Doc,

The pictures are very good.  My records of the Blakeney's goes only back to a John b. abt 1732 in Limerick Co., Ireland. I have the following about him and a William, but it does not say that William was John's father.  Does any of this fit with your Blakeney's?

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My list of names are:

John Blakeney, b. abt 1732, Ireland,  no wife listed.

His son John Blakeney, b. abt 1756, Ireland.  Wife Martha b. abt 1765

  Their son: John T. Blakeney b.10 May 1786, wife Sarah Oliver

                        son: William Blakeney b. 1812, wife Susannah

                                      daughter: Susannah Blakeney b. 1855 spouse Theodore Brooks

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

The following information was copied in part from "The Blakeney Kith and Kin 1745-1974."  Written by Grace Glaspie, now deceased, and from articles in the "Portrait and Biographical Album."

Grace writes, "We hope you find this an interesting account of a family which started in America with a Revolutionary War Soldier, John Blakeney, from Limerick, Ireland, whose family motto translated from the Latin reads, "My help from on high."

A veil covers much of the Family Tree outside of America.  The Blakeney family was driven out of Alsace, A Province of France, during religious persecution, where they were known as "De Blakeney".  They settled in Ireland and became the Blakeney family.  The Blakeney name is found in the Encyclopedia Britannica concerning one William Blakeney who became a Baron due to his gallant defense in battle.  He was born at Mount Blakeney, Limerick, Ireland and lived from 1672 to 1761.

The persecution by the Catholic Church in Ireland caused many to flee to America to seek religious freedom.  Among them was young John Blakeney, who came to Maryland.  Other Blakeney families settled in the Carolinas and Pennsylvania.  Nyal Royce found that the old records of Limerick, Ireland , before 1800, were placed in the paper drive during World War II.

Betty

This is exciting stuff.  I do think 'Blakewey' is a scribal error, possibly repeated over time, and that the name should, indeed, be 'Blakeney.'  'Blakewey' just doesn't sound English, although, yes, it could be Anglo-Saxon for 'the black way' or 'the black path.'  It could also be a local Indian name; however, perhaps because of my lack of faith in humanity's calli- and ortho-graphic practices, I think the misspelling or misreading is very likely and that these early Charlestonians were, indeed, Blakeneys.  If someone produces for me an individual with the surname of Blakewey, I will sit down to a hearty dish of crow.

My dictionary of English place-names gives the derivation of Blakeney as  the Anglo-Saxon 'blacaneg' or 'black isle.'  The final 'g' is actually the runic character yogh and has a consonantal 'y' sound.  'Blacan' is an oblique form of 'blaec,'  the modern English 'black.'  There are some other words that might indicate 'the white isle' or even 'the isle of the lepers,' but I think the best candidate remains 'the black isle.'  I think we can toss 'bleak isle' as well:  'bleak' is from Old Norse and, unless we can prove that the eponymous estate is coastal, which I'm not inclined to believe, it is an unlikely candidate for the name.

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As a parting note, I came across a new translation of the Domesday Book on Sunday, $40 in paperback (admittedly, there is a lot of paper there).  My cursory and unscientific examination of said tome revealed no Blakeneys, and I believe Rhonda's much more thorough research confirms that.  While I didn't hurry out and buy that, I did purchase, some years back, a facsimile of the 1768-1771 edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica.  I had no idea our illustrious ancestor was included in some early editions.  I did not find an entry for 'Blakeney' and the entry for Minorca was merely a one-sentence description of the island.  Does anyone know in what article this appeared?  If it's in my edition, I'll run the thing over to the office and send you all pdf versions of the text.

Jimmy

In a message dated 02/02/2004 6:49:45 PM Pacific Standard Time, rlbj1161@bellsouth.net writes:

Hi folks,

Some of you may be wondering about Dad's last letter.  Not all of you got a copy of the letter that he was discussing.  I had forwarded to him a letter that I wrote to the source of a Blakeney article that Doc forwarded to me.  (Got that? LOL)  The lady, Linda, said she did not write the article; she's contacted her cousin to try to find who did.  It's an excellent article, but I had some comments and questions.  I mailed it back with only the paragraphs that I wanted to ask about.  The rest of you might have some input for me, so I've included the same here.  I'll forward the entire article separately so you can see the whole thing.

Love,

Rhonda

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Dear Linda,

Hello again!

I was forwarded this excellent article and had some questions about it.  Did you write it?  There's some absolutely fascinating new information (to me, anyway).  Can you direct me to the source of some of it?

I'll insert my comments and questions in the text.

Thank you,

Rhonda

THE BLAKENEYS  OF  SMITH COUNTY (Probably Alabama)  NARRATIVE

**[Is this Smith County, AL, or another state? -- RBJ]**

**...**
For what it might be worth there are earlier records of other Blakeneys in this vicinity prior to any mention of
Captain John. On December 6, 1736 an “Inventory and Appraisement of Robert Blakeney, Dec.” was made in Granville District, N.C. Also a Luke Blakeney witnessed deeds on the north side of the Pee Dee River in Anson County, NC in 1746 and 1750 and received a land grant in 1750 at the same location. A Major William Blakeney is mentioned as early as 1716 in Charleston, SC as an attorney and official of the Indian Trade Commission. Just what connection these individuals might have had with Captain John remains a mystery but their existence would seem to open up the possibility that John could have been born in this country of parents who had recently emigrated from Ireland or accompanied his parents to America while a minor. This is certainly worth exploring.

