer available. From the 1880 census, we learned that Jane married Matthew Palmer and, with them, we find Delight Rapp and Grace Rapp listed as stepdaughters.

The next document found in Mantorville was the death certificate of Delight Baker who died on December 21, 1875. The death certificate listed her age as 65 years and 10 months and stated she had been born in New York state.<sup>348</sup>

---

<sup>347</sup> *Census 1870 Wasioja, Dodge County, Minnesota*

<sup>348</sup> *Death Certificate State of Minnesota, County of Dodge*

An 1875 state census tells us Orrin L. Baker, Stephen and Delight's next child, had married Hetty, A. Baker and had three children: Florence, 11, Sylvia, 8, and Lydia, 4.

It is evident Hetty died as we find the next document is:

"Orrin L. Baker of Wasioja, takes as his bride, Louisa Britt of Dodge County, State of Minnesota, as witnessed by Jane Rapp and Louisa Pillings, his two sisters.<sup>349</sup>

But then the 1880 census has Orrin L. without a wife, which indicates Louisa also died or did not get along with his children and his oldest daughter is keeping house.

Orrin Baker M 37 Unemployed Laborer b. New York  
Florence F 16 Daughter b. Wis.  
Sylvia F 13 Daughter b. Minn.  
Lydia F 9 Daughter b. Minn.  
Stephen Baker M 68 Father b. New York<sup>350</sup>

After Delight's death, Orrin provided a home for his widowed father. Stephen died in 1884 at Orrin's and was buried beside Delight and former, son-in-law George Rapp in Mantorville.

The next document found at Mantorville is the registry of another son, Burton Pilling, born to William and Louisa Pilling, living in Wasioja, May 11, 1871. William was still listed as a saloon keeper.<sup>351</sup>

---

*Death Record A , page 415 , section 40.*

<sup>349</sup> *District Court of the County of Dodge, Minnesota  
Certificate # 328*

<sup>350</sup> *1880 Census, Wasioja, Dodge County, Minnesota  
Enumeration Date June 23, 1880*

<sup>351</sup> *Dodge County Birth Records, Mantorville, Minnesota*

The Baker family at Wasioja in the 1900 Census:

Henry E. Cook M 38 Merchant b. Minn.

Sylvia F 32 Wife b. Minn.

Clarence M 6 Son b. Minn.

Kenneth M 5 Son b. Minn.

Orrin L. Baker M 56 Father-In-Law b. New York<sup>352</sup>

The last recording for the Stephen and Delight Baker family:

Orrin L. Baker b.6-10-1843 d. 3-20-1923 Age-79-9-10

Retired Farmer

Burial in Wildwood Cemetery, Wasioja, Minnesota.<sup>353</sup>

#### A BRIEF HISTORY OF WASIOJA

Wasioja bears the Sioux name of the Zumbro River, spelled Wazi Oju, translated as "Pine River" meaning "pine clad".

The first settlers came to Wasioja in 1854 and the village was platted May 24, 1856. In the years from 1855 to 1861 Wasioja was spoken of as the coming metropolis of southern Minnesota. It boasted a population of 1000 or more residents, but today it is a tiny village of about 100 people. Three main blows helped to defeat the growth of Wasioja- the Civil War taking its toll of Wasioja's best at Chicamauga, its bid for the county seat, and its being bypassed by the railroads. Wasioja was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

---

<sup>352</sup> *Census 1900 Wasioja, Dodge County, Minnesota*

<sup>353</sup> *Dodge County Court Death Records, Book E p. 152*



The following sites are also maintained by Dodge County Historical Society:

#### CIVIL WAR RECRUITING STATION - 1855

When President Lincoln called for troops in April 1861 the students of Wasioja Seminary marched to the little bank building where Colonel James George, a veteran of the Mexican War, had turned his law office into a recruiting station. That morning they formed Company C of the Second Minnesota Regiment.<sup>354</sup>

Figure 23-03: Wasioja Civil War Recruiting Station.

The only Civil War Recruiting Station in Minnesota being preserved.

#### WASIOJA SEMINARY

The most prominent site in Wasioja was one of the leading educational institutions in the state. Dedicated in 1860 by the Free Will Baptist as Northwestern College, it had an enrollment of 300 students prior to the Civil War. It was from this school that the students marched with their instructor, Clinton A. Cilley, to answer the call for troops by President Lincoln.

