Dear Dad and Doc,

Doc sent me the Blakeney narrative sent to him by Linda ([Cyers@aol.com](mailto:Cyers@aol.com)).  I had some questions and comments on it so I wrote her tonight.  I'm sending y'all a copy of my letter so you'll know kind of where I am in my research.  I cut out the parts that I had no comment on.  It was an excellent article!  I hope she will send me her sources.

Love,

Rhonda

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

**From:** [Rhonda Jordan](mailto:rlbj1161@bellsouth.net)

**To:** [Cyers@aol.com](mailto:Cyers@aol.com)

**Sent:** Monday, February 02, 2004 12:30 AM

**Subject:** Re: Blakeney's of AL

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,

THE BLAKENEYS  OF  SMITH COUNTY (Probably Alabama)  NARRATIVE  
  
Captain John Blakeney of Chesterfield County, South Carolina is the oldest known antecedent of the Smith County Blakeneys. Much effort has been made by the author and a number of others to positively identify his  
ancestors without avail. The necessary information is probably available somewhere in this country or in the  
British Isles and hopefully other interested persons will continue the search and eventually find and publish it.  
The most complete extant record of Captain John appears to be that contained in the book “THE BLAKENEYS IN AMERICA AND SOME COLLATERALS” published in 1928 by John Oscar Blakeney of Little Rock, Arkanses. Extensive research was later done by Dr. W. W. Blakeney of New Boston, Texas and there is a possibility that he might have been more successful but, unfortunately, he passed away before his work could be published.  
  
Salient facts concerning Captain John Blakeney, taken mostly from the 1928 John Oscar Blakeney book and supplemented with results of later research follow.  Captain John evidently came to the area in the vicinity of  
the present border between North and South Carolina near the Pee Dee River about 1750. The first mention of him in public documents is his listing as “Sworn Chain Bearer” in a survey for a land grant in St. Johns Parish, Granville  
District, NC on October 26, 1752. He also witnessed a will in Granville County, NC on August 31, 1753. His second son John, Jr. in an application for Revolutionary War veterans benefits, lists his place of birth as Bute County, NC  
(abolished in 1779 and area divided into Warren and Franklin Counties) on January 14, 1758. Captain John’s  
port of entry and the date thereof has not been established. There are some indications that he might have  
landed in North Carolina or possibly Virginia but this is only speculative. There is also a possibility that he came  
to America as a part of the British Military since he was later commissioned by the South Carolina Colonial  
Government and placed in command of a Militia Company.  
  
He evidently remained in the area of the present town of Cheraw, SC for the next twenty odd years. He is listed as  
an official in St. Davids Parish of the Anglican Church in 1773. There is a record of his purchasing a tract of land  
on Lynches River in the northwest corner of Chesterfield County, SC on August 31, 1785, the area in which he  
apparently remained until his death in 1832. He is buried in a family cemetary about six miles southwest of  
Pageland, SC. Specifically the cemetary is located a short distance north of Hwy 9 on the first road to the right  
west of the intersection of Hwys 9 and 601. There are signs leading to the site.  
  
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.  
  
All prior researchers agree that Captain John came from Mt. Blakeney, Limerick, Ireland but offer no documentary  
evidence. He is said to have been a nephew of General William Blakeney but again no proof is evident. For those who may not be familiar with the record of General William the following brief resume of his life is offered. He was born at the family estate near Kilmallock, County limerick, Ireland in 1672. He was groomed for a career in politics  
by his father but opted for the military instead. At the age of eighteen he led the defense of the Mt. Blakeney  
Estate against the Irish Rebels. He enlisted in the British Army and went to the war in Flanders. In 1702 at  
the Siege of Venlo he won his commission. He served in a number of engagements over the next 35 years with little  
notice and in 1737 at the age of 65 he was promoted to Colonel. 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. He was a Brigidier General in the Cartegena Expedition of  
174l and promoted to Major General a short time later. He distinguished himself in the defence of Stirling Castle  
against the Highlanders in 1745. Two years later he was promoted to Lieutenant General and appointed Lieutenant  
Governor of Minorca, an island off the coast of Spain which was then in British hands. The Governor never set  
foot on the island and General Blakeney was in total control.  
  