**[This is the first time I've heard of most of these!!!  Do you know the sources?  I am very excited to hear of them!  There is also a girl -- I'd have to check my files for the name, I think it was Julia -- and she was in the area before Capt. John, too.  The Major William B. is a dead end, I think.  I had found him listed as BLAKENEY in one book but as BLAKEWEY in all other sources, including one with a photocopy of the name in a contemporary, handwritten document; this one clearly said BLAKEWEY.  I believe he's the one who left a widow in Charleston who became a prominent real estate dealer.  There are numerous published references to her and she's definitely a BLAKEWEY, no transcription error. -- RBJ]**

All prior researchers agree that Captain John came from Mt. Blakeney, Limerick, Ireland but offer no documentary
evidence.

**[The original reference was in Bishop Gregg's "History of the Old Cheraws."  His source of info was his good friend who was the Captain's grandson.  That gives it some good credence, but then again...  I know that since starting genealogy I found I was wrong on almost everything I knew about my own grandparents.  This source might likewise not be 100% proof positive. -- RBJ]**

For those who may not be familiar with the record of General William the following brief resume of his life is offered. ...
  The long delay in his advancement was said to result from the hostility of Lord Verney who commanded the regiment in which he was assigned. Lord Verney was somehow connected with the Blakeney family through marriage. The Duke of Richmond relieved Lord Verney and thenceforward William’s advancement was phenomenal.

**[This about Lord Verney is very important!!!  Do you know the source of this?  I have only found the biography of the Baron, and in it the reference was disguised by omitting the middle letters:  "V\_\_\_\_y."  I have searched and searched for names that might fit the bill and decided it might be "Vesey," as this family was involved in Irish politics and I couldn't find a connection with William and the Verneys.  I haven't found any military records from Will's earliest days, when a Verney might have been his superior officer.  Molesworth is the earliest that I've found, and I think it was the bio that specified him as a target of William's wrath as well.  He definitely despised Molesworth.  But I'm especially interested that your source i.d.'s a Verney.  Why?  Look at my notes further down.--RBJ]**

His statue was erected in Dublin and remained until the British withdrew from southern Ireland, after which it was removed and at one time was reported to be in a junkyard in Dublin. The present owner of the site of the historic Mt. Blakeney estate reports that his father tried in vain to retrieve the statue.

**[I read that it was melted down for someone else's statue.  I hope it did actually survive somewhere!  Is there any way to find out what retrieval efforts were made?  That is, did he actually find it?  If so, was money the problem?  Transportation?  Maybe we could help if there's anything that could be done.--RBJ]**

Early editions of the Encyclopedia Brittanica contain a good writeup on General Blakeney. There is also a book
which is still in print entitled “At Twelve Mr. Byng Was Shot” by Dudley Pope (J. B. Lippincott Co. 1962) which
covers the Minorca Siege but, unfortunately was written by a bleeding heart who attempted to discredit General
Blakeney and to justify the Admiral’s cowardice. In spite of this it provides some good historical data surrounding
the incident and is well worth reading.

**[I've read the above book and the assertion is correct.  I don't feel Byng bungled out of cowardice (though bungle he did), and most of England soon came to the conclusion that his execution was a travesty.  However, it's a shame that Pope evidently felt that in order to exonerate Byng, he had to vilify Blakeney.  His negative tone was completely inappropriate and unnecessary.  There are other, better books that cover Minorca.--RBJ]**

A number of sources exist concerning the origin and history of the English and Irish Blakeneys. Most are
uncertain and somewhat contradictory of one another. They all seem to agree that the name first appeared in England as a result of the Norman conquest in 1066. A William de Blakeney is on record as having been rewarded for his service to William the Conqueror. This would seem to fix the source of the name as Norman, and since the Normandy area was populated by Vikings it appears most likely that the name originated among the Vikings.

**[I have come to a different conclusion.  I know of no evidence that any Blakeney came with the Conqueror but have found much information that suggests he did not.  There are no Blakeneys in the Domesday book, none on the Falaise Rolls of Conqueror's Companions.  I also found a list of Norman soldiers rewarded with English lands as a reward for service; there are no Blakeneys on it.  I'm afraid it's much more likely that our forebears took their name from the town, not the other way round.  There is physical evidence for this theory, as well.  A coastal location is a likely place for a name that means "Black (or Bleak) Isle."  Still, a town with a Norman name was likely populated with Normans, so I do think that is still our ethnic origin.--RBJ]**

The consensus seems to be that the original Blakeneys in England settled in Gloucester at or near the village of
Blakeney which still exists and that some moved to Norfolk during the 14th century where a second village named
Blakeney exists.