#### WASIOJA SCHOOL

The early settlers of Wasioja showed an interest in education of their children. In May 1856 a small school house was constructed. Construction of the present two-story limestone building was started in 1858. It was planned to serve a dual purpose - the lower portion to be used as a one-room, upgraded school room - the upper room as a town hall. In later years both stories were used in the semi-graded school system.<sup>355</sup>

You may be assured that the Bakers and the Pillings were a part of the planning of the school system. Stephen and Delight, having grown up in the mountains of the Catskills at Shandaken

---

<sup>354</sup> *Brief History of Wasioja, Dodge County Historical Assn.*

<sup>355</sup> *Dodge County Historical Society brochure on Wasioja History.*

had never learned to write, as the land titles in this chapter are only signed with their marks. The Pillings with small children were also interested in education of their children.

The Battle of Chickamauga took the lives of many of the students of Wasioja Seminary and their teacher. It was fought in Northern Georgia, along the Chickamauga Creek near Chattanooga on September 19-20, 1863. The Union force, the Army of the Cumberland under General Rosengrans numbered 58,000; the Confederates under General Bragg numbered 66,000. A mistaken order left a gap in the Union center into which Longstreet (commanding Bragg's left) poured a heavy column. The weakened Union right and center were swept away. Thomas, commanding the Union left stood firm in the face of repeated Confederate attacks, thus earning the name, "Rock of Chickamauga". The battle was the one great Confederate victory in the West. Both commanders were severely criticized, Rosengrans for his poor tactics, and Bragg for his ill-advised attacks on Thomas.<sup>356</sup>

Only twenty-five of Wasioja's seminary students returned after the war.

Figure 23-04: The ruins of Wasioja Seminary, built in 1858

The last document found at the Dodge county courthouse is a marriage certificate dated January 29, 1871.

"This license is hereby granted to join together as Husband and Wife, Stephen N. Baker of the County of Dodge, State of Minnesota and Louisa M. Warren of the County of Dodge- In testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed my seal of the said District Court at Mantorville this 28th day of January 1871. Signed: A. Ladue, Clerk and attached the certificate of marriage on 29th day of January, 1871 at Milton in said County, I, Robert Taylor, Clergyman did join in holy bonds:

---

<sup>356</sup> *American People Encyclopedia*, Vol. 5, p.5-286

Stephen N. Baker and Louisa M. Warren of the said County.  
Witnessed: C.C. Warner & C.S. Culver.Signed: Robert Taylor<sup>357</sup>

This is Isaac Baker's grandson, son of Stephen J. Baker of Whitehall, Trempealeau county, Wisconsin. This then places Ira, his son Lony, and Isaac's grandson Stephen N. Baker, all having positive ties to the family back at Shandaken, near to each other and just a few miles south of Stephen and Delight and their families. I'm sure these people had all been in contact with each other since the departure started at Shandaken in the fall of 1845.

My grandfather, Henry Hudson Baker, received what little advanced education he got at the above Wasioja Seminary, which re-opened as Groveland Seminary and operated until 1894, when it closed. A fire in 1905 destroyed most of the building.

I have in my possession one of his class books:

National School Series  
"National Fourth Reader",  
By, Richard Greene Parker and J. Madison Watson.  
Pub. by A.S. Barnes & Co., New York and Chicago-1872

The explanation on the inside cover states:

A Simple, Comprehensive, and Practical Treatise on Elocution;  
Numerous and Classified Exercises In Reading and Declamation;  
Copious Notes; and a Complete Supplementary Index.

His name, HENRY BAKER, is inscribed on this page.

The unique contents of this rather advanced reader is: as each word appears for the first time in its text, that word and others on that page that are new exposures are footnoted at the bottom of the page-

---

<sup>357</sup> Dodge County Marriage Records, p. 251

Example:

Tyrannical, unjustly severe in government; cruel.

Insurrection, a rising against the authority of a city or state;

a rebellion, an attempt to overthrow a government.

Betrothed, contracted or engaged to be married.

Deductions, inferences drawn from assertions.

Logic, the art of thinking and reasoning justly.