In 1756 during the seven years war the French attacked Minorca with a force of about 15,000 and beseiged Fort St.  
Phillip holding General Blakeney’s force of approximately 5,000. After about a month a British Fleet under Admiral  
John Byng carrying relief forces arrived off Minorca. They were met by the French fleet and an indecisive battle  
was fought. During the night Byng withdrew his forces and left General Blakeney and his command to their fate. They held out for a total of seventy one days but were finally compelled to surrender. The French Commander was so taken with his courage and valor that Blakeney was able to dictate the terms of his capitulation and he and his  
garrison were transported to Gibralter and released with liberty to serve again. Byng was charged with dereliction  
of duty, court martialed and shot, the only officer ever to be executed for cowardice in the history of the British  
Navy. On his return to England Blakeney found himself the nations hero. He was made colonel of the Enniskillen  
regiment of infantry, Knight of the Bath and Lord Blakeney of Mt. Blakeney in the Irish Peerage. He died September 20, 1761 at the age of 89 and is buried in Westminster Abbey. Since he never married and had no issue his title died with him. 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.  
  
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.  
  
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. The “de” prefix was retained for about 300 years and then dropped. A number of people with the name of Blackney remain in both  England and Ireland and are believed to be of common origin with the Blakeneys with one or the other having changed the spelling at some point. In that regard the Blakeney name has been horribly misspelled throughout history, particularly during the westward movement of the pioneers in this country. It seems that courthouse clerks, census takers, etc. attempted to spell phonetically and if the person was illiterate and unable to correct the spelling it remained incorrect in the records. A few examples are Blakley, Blakeley, Bleakney, Blackney,  
Blankley, Blakewey etc. It was fortunate that our pioneer ancestors in Smith County were literate for the most part  
and at least maintained consistancy in the spelling.   
  
Numerous references to de Blakeneys and later Blakeneys are found in British history from the time of the Norman  
Conquest forward. A few were in politics, one of which was a Peter de Blakeney who was Sheriff of London about  
1300. Most seemed to be associated with the wool and fisheries trades and several are recorded prominently in  
Anglican church history. In contrast, there was one William Blakeney, a shuttlemaker of London who represented  
himself as a Pilgrim who had been to Jerusalem and other distant places at the time when such were considered  
heroes. For six years he was wined and dined by those whom he enthralled with tall tales of his exploits until he was  
exposed as an imposter about 1412. He was then paraded around the streets in a cart with a whetstone around his  
neck to show that he was a liar and later put in the pillory.  
  
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. There is considerable disagreement as to when the Irish Blakeneys came and where they came from. One researcher reasons that Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke who led the Irish invasion in 1168 occupied Chepstow castle, which was a short distance from the village of Blakeney, Gloucester and would certainly have recruited from the area and included some of the Blakeneys in his invasion force and that the family was established in Ireland at that time. 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. In any event, recent contacts with residents in the area of  
both Mt. Blakeney in Limerick and Castle Blakeney in Galway reveal that the Irish Blakeneys are remembered as  
compassionate, caring people and no evidence of ill will toward them because of their British origin was detected.  
  
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. 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. 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.  
  
Hugh Blakeney (1.8) was the youngest son of Captain John, born in 1774 in Chesterfield District, SC which later  
became Chesterfield County. As is often the case, the courthouse in this county burned and very few records are  
available. We do know that he first married Nancy Ann Welch. An entry in the Biographical Directory of the South  
Carolina House of Representatives identifies Nancy Ann as the daughter of William Welch and wife of Hugh Blakeney.  
  
Hugh remained in Chesterfield county through the 1810 census and was listed as having 9 children, 5 males and 4  
females. In 1820 he was listed in Montgomery County, TN  along with his oldest brother Thomas. Hugh was shown to have 6 chidren at that time, 2 of which were under 10 years of age. This indicates that he had at least 11 children and that 5 of the older ones remained in South Carolina. Hugh had 25 slaves and his brother, Thomas had 38 at the time of the census. Hugh’s first wife apparently died before he left South Carolina and he remarried to Ibby  Williams from Kentucky (this according to Dr. W. W. Blakeney and not verified by this writer) after he settled in Tennessee. The lands that Hugh and Thomas occupied were located northwest of the present city of Clarksville, TN and are presently part of the Ft. Campbell military reservation. Hugh apparently died sometime between 1840 and 1850 and is presumed to be buried in the Fort Campbell area.   Thomas(1.8.1), the oldest son of Hugh, is listed in  
Chesterfield County in 1820 with a wife and 2 children under 10 years. In 1830 he appears in Covington County, MS with 3 sons and 3 daughters and a 70 to 80 year old male in his household. The old man cannot be identified but he is presumed to be a relative of either Thomas or Matilda. Censuses prior to 1850 only named the head of the household and numbered the others. It seems most likely that he was a relative of Matilda since Thomas’ father Hugh was listed in Montgomery Cy, TN and his grandfather John remained in Chesterfield Cy, SC. According to tradition Thomas settled temporarily in the Smith School community about three and one half miles due east of Mt. Olive. Nearby is a creek presently called Blakely Creek which is reported to have originally been Blakeney Creek.  
  
