

C O P Y.

Our knowledge of the Bryan family of Halifax and Edgecombe Counties, N.C. dates from the early years of the 17th Century; when Hugh Bryan of the House of Orange, and therefore a protestant in religion, was for sundry political offences and a disposition to publicly give utterance to his democratic opinions, banished from Ireland, where he was Lord of an extensive Ancestral Estate. At which time, as far as the Crown could do so, his titles were revoked and his landed estates confiscated to pay the damages of certain revolts he is said to have promulgated against the Crown and the Roman Catholic Church.

When ordered to leave the land of his nativity, Lord Bryan bought three small ships and embarked for America. The chronicler tells that he loaded his three ships with "many kegs of pure gold money", (whether this is true or not,) it is well known that he filled the living apartments of his ships with much plate and every convenience and comfort, and below decks were stored provisions of all kinds, wines etc, and costly furniture taken from his mansion; also it is known that the decks of his vessels were fully occupied with blooded horses, fox hounds, etc... and a very extensive household of servants with not a few of the tenants of his estates. This latter statement is well attested by the number of Irish names at the present day to be found at and adjoining to the region where this Lordly Gentleman first pitched his tent in America.

After leaving the Irish Courts, Lord Bryan made a straight wake for the coast of North Carolina, entered one of the sounds and finally reached the mouth of the Roanoke River. Having deigned to receive a grant of land from his offended King, who regretted his severity and was anxious to regain Lord Bryan's favor, lest he should by his opposition and hatred contaminate the American Colonist.

After reaching Roanoke River, Lord Bryan had the masts cut from his vessels and started slowly and laboriously to work them up the river, by having a small boat to take a rope and fasten it a distance up the river, when the ship was pulled to that point, another forward movement of the anchor rope was made. Finally Lord Bryan reached a point on the Roanoke River Northh of the present site of the town of Palmyra and South of Scotland Neck's nearest point toward the Roanoke, where he disembarked and bought an extensive landed estate on both sides of the Roanoke River of settlers who had originally received it by grant from the English Crown.

This ancestor of ours was in many respects a remarkable man. As soon as he settled he began to dominate everything and everybody with whom he came in contact; was in the habit of wearing a powdered wig, knee pants, silk stockings, silver buckles on his shoes and knees, and rode a blaze face, bob tail, blood bay stud horse, the first bob tail horse ever seen in that region.....

Lord Bryan, after the day he left his native shore, gave unbridled reign to his democratic taste; never permitting himself again to be called Lord Bryan, but assumed the more respectable title of "Mr."

Mr. Hugh Bryan was a man of unusual strength and vigor, reaching an extremely old age,

After he was eighty years old, for the first time, he married a Miss Sallie Smith, a relative of the present Smiths that live in Scotland Neck, N.C. The product of this marriage was Henry Hugh Bryan and Mary Bryan. Mary Bryan married an Erquette from which descended the Erquettes, Thompsons and Bughs of North Hampton County. Henry Hugh Bryan was the father of William T. Bryan, Capt. Jos. Bryan, Smith Bryan, Mary Bryan and Bryan, William T. Bryan was the father of Mary Sumner Bryan by Sallie Taylor. Mary Sumner Bryan was the mother of Theodore Bryan Kingsbury. Capt. Jos. Bryan was killed in war in Canada and his negro servant brought his arms and horse all the way across the country to Halifax County and delivered them to his people; he never married. Smith Bryan born in 1744 married Lucy Barlow and was the father of Dempsey Bryan, born Sept. 4, 1774 and died in 1847. It is probable that no wiser man than Dempsey Bryan, this date, ever lived in Edgecombe County. He first settled on what is known as the Dancy Field on David W. Bullock's old Edgecombe plantation, then known as Cotton Plains. ~~xx~~ being situate about nine miled North of Tarboro, N.C. on the road leading to Enfield.

Smith Bryan, the father of Dempsey Bryan, though the grandson of Lord Bryan originally of great wealth, owing to the non productiveness of uncleared lands, and a long life of extravagance, was unable to give Dempsey Bryan anything at all with which to start life.

