Message from the President

Begin. A new term begins. On the heels of a successful reunion, we begin the march towards our next Claiborne family event. How we savor our Charleston memories of picturesque places, new historical insights, and discoveries of closely related family connections!

Reunion. The Charleston Reunion gathered together 25 people from 10 states: Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Tennessee, Kansas, Oregon, and Maine. Four were first-time reunion attendees: Elizabeth Glazebrook, Douglas Edgmon, Deborah Lugone, and Neoma "Mae" Damron.

Officers farewell. Serving the Claiborne Society diligently have been our outgoing officers. Patricia Clayborn, as both president and newsletter editor, showed adept managerial style and publishing artistry. Corinne Middleton, as secretary, produced interesting reports with masterful prose. Dede Clements, as treasurer, was a financial whiz who quickly and accurately handled finances for the reunion and membership. My personal thanks to them for their invaluable help as I undertook the Richmond and Charleston reunions. They were wonderful to work with.

New officers. The Claiborne Society's progress will continue as the newly elected officers take charge. Bill Bissell, son of Claiborne/Cliborn author and researcher Lolita Bissell, as incoming Vice-President, will plan for our next reunion in Nashville, Tennessee. Beverly Davis, world traveler and history guide, will be Secretary and Clai Bachmann Ely, planner of the Washington D.C. reunion, will become Treasurer. Frank Rura will assume the position of Registrar and membership chairman. As President my goal will be a new project, converting the archives, the cumulative history of the Claiborne Society, into a form that allows for distribution.

Standing Committees. Also vital to our continuing success are the standing board members who contribute unique capabilities to our organization. They oversee research, archives, publishing, and access to the Internet. These members are Alex Waldrop, Curly Moore, Patricia Clayborn, and Dan Boylin. Their respective skills continue to propel us to a higher level of accomplishment.

Every successful reunion becomes a springboard from which to leap forward. Let us begin.

Susan W. H. Rura, President, Claiborne Society
“Spice Islands” Response from Jill Price

We have received a response to our article on “Who Is the Thomas Clayborne Who Sailed to the Spice Islands?” that was published in the Fall 2015 Newsletter, from Jill Price, our wonderful King’s Lynn connection. She states:

“With regard to a Thomas, can you trace any descendants of William’s elder brother, Thomas? He came back to Lynn to claim his right as a Freeman, and I’m pretty certain that I have read somewhere that he went to America. Lynn as a Hanseatic town, now has very strong links with many of the Baltic cities, and we have visited a lot of them. It is also a member of the modern Hanseatic League. This summer I was in La Rochelle, another Hanse town. I don’t think there is any link with trade elsewhere. They were too busy whizzing across the North Sea! Please give my congratulations