**[Consensus among whom?  I've never heard that theory before.  I'd love to speak to or hear of these sources.  I'm absolutely sincere.  I have really wondered about the Gloucestershire Blakeneys and where they might fit in the mix.  If others have already done research on this, then I want to find out what they've learned!  It's been a puzzle to me and I've not found anything to point me in the right direction.  It's left a huge hole in my research.--RBJ]**

... Another source states that the Irish Blakeneys came from Norfolk during Queen Elizabeth’s
reign (1554-1565) at which time the entire Norfolk estate of the Blakeneys, who had become part of the landed
gentry, was said to have been inherited by a female.

**[Here's the Verney connection I mentioned!  Mary Blakeney of Norfolk married Lord Verney as her third husband in the late 1500s.  I believe this is the lady who recieved the bulk of the Blakeney estates.  It would have taken quite a dowry to get her in even the first of her marriages into excellent families.  I have wondered at not finding further reference to her male relatives among the Verney papers.  I'm still looking for more info on her.  So back to that Baron Blakeney connection some 150 years later...  Would they even have remembered the former marital alliance?  I don't know, but I'd love to find out.--RBJ]**

A local historian living on the Blakeney lands at Castle Blakeney, Galway is quoted as stating that the Blakeneys
of Galway, Limerick and Belfast were closely related and often visited back and forth.

**[This would be supported by the marriage alliances between the branches shown in Burke's genealogical works.--RBJ]**

He reported that the Blakeneys of Limerick (Mount Blakeney) remained Catholic while those of Galway and Belfast became Protestants and that during the time of the Cromwell persecutions those of Castle Blakeney came to Mt. Blakeney for protection.

**[Hmmm, this is not correct.  It was the Limerick Blakeneys who were Church of Ireland and the Galway branch who were Catholic until around 1700.  I didn't know about Belfast Blakeneys!  I'd like to know more about them.--RBJ]**

He further reports that the Blakeneys of Castle Blakeney went to Virginia in 1750 and that other members of the family followed them in later years.

**[I'm hyperventilating!  Where can we find records about these immigrants?!  Very exciting!--RBJ]**

**[I can't comment on the rest because I've done very little research on the Blakeneys once they were established in America.  It's already been done so well by you others!  Altogether an EXCELLENT article.  Do you know how I could source it for my own records?--RBJ]**

----- Original Message -----
**From:** JimBlake@aol.com
**To:** RLBJ1161@bellsouth.net ; holliman@psknet.com ; alb21@simplecom.net ; pbblakeney@yahoo.com ; Jidjr582@aol.com ; jmdye@xtn.net
**Sent:** Monday, February 02, 2004 8:35 PM
**Subject:** Ref your questions---it was a good article.

The county is in *Mississippi.*  It is full of descendants of John(Jack)Blakeney. I talked with one of them some forty years ago and he invited me to come and spend a week there.  Said just "be sure you don't say anything bad about the Blakeneys, because if they don't carry the name they are still reloated."

Bishop Gregg was a lawyer before he became an Episcopal Bishop.  He shared a law practice with General James White Blakeney, who was a grandson of Captain John and who was a Brigadier General in the Indian Wars.  He is buried at Cheraw in Old St. David's Episcopal Churchyard.  I have visited his grave there where soldiers of the British are also interred.  He was a soldier and statesman and served in the South Carolina Legislature.

Dear Jimmy,

Uh oh.  Blakewey is indeed an unrelated family that I've run across more often than Blakeney.  It's sort of like Blakeley in that the family is a distinctly separate entity, but easily mixed up with ours due to transcription error.  In fact, I got a free Blakewey will from the PRO because they had erroneously indexed it as "Blakeney."  And Sarah Blakewey of Charlestown, widow of a well-connected appointee (the guy who most likely was the one involved in the Indian Trade Commission), ran weekly ads in the South Carolina Gazette for her real estate business.  Her name is consistently spelled with a "w," whether in those same ads or in other documents.

Less common but similar is the Blankney family.  That is also a separate family from Blankney, Lincolnshire.  It's as old as ours and kind of raises an eyebrow for me, but there appears to be no connection.

Jimmy, I meant to send you a copy of Dr. Seabrook's "The Blakeneys: An Etymological and Ethnological Study."  You'd enjoy it.  Most of it went straight over my head.  He did come up with a theory on the origin of the word and concluded it was Norman.  (However, an older book I checked from a different source went over all the Norman placenames of Norfolk and did not include Blakeney among them.)  If you want, I'll photocopy those parts and send them over.  Unless you want your own, new copy.  He added new historical info for another edition right after I paid for this one.  Grrrrrrrrrrrrr.  His email is celticgoddess@nii.net.

You asked if anyone knew in "what article this appeared."  I got confused.  Which info did you mean?  Did you mean the longer article that I hacked up and then forgot to send until this morning?

Love,

Rhonda

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Jidjr582@aol.com

**To:** rlbj1161@bellsouth.net ; JimBlake@aol.com ; holliman@psknet.com ; alb21@simplecom.net ; pbblakeney@yahoo.com ; jmdye@xtn.net

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 03, 2004 2:29 AM

**Subject:** Re: Ref your questions---it was a good article.

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