The Reader served as a dictionary for any new word that you were introduced to in this book. A Chapter on True Eloquence has five quotations from Daniel Webster.

One I like:

True eloquence does not consist in speech. It can not be brought from far. Labor and learning may toil for it, but toil they will in vain. Words and phrases may be marshaled in every way, but they can not compass it. It must exist in the man, in the subject, and in the occasion.

In the next chapter: farther west to Freeborn and Faribault Counties.



# 24

## Freeborn County

In 1868, Abram Charles Baker and his wife, the former Alvira Gillett, and their four children left Wisconsin with Worth county in Iowa as their destination. There had been many Norwegian families following the Wisconsin river from Portage where the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers nearly meet. Many of these Norwegians migrated on to Worth county, including my mother's grandmother and great-grandmother's families. Mail had been sent back to Abram and Alvira from someone who told them of the fine farmland in and about this area in north-central Iowa. The railroad had reached La Crosse, Wisconsin and was moving west and there was stage service where the rails were not yet laid. Abram's family decided to move to this new area. As they neared their destination they passed through a new community called Albert Lea, about 20 miles before they reached Lake Mills, a town in Winnebago county, Iowa. They located on a tract of land east of this village, which made their new home in Worth county Iowa. Here their fifth child was born on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April, 1869. They gave him the name Hudson Wheeler Baker.

Alvira wrote to her sister, Laura, with the good news, and also told about the beautiful town of Albert Lea, situated in a lake area just north of where they were located and that they were pleased with the rich black soil they had found at their new location.

Nelson and Laura decided they would not stay on in Kilborne, but would go investigate the new area Abram and Alvira had told them about. They could also visit his parents, Stephen and Delight on the way, and if they liked the area at Albert Lea, they would be living near his parents, brothers, and sisters.

Laura would also be near her sister Alvira. They discussed the idea with a cousin, Zebedia Kelly, who had also found his way to Wisconsin. His mother was Mercy Baker, daughter of Jonathan, from back at Shandaken, who had married into the Kelly family. They were neighbors of the Bakers, on the trail that went over the mountain to Griffins Corners, now the town of Fleischmanns. Zebedia had left Shandaken and found his Baker family in Wisconsin. However, we had never recorded any information on him until he became associated with Nelson and Laura. He decided he would go west with them. Nelson may have attempted to recover his \$300 purchase price on the property he had just purchased in Kilborne City, but there was no recording of such, so I think they left the property. Zebedia said that if he did not like the new area in Minnesota, he could return to Kilborne and take over this property. Nelson, Laura, and their three children, Emma, Henry and Nelson W., along with Cousin Zebedia, took the new train to La Crosse and the stage on west to Wasioja. Here they were united with their parents, Stephen and Delight, and his brother, sisters and their families.

The purchase of the property by Nelson and Laura in Kilborne City was dated September 9, 1869. I think they reached Wasioja, as winter was about to set in. Stephen and Delight and Louisa and the Pilling family all convinced them it would be better to spend the winter with them and to then move on to check out Albert Lea in the spring. Stephen and Delight had their entire family together again that winter. Jane was nearby at Mantorville and Louisa and Orrin L. were all at Wasioja. We have no information on Elizabeth Ann, Stephen and Delights fifth child. It is apparent she died somewhere along the way and no recording was ever made of her demise. I believe the winter of 1869 was a happy one for the aged parents and their children as they sat by the fires and reminisced about their experiences living on the mountain at Shandaken, the Anti-Rent War and Isaac and Ira going west, bringing Ira's son west them, the family being united at Rubicon, and becoming separated after Lyndon Station. But what a blessing it was to be together again.

Spring arrived and Nelson, Laura, Emma, Henry, Nelson W., and cousin Zebedia Kelly moved on west to check out Albert Lea, to unite with Abram, Alvira, and their family. They found the rapidly-growing town beautiful. The main streets of the town were clustered on high ground overlooking Fountain Lake which had a large mill to grind flour at a dam at its southeastern end. There was another large lake east of the village and another southwest of the new town. The railroad had reached this town and new streets had been laid out just south of the hill on which the main town was built. There was a beautiful, three story mansion in the heart of the new lakeside community. Francis (Frank) Hall had come to town in 1867 and built this fine house. He returned in 1868 with his new bride. He was the city's first civic leader and businessman. Hall operated two general stores, a large livery barn or stables for horses, owned the local Opera House, and organized the first bank in Freeborn county. The new town was more than they had expected.