Due to the dearth of records in Chesterfield County, SC it is difficult to prove with certainty that Thomas is, in  
fact, the son of Hugh and this writer has not seen any documentary evidence to prove it. Previous researchers  
pronounce it as a fact and census data certainly supports it but until legal documentation is discovered some doubt  
will remain.  
  
It is fairly certain that Thomas and Matilda went north into what is now Smith county to claim land that was opened to settlers by the third Choctaw Cession in 1833. They are listed there in the 1840 census with 7 children  
and without the elderly man. Two of the older daughters are missing and presumed to be married or deceased. One  
has been tentatively identified as Arrabella who married Arlow Ainsworth and moved to Louisiana. Three additional  
children have been born in the interim, Eleanor b. 1831, Alvin b. 1834 and an unidentified daughter.  
  
There seems to be no evidence as to exactly where in Smith County Thomas settled. The first indication as to where  
he and his sons were located is contained in a letter  written by Hugh (1.8.1.2) in 1865 to his niece, Elminey  
Guess, which has recently surfaced. In this letter Hugh states that he is presently living on Brown’s Mill Creek  
about two miles above the Mill; Jacob is living at the old man’s place; the old man is living at the post oak thicket  
and Alvin is married to Lucy Ann Jernigan and is living with the old man. Robert is living on “the level land  
where Bonny died”. No doubt “the old man” refer  to Thomas. In the era of Thomas’ migration to Smith County  
most if not all of the successful farming had to be conducted in valleys where seasonal floodwaters replenished the soil nutrients, therefore it seems reasonable to assume that the early homesites were all located contiguous to the floodplains of the Leaf river and its larger tributaries such as Tallahala, Ichusa, Beaver Dam and Fisher Creeks. The foregoing is admittedly not very definitive but it is the best we have until someone can turn up something better.  
  
The reference of Hugh to his residence on Brown’s Mill Creek is also a mystery. There is no evidence of a Brown’s Mill Creek on any of the current USGS maps of the area nor is there presently an Etahoma Post Office in the vicinity. The maps do show an Etahoma Creek about a mile west of Bay Springs and a Thompson Creek about one mile south of Mt. Nebo Church. It seems likely that Hugh might have lived somewhere along what is now  Thompson Creek.  All of the four sons of Thomas remained in Smith county until their deaths with the exception of Alvin and his family who apparently accompanied his parents to Arkansas  hortly after returning from the Civil War.  y all accounts both Thomas and Matilda died in Arkansas and Alvin’s wife possibly died in Arkansas or while enroute back to Mississippi. Her death date would have to have been during or after 1871 since her youngest child was born that year. Alvin did return to Smith County but the exact date is not evident. He is listed there in 1880 as a widower with 2 sons and 2 daughters. The following is quoted from a letter written by Dr. W. W. Blakeney in 1968: “Thomas Blakeney married Martha Matilda Page the latter being a sister of my grandfather’s first wife Elizabeth Page. Both were born on December 25th and both died on December 25th and are buried in twin graves in Des Arc, Arkansas.” An attempt was made to confirm this information and a search of the records revealed that they  are not recorded in the main cemetary in Des Arc. It is more likely that they are buried in a small country cemetary in the vicinity of Des Arc but this remains to be confirmed. Another researcher states that Thomas and Matilda died and were buried in Ashley County, Arkansas.  
  
The oldest son, Hugh had suffered some traumatic injury or illness prior to writing the above referenced letter in 1865 and stated “I am able to walk about the yard with my sticks”. He died about two years later at the age of 47,  
having sired a total of 15 children. He is reported to be buried in Mt. Nebo Cemetary located west of Bay Springs  
and a short distance south of the road to Raleigh. His grave is unmarked. Jacob lived to be 64 and had 13 children. Robert had at least 5 children and possibly more. He died somewhere between the age of 44 and 52. Alvin, the youngest son lived to the age of 60 and had a total of 7 children.  
  
Thomas’ descendants down through the second and third generations were very prolific and families numbering up  
to fifteen or sixteen are not uncommon. For instance, Hugh had fifteen children and at least one hundred and  
eighteen grandchildren despite the fact that two of his sons died before marriage. He is estimated to have had  
something in excess of one thousand great grandchildren. The other children of Thomas appear to have been equally  
productive and it seens reasonable to estimate that he could have had as many as nine thousand descendants by the  
fourth generation. It is apparent that almost all of the first and second generations remained in Smith County with  
a few moving into adjacent counties and others migrating west, some stopping in western Mississippi and others in  
Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma and as far as California. Most of those who remained in Smith County did  
so until the 1930’s and 1940’s. During World War II  some  moved out of the county to engage in defense related work and did not return. Many others went off to serve in the military and found employment elsewhere after the war. Throughout the country there was a general migration away from farming areas toward industrial centers during this period and this occurred among the Smith County Blakeneys. There remains a substantial number of Blakeneys and Blakeney relatives in the county but they represent only a very small percentage of of the descendants of Thomas and Matilda.  
  
Mr. Henry Blakeney (1.8.1.2.4.5) who was born in 1880 and others contempory with him who remained in Smith County liked to recount their early experiences and their tales provide some insight into what life was like in the area  before the turn of the century. It seems that, before the advent of mechanical gins the cotton seeds were picked out by hand and the fiber was made into thread with spinning wheels. It was then woven into “homespun” cloth with hand operated looms, the shuttles of which were tossed back and forth by hand. Most everyone wore clothing which was hand stitched of homespun cloth. Cooking was generally done over an open fire in a fireplace.  
  
Another interesting aspect of Smith County life during this era recounted by those who experienced it was the  
necessity to travel long distances by ox wagon to purchse supplies. It seems that the nearest trading post was located in Ellisville, which was about 30 miles to the southeast and common practice was to make the journey about twice a year. It was a two day trip each way by ox wagon and required overnight camping. Mr. Henry told of a tornado striking the campsite during one of his trips to  Ellisville. He was a young teenager at the time and recounted the event as a terrifying experience.  
  
To those of us who grew up on farms in Smith County in the first half of this century where cultivated farm land was practically continuous throughout the county and thrived w ith crops of cotton, corn, soybeans, sugar cane, watermelons, etc. it is, in a sense, sad to drive through familiar areas and see nothing but timberland, pa tures  
and occasional small gardens. Most of the old farm houses, the sites of so many happy memories, have been  
burned, torn down or allowed to fall down. The only  redeeming aspect is that wild game has returned in  
abundance with most of the county teeming with squi rrels, rabbits, deer and turkey and a few new species such as  
coyote and armadillos.  
\_

Dear All,

Here's a question I've been pushing aside all along:

Where do the Gloucestershire Blakeneys fit into all this?

I have reference to Blakeneys (from Blakeney, Gloucestershire) from at least as far back as the Norfolk Blakeneys.  Gloucestershire is right across the water from Ireland.  So, is there some connection somewhere?

If our Norfolk Blakeneys spread all over England and Ireland, it doesn't seem logical that the Glouce. families would just stay put and not complicate things.

Could those early Dublin Blakeneys be connected to them?  To Norfolk?  Or arrived there independently?

If Blakeney means roughly "Black (or Bleak) Isle," then it makes sense for more than one coastal town to find that name fitting, even without any family connection.  But it would be great to know more about the Gloucestershire origins.  Anybody come across anything?

Love,

Rhonda

Hey Jim!  And everybody else, too...

In the past I have come across a couple of old library books about the Royal Navy back in that time frame, but I didn't find any leads.  Can't remember now but doubt they were comprehensive as to lists of sailors or years we needed.  The pickings are slim so far as published works.  You're right about extant records, though; they probably exist within England's Public Records Office.  The problem is money and access, I'm afraid.  The PRO has a great web site and searchable catalog from which photocopies of documents can be ordered.  However, you don't know ahead of time what exactly might be included in the records or how brief or long any one section might be.  I have a list of about 300 documents I'd like to look at, but I for sure couldn't afford to order them.  The thing to do would be to just go over there and pore over documents oneself; boy, would I love to do that!  But the problems of time and money to finance the travel have pushed that option far in the future.

I do think it likely that John came over with a branch of the military, even though he didn't earn his title until much later, as a Revolutionary.  He would have been practically a boy -- and I know for a fact that Irish regiments of the time, including the Baron's own, were padded out with boys.  And the Baron visited most of the coastal states with his own regiment on recruiting ventures.  Furthermore, there were always one or two Blakeneys in his and neighboring regiments.  I'd like to find records that show whether any of them retired from the military while over here.  I even have kept an eye out for deserters.  These records also are possibly to be found in the PRO.

However, we don't know that he came directly to the southern coast.  He may very well have come to the northeastern shores and worked his way down, as multitudes of Irish Protestants did at that very time.  There are records of Blakeneys in PA and NJ just a few years before John showed up in the Carolinas.  Going by the rarity of the name, there's no reason not to wonder if they might have been relatives.  John may have gone to them first -- perhaps even belonged to one of the family units.

Speaking of boy sailors and Blakeneys, has any of you seen "Master and Commander" yet?  I've been meaning to but haven't yet.  I understand one of the main characters is a preteen sailor named Lord Blakeney.  Ha!

Let's keep theorizing...

Love,

Rhonda

Hi Doc,

There are several Blakeney wills in the PRO's documents online series, including the Baron's.  I bought most if not all, and now can't find them on my computer!  I hope to find them on a floppy disk somewhere, otherwise I'm out some bucks.  :-(   Oh, I do have the Baron's, though, if y'all would like a copy.

Did you get yours from this same place, or is there another source for wills?  That would be great!

I'd love a copy of Robert's, especially as if it was one of the Roberts that I paid for, I can't find it; and if I didn't have it already, then I'd really, really like it!

By the way, was this Robert a lawyer?  Because most of our lawyer Blakeneys kept a residence in Dublin for business purposes, even though the ancestral seat was elsewhere.

I did transcribe the 1799 will of Edward Blakeney and luckily have my handwritten transcription handy.  Would anyone like me to type it up?  Edward's residence was in the county of Middlesex at the time of his death but he is one of our Irish fellows.

Love,

Rhonda

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

**From:** [Doc. Holliman](mailto:holliman@psknet.com)

**To:** [James Reed Blakeney](mailto:JimBlake@aol.com) ; [Al and Kay Blakeney](mailto:alb21@simplecom.net) ; [Gary Stevens](mailto:GStev72818@aol.com) ; [C. Jim Holliman M.D.](mailto:jholliman@psu.edu) ; [James Allen Holliman](mailto:jholliman1610@bellsouth.net) ; [Bill Davis](mailto:MARTYBILLD@att.net) ; [Pauline Blakeney](mailto:pbblakeney@yahoo.com) ; [Kathleem Sullivan](mailto:KSulli8339@aol.com) ; [Rhonda Jordan](mailto:rlbj1161@bellsouth.net) ; [Phyllis Lyday](mailto:plyday@usgs.gov) ; [jidjr@aol.com](mailto:jidjr@aol.com) ; [Revis Blakeney](mailto:hillbillyrev@adelphia.net) ; [Jim Dye](mailto:jmdye@xtn.net) ; [Harold Templeton](mailto:mrman23@earthlink.net) ; [Deanna Holm](mailto:HolmHogs@aol.com) ; [DLDLLitle@cs.com](mailto:DLDLLitle@cs.com) ; [Harvey Nick Blakeney](mailto:hnb13200@earthlink.net) ; [dianebs111@aol.com](mailto:dianebs111@aol.com)

**Sent:** Friday, January 30, 2004 10:55 PM

**Subject:** Hon. Robert Blakeney's will

Dear Family:

I think that I have made another discovery of importance if I can get it to run on the Internet.  I found Robert Blakeney's will on the UK Archives and I am having trouble loading it to a floppy.  If you can receive it,  it will take Adobe Acrobat 6.0 to load and read.  The will is**VERY  SLOW  to  load !**   If you receive the next transmission from me, be very patient (as much as 15 minutes !).

The will is 5 pages long and mentions the Lord Baron Wm. Blakeney as the brother on the first page.   I've been so busy trying to get it into email form, I haven't had time to read much of it.   Robert Blakeney is listed in Dublin, not Mount Blakeney and Castle Blakeney is mentioned often.  Robert's wife is named.   This is a "gold mine" of long awaited information.  I'll try to send all the info on how I found this document.  Let's hope I can get it to you.

I have been able to print a copy so if the next effort fails,  I will scan it and send you the scan.  You'll receive it one way or another.

Let me hear from you.   My best,   Doc

Sorry guys, this isn't it.  I think the same info came across to us a few  
years ago.  
  
According to "Burke's Irish Family Records," Robert and Sarah Ormsby  
Blakeney did indeed have a son John.  But this son is "Col. John Blakeney,  
of Abbert, co Galway (bought 14 May 1734), JP (1727), High Sheriff 1727 and  
1738, Galway Drags, MP for Athenry from 1727, married Grace, dau of Henry  
Persse, of Roxborough, co Galway, and DIED 21 July 1747, leaving issue"  
(Robert, John, Theophilus, William, Sarah, and Mary).  
  
All these stayed in Ireland, and this John died before ours showed up in NC.  
  
Sarah Ormsby married Robert B. in 1702.  She couldn't have been born in  
1715.  
Also, Robert Blakeney died in 1733.  Their first son was John, followed by  
George Augustus, Gilbert, Robert, Margaret, Dorothy and Lettice.  If this  
John was born in 1732, then Robert couldn't have sired 6 more kids before  
dying the following year.  
  
Further, Childers lists this Robert as the son of William Blakeney & Eliz.  
Bowerman.  Not correct.  His parents were John Blakeney, born 1649, and  
Sarah Persse; they were married in 1671.  
  
Childers may have gotten these names and dates from the Mormon IGI.  I had  
gotten all excited at one point when I found all kinds of info there, but  
then found almost all of it to be wrong.  :-(   Not all IGI listings were  
documented or checked, and a lot of it comes from research done when it was  
harder to find sources and keep the lines straight.  (Don't know how any of  
you ever worked on this before there was software to help!)  
  
Burke's lists the Baron's brothers but except for Robert, no marriage or  
further lineage is listed for them.  Doesn't mean they didn't have any, just  
that Burke had no info for them.  I still think that's where our problem  
lies -- finding marriage and parenting documents for any one of them.  
Robert's info is full on his line of children, and our John isn't among  
them.  
  
Let's keep looking, though!  
  
Love,  
  
Rhonda  
  
  
  
----- Original Message -----   
From: <[JimBlake@aol.com](mailto:JimBlake@aol.com)>  
To: <[RLBJ1161@bellsouth.net](mailto:RLBJ1161@bellsouth.net)>  
Sent: Monday, January 26, 2004 8:46 PM  
Subject: Fwd: Fw: Source of John Blakeney info  
  
  
>  
>

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

**From:** [Doc. Holliman](mailto:holliman@psknet.com)

**To:** [Al and Kay Blakeney](mailto:alb21@simplecom.net) ; [James Reed Blakeney](mailto:JimBlake@aol.com) ; [Gary Stevens](mailto:GStev72818@aol.com)

**Sent:** Monday, January 26, 2004 1:39 PM

**Subject:** Fw: Source of John Blakeney info

**KAY --  REED  --  GARY:     Do you know anything about this fellow,  R. Childers ??  Here is  a note that I just  wrote to Deanna Holm in CA.  She is a descendant of the Thomas Blakeney that landed in New York about 1750.  I think that we need to check out Childers'  sources.  This may be a hot lead.  Please send this on to any interested in Blakeneys.**

**Doc**

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

**From:** [Doc. Holliman](mailto:holliman@psknet.com)

**To:** [Deanna Holm](mailto:HolmHogs@aol.com)

**Sent:** Monday, January 26, 2004 2:20 PM

**Subject:** Source of John Blakeney info

Dear Deanna:

The source of the John Blakeney info is a fellow named Roy Childrers.    [rchilders@iwon.com](mailto:rchilders@iwon.com)

Check:     [www.gencircles.com/users/rchilders](http://www.gencircles.com/users/rchilders)

Check also:    [www.gencircles.com/users/rchilders/1](http://www.gencircles.com/users/rchilders/1)

And:              [www.gencircles.com/users/rchilders/1/bysurname?Blakeney](http://www.gencircles.com/users/rchilders/1/bysurname?Blakeney)

Need to check out this fellow and see what his sources are.  I'll be doing that as soon as I can finish the lettering on the Lord Baron's grave.  Nearly finished.  Looking forward to a total restoration by midnight ! !

Love,   Doc

Dear Doc,

Wow, you really cleaned this up!  Makes it so much easier to read.

I did find my copies of wills on floppy disk.  I didn't remember having the foresight to copy them over already.  If you (and others) would like, I can send you the files.  They are the wills of Deborah (Robert's wife and the Baron's sister-in-law), Edward, and two Georges.

Didn't find the all-important Capt. John mentioned in any of them but they are interesting nonetheless.  Edward's mentions the most relatives but he had no children to leave anything.  Ed's is the one I've transcribed but haven't typed up for y'all yet; it's a 5-page monster.

AH, actually there is one potential clue there:  He mentions a Kirwan nephew in the Isle of Man.  This is the location that I'm aiming at lately.  Remember the Baron's falling out with a brother who then fled to the Isle of Man?  Well, if that was the father of our John, it might account for our finding no records in Ireland.  I have tracked down another Isle of Man Blakeney and am waiting for a copy of his will to arrive; cross your fingers that there will be clues in it.  It isn't that of the elusive brother (this guy is also named Robert), but he may well be his son.

Oh yeah, the Kirwans were a staunchly Catholic family in Galway -- neighbors of our families who intermarried with them more than once.  That's why finding a Kirwan married into the Blakeney family in the Isle of Man is particularly significant.  :-D

Thanks again for the files, Doc!

Love,

Rhonda

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 LegislatureGot my film with info on Robt Blakeney of the Isle of Man (d. 1778).  It did not offer nearly as many clues as I'd hoped.  It was not actually a will, as I had been told, but a court document stating that he'd died intestate and in debt.  His belongings were inventoried and sold to repay his landlord.

The few facts it did offer:

He was a native of Ireland.

He no longer had any relations on the Isle of Man.

He owned no real estate.

He was a man of some education.  (It will take me a good long while to transcribe the inventory, but I did notice several high-brow books on the list.)

All this does not prove, but suggests he could have been, a nephew of the Baron.  He could have come to the island as part of the family that was disowned by the Baron.  The Baron had described this brother "never having a groat (Irish penny) of his own," which could explain the slim circumstances this Robert died in, if he was a son of that brother -- especially a younger son.

It would also fit for our Capt. John to have been one of them, for it suggests that whatever relations once had lived on the Isle of Man had left for other parts.

What doesn't fit, if this is the case, is the generous financial support our Capt. John must have had at the time of his immigration.

Any thoughts?  Anyone?  Anyone?

By the way, Doc, the restoration of the stall plate looks great so far!

Love,

Rhonda

There has been much conjecture over the time frame of the Blakeney presence in Ireland.  My info suggests that the earliest time may have been with Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke in 1168. Other info indicates they came over during Elizabeth's reign(1554-1565).   
  
I tend to agree our line settled on lands belonging to one Mr. Fitzgerald, who must have been put out (literally). A local historian living on lands at Castle Blakeney, Galway is quoted as saying that the Blakeneys at Limerick ( Mt Blakeney) remained Catholic while their close relatives at Galway and Belfast became Protestants.

Hi guys!

Our line in Limerick definitely settled there in the 1600s.  Dad, you are right about the Fitzgerald property -- his land was seized and given to William Blakeney.  However, this was done because Fitzgerald was Catholic and Blakeney a Protestant.  This transaction and religious designations are recorded in Pender's 1659 Census.

When our William, the Baron, was 18, his family abandoned the Limerick estate and fled to the Galway homes of their cousins.  The reason was that the Catholic tenantry was rising up against the Protestant landlords, particularly in Limerick.  (I would have to check the dates, but I think the uprising was during the clash between King James and his son-in-law William of Orange.)  William defended the homestead successfully against the rapparees.  This info comes from his biography, which further says specifically that the Galway relatives were Catholic at that time -- though they had converted to Protestantism by the time of the biography's publication. (1750s)

I am still confused about the suggested religion on the Galway group.  It's true that many families were divided in religion.  Sometimes in a Catholic family, one son would become Protestant in order to preserve the families lands and hold political office.  So the fact that the first Limerick Blakeney was Protestant need not suggest anything about the others in Ireland.

But I have also read that the Blakeneys took over the land in Galway from the Kelly family when the penal laws against Catholics were first introduced.  (Castle Blakeney was first Castle Gallagh, or Castle Kelly).  Further, one of the Galway Robert Blakeneys served as sheriff or mayor of Galway city and in 1722 (I think!  I'll have to check the date and office) he drove the Catholics out of the city.  The Convert Rolls began publication in 1703; only one Blakeney is listed as converting from Catholocism, and she was at a fairly late date.  So any conversions must have been prior than 1703.

The official "Local Ireland / Galway" web site mentions this:

"**The Cromwellian settlement and after brought new names to both city and county.** Names, however, such as Pierpoint Buckett, Benjamin Bickiner, George Scanderby-Bushell, William Haycocke, George Younghusband and Christopher Pigg did not long survive. The Persses from whom was descended Lady Gregory of the Abbey Theatre and who had a famous distillerv in Galway, left a more permanent mark. Their home in Dominick Street, Galwav, is now the office of Galway Corporation. **The Blakeney family came at about the same time. Castleblakeney still bears their name. Robert Blakeney was Mayor for three years from 1713 onwards."**

<http://galway.local.ie/content/28125.shtml>

I started to say the Cromwellian designation would have meant they were Protestant, but Galway was in Connaught, where the dispossessed Catholic gentry were sent.  Could have been either way.  I have noticed also that the Blakeneys married into some traditionally Catholic families.  And later on, in the 1800s (maybe earlier), we find Presbyterian Blakeneys (I think in co. Down; not sure where else).

(The oldest line, the Dublin Blakeneys, had been in Ireland at least 100 years earlier but remained determinedly Catholic.  They wound up in Co. Carlow and changed the spelling to BLACKNEY.  I don't know if they were ever connected to our original Norfolk group.)

It's all still very confusing!!!  But the Limerick Blakeneys were without a doubt Church of Ireland, not Catholic.

Love,

Rhonda

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

**From:** [JimBlake@aol.com](mailto:JimBlake@aol.com)

**To:** [Jidjr582@aol.com](mailto:Jidjr582@aol.com) ; [RLBJ1161@bellsouth.net](mailto:RLBJ1161@bellsouth.net) ; [holliman@psknet.com](mailto:holliman@psknet.com)

**Sent:** Thursday, January 29, 2004 9:36 PM

**Subject:** Re: Fw: Source of John Blakeney info

There has been much conjecture over the time frame of the Blakeney presence in Ireland.  My info suggests that the earliest time may have been with Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke in 1168. Other info indicates they came over during Elizabeth's reign(1554-1565).   
  
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Okay, egg on my face about the sea captain bit.  There may be a few west coast Blakeneys who'll tell you they had heard that:  consider me the source.  
  
I think you won't find Blakeneys among the Ulster Scots who ventured into Appalachia via NJ and PA: the family is Norman and, sad to say, belongs to that lot the Irish refer to as the "bad Normans."  These were the Plantationists, who started going over to Ireland around the reign of Elizabeth I, I think.  The "good Normans" had gone over much earlier and had become assimilated into Irish society.  The Plantationists have generally a bad rap for cutting down all the trees in Ireland, being staunchly Protestant, and insufferably English.  The Irish may not have wept when John Blakeney and his ilk bade the Emerald Isle adieu.  
  
Another reason it is unlikely the Blakeneys were Ulster Scots:  they were Episcopalian (I did get that much right, didn't I?) rather than Presbyterian.  The Presbyterian Church is the hallmark of the Scotch-Irish.  If John Blakeney belonged to or was associated with the Anglo-Irish nobility, still firmly ensconced in the Church of England, he would have likely been attracted to the southern colonies, and Charleston was by far the busiest port down south.  It may have, at the time, been busier than many up north as well.  The northern colonies were given over to religious extremists: Puritans, Quakers, Mennonites, non-Presbyterian Calvinists, and Catholics (if one considers Maryland a northern colony).  Unless he himself belonged, in his youth, to one of these groups, I doubt he would have found the north terribly hospitable.  
  
Jimmy