Dempsey Bryan became very rich from that date and locality. He bought up all the farms surrounding his own and owned seven or eight hundred slaves, though not all at one time. He took a lively interest in all public affairs; was a band director and money lender; Mr. Harrison and Mr. James Battle alone were thought to be Mr. Bryan's equal in wealth in Edgecombe County. He spent his entire married life in the red house the home-stead situated in the Center of Cotton Plains, David W. Bullock's old farm. He married Mary Davis Lee, the daughter of Major Aaron Lee of Westmoreland County, Va. and Mary Davis of Maryland Heights near Harpers Ferry, Va. of which more will be said. The products of Dempsey Bryan and Mary Lee's marriage was first; Mary Elizabeth, who married Johnathan Bullock of Edgecombe County and bore one child, David Wm. Bullock of Edgecombe County, and was the father of ten children by Margaret Mary Rith. The second products were triplets, Luch, Louisa and Laura, Laura only survived infancy, Lucy when grown married Benj. Batts of Edgecombe County, N.C. Margaret married L. Lafayette Staton. Their children were Dr. L.L. Staton, Mr. Logan Staton Miss Lucy and Miss Maggie. Emma married Thomas Cherry who died in early in life;.....

The third living child of Dempsey Bryan, Sallie Bryan, married Coffield Knight of Upper Edgecombe County; they had two children, Wm. Henry and Martha. Mr. Coffield Knight and his grandchildren after him, lived on the same grant of land that one of his ancestors secured of the King of England; this land never left his family or descendants until it was sold about 1886 to the late W.D. Pittman.

Dempsey Bryan's next child, Martha, Married Redding Pittman, was the father of Oliver Beverly, T. Reeding and G. Mary, Martha and William Dempsey. Dempsey Bryan's next child, Maggie married Lem. Lawrence and died without children. Penina lived to an extreme old age in upper edgecombe County and never married, Mary, the next child married Thomas Mayo of Pitt County and was the mother of Major James W. Mayo, Dr. Mayo -

to Mr. Mayo - my grandma

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Thomas Mayo, Dempsey Bryan Mayo, Mary and Martha twins, and Otha and afflicted child who died in early manhood. Nannie another child lived in Nash County and old maid for many years, but very late in life, when

Wm. Dempsey Bryan, the first son ~~married~~ Miss Benton of Halifax Co. and moved to Alabama about 1850.

Hugh Blair Bryan, the youngest child of Dempsey Bryan, married a Miss Mary Peterson ~~Henkins~~ of Warren County. N.C. Their children were Dempsey, Mary and Ida. (Ida is the only one surviving at the present time-1933)

Dempsey Bryan, as above stated, married Mary Davis Lee who was a daughter of Aaron Lee born in Westmoreland Co. Va. in 1731 and was killed in the Revolutionary War. The wife of Aaron Lee was also Mary Davis, born at the present ~~time~~ site of Harpers Ferry, Va. in the year 1746. Major Lee was a Major in the Revolutionary War serving with Washington. His home on Maryland Heights was a place where war information was deposited by any patriot who wished it transmitted to Washington.

The above was taken from the records of Dr. D.W. Bullock of Wilmington, N.C. during the month of August 1904.

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my grandmother
Martha Taylor Collier

(Wm. Bryan moved
to 1840

Triplets -

(Margaret, Md. Lafazeth Staton
(Mary " William Long
(Emma " Thomas Cherry
(Ben
(Dempsey, " Mina Bryan
(Dick (Isaac) Md. Fanny Little

(Sallie, Md. Cofed
Knight

(Wm. Henry
(Martha, Md. William Pittman

(Penina, not Md.

(Laura died in Infancy
(Dempsey " " "
(Jas. Macajah, Md. Florence Lyon
(Hugh Blair, died 1861 Battle
Bethel)

Henry Lee
from Eastern
Shore, Md. dis
appeared dur-
ing Rev. War.
Father of
Lucy Lee.

(Lucy Lee
Married
Maj. Dempsey
Bryan

(Mary Williams
Married
Thomas Mayo

(Mary Dorsen, Md. (Harrison P. Lyon
Virginus W. Land

(Martha Darien, Md. Wm. Thom. Taylor
(Wm. Thomas, Md. Annie Lawry Lyon
(Dempsey Virginus, died 1872
(Laura Virginia, " 1863
(Otho Logan " 1883

(Redden Pittman

(B.W. Tucker
(Oliver
(Mary Streater, Md. Dr. N.G. Pittman
(Martha, died in Infancy
(Wm. Dempsey
(Redden Gresham
(Benjamin, died in Infancy

(Elizabeth Md.
Bullock

(Dave

(Hugh Blair Bryan

(William Dempsey
(Ida - Mrs. L.H. Lyon
(Mamie, died in Infancy