Figure 24-01: Hall Mansion, Albert Lea, Minn. in 1868.

On July 5, 1870, Nelson Baker and Zebedia Kelly purchased from Francis and Maggie Hall, Lot #5 in Block #4, in the new Railroad addition in the village of Albert Lea, Freeborn County, Minnesota, for the sum of \$100.00 in hand.<sup>358</sup>

Mavis and I have visited this lot and photographed the house on the lot, but as we have no confirmation that this is the home from 1870 in which my ancestors lived, we chose not to include that photo in this history.

On December 5, 1870, Zebedia Kelly sold a one-half interest in Lot #5, Block #4, in the railroad addition, of the village of Albert Lea to Stephen T. Baker and Delight Baker for the sum of \$300.00 .<sup>359</sup>

---

<sup>358</sup> *Freeborn County Court House, Record of Deeds.*

<sup>359</sup> *Freeborn County Court House, Records of Deeds.*



It is evident that Zebedia decided he did not like Minnesota winters and would return to Kilborne City and take over the property that Nelson and Laura had left without taking up residency. The reason for the price quotation of \$300 which was actually not recorded as in hand was because it was in exchange for Zebedia to acquire that property in Wisconsin. You will remember, from an earlier chapter, that Nelson had borrowed, from Stephen and Delight, \$300 to purchase those two lots in Kilbourne City. Now Stephen and Delight had become half-owners of a lot in Albert Lea, and Zebedia returned to Kilborne City. Before he left he signed his name in Nelson Baker's Bible, which is one of my treasured possessions. On the inside cover of this bible, published in 1845 by the New York American Bible Society, Instituted in the Year 1816, are the signatures of Nelson Baker, and Zebedia Kelly. There is also recorded there the following:

"Zebedia Kelly, cousin of Grand Dad Baker who lived with granddad's just before the Civil War, was drafted but did not go because draft papers came Zebedia Kelley."

On July 5, 1871, Stephen T. and Delight Baker sold one-half interest in Lot #5, Block #4, in the Railroad addition, of Albert Lea, to Elijah Greenfield, for the sum of \$175.00, in hand.<sup>360</sup>

On July 6, 1871, Nelson and Laura Baker sold one-half interest in Lot #5, Block #4, in the Railroad addition, of Albert Lea, to Elijah Greenfield, for the sum of \$175.00, in hand.<sup>361</sup>

After Nelson paid his parents \$125.00, these two land transaction satisfied the loan Stephen and Delight made for the Kilborne City property. Nelson had \$50.00 in his pocket, which is 1/2 of the \$100, he and Zebedia had paid for the property, back on July 5, 1870.

---

<sup>360</sup> *Freeborn County Court House, Land Deeds.*

<sup>361</sup> *Freeborn County Court House, Deed Records.*

Life in the area continued for Nelson, Laura, Emma, Henry and young Nelty. They evidently rented a tract of land and continued to farm just south of the village. The 1875 Minnesota state census for Freeborn county, Albert Lea:

Family #18

Nelson Baker 39 M Born NY Parents both born NY

Laura Baker 37 F Born NY Parents both born NY

Emma S. Baker 16 F Born Wis Parents both born NY

Henry H. Baker 14M Born Wis Parents both born NY

Nelson W. Baker 12M Born Wis Parents both born NY

They are joined some time after 1875 and the death of Delight at Wasioja, by sister Louisa and William Pilling and family moving from the Mantorville area to Albert Lea. The 1880 census of Freeborn county, Albert Lea has the following information:

Family 131 Nelson Baker 45M Farmer

Laura 43F Keeping House

Emma 22F At Home

Henry 19 M Farm Laborer

Nelson W. 17 M At Home

Family 133 William Pilling 58 M Farmer

Louisa 44 F Keeping House

George 20 M

Alice 18 F

Saphrona 14 F

Burton 9 M

Family 60 Rhonda Trow 50 F Born VT. Parents VT

In my files I have an envelope addressed to Mr. Henry Baker, Flandreau, Dakota

Letter enclosed:

Albert Lea, Minn.

May the 20, 1880

Dear Son and Brother,

We will write to you as I have been writing to Kline. It is pleasant this afternoon. We looked for a letter from you for a long time. Pa and Neltys are at work in the cellar yet, they will finish tonight. I guess the corn is up and they will commence plowing in the last of next week. How do you like it out there? Uncle Bills place that he had in Dakota was in sight of Flandreau. I do not know which way. We want you to write and tell us all the news, and what luck you had after you left Blue Earth. Pa wants to know how your horses gets along he says you had better sell them when you come home if you have a good chance you can sell them for a good price up there and then buy another team when you get home.

Arnold is going to Martin County to get him land and he will stop when he comes or goes. I do not know which. Neltys and Ma sent you a letter the very day we heard you were going away from Blue Earth they sent it there did you get it yet or not. Tell Kline Ma has sent for her washing Machine but it has not come yet. George was over and stayed all night Saturday and then he was over yesterday. I made a trade when Aunt Alvira was up we traded Shoes I traded my slippers for a pair of high Shoes. Ma is sewing making her a new dress she will send you a piece of it and she wants you all to say it is pretty.

[ Sample of material attached. Tall plants with leaves and colored daisy like flowers.]

Neltys pet hen is setting on nine eggs it does not seem that you have been gone only three weeks it seems more like five weeks it does not seem as if you were in Dakota it is so far of. John Cunningham and wife have moved on his place they went by here well I cant think of any more be sure and write when you get this. Good bye from

Ma and Emma {sic}

Also attached was a letter from Nelty to brother Henry:

Dear Brother

as Ma and Em was writing and they want me to put in a piece I will do So. Well but when ma and Em heard that you had gone to Dakota what a belering time there was. first I found ma out in the Shanty in one corner and I went in the other room and there set Em by the window a rubing tears away. Ma says that she would see either one of the heifers lay down and die if you would come home. Peter Burgland went down whare Edd and Nelse was and worked too days and turned his horses out to feed and one of his horses went away and it took 2 or 3 days to find her and when he found her he came home he got here today. We

will plow our corn the last of next weak. they give olf Stage the Bounce he did not fill the contract and the company payed the hands and never give old stage a cent. how is your horses now. set down and

write us a letter.

From. Nelson W. Baker {sic}

Evidently they received a letter from Henry before they had the above letters mailed, as a third note was attached:

(Henry Baker)

Tuesday

Dear Brother, I will put a few lines in this we got your letter Saturday. Pa and Nelty are working on the road down near Town. Uncle Bills people are looking for Arnold a little to day. He is going to Martin Co to get land. Ma wants to know if you begin to think about coming home we think you will come about the 4th. {sic}

The first letter was written by Laura, the second by Nelty, and the third by Emma. All could write, so had some schooling. However, sentence structure and capitalization was typical in many old letters we encountered.

These letters give us a great deal of information. William Pilling had evidently made a trip out to Flandreau, Dakota, to procure a homestead, but evidently came back. Laura was getting household equipment. She had a sewing machine and had a washing machine on order. Nelson's dairy herd was growing as they had two heifers. The corn was ready to cultivate the first of June. They evidently were making a vegetable cellar to store the garden crops that fall. Henry, my grandfather at age 20, was out scouting for land, as was Kline Wanamaker, who was evidently a neighbor's son in Albert Lea, and was also a boy friend of Em.

In Laura's letter she asked what luck Henry had after leaving Blue Earth. The two 20-year olds were looking at all possibilities. They had looked in Martin county, the next county west, where cousin Arnold Pilling was also looking. Arnold's father had staked a claim on a property within sight of Flandreau, South Dakota, so the young men went on to check out that area.

Father Nelson tells Henry in a letter that probably he should sell his team in Dakota, as he can replace them in Albert Lea for less money. The boys returned to Albert Lea and the families evaluated the potential of land in Faribault County, only about 25 miles from where they are in Albert Lea.

# EPILOG

A history such as this is, in fact, a small slice from a much larger family history. While it is unfortunate that Lee passed away before completing the next two chapters which he had envisioned, we felt it necessary and proper to proceed and publish the history that Lee did complete.

Therefore, this work is neither the beginning nor the end of the Chronicles of the Family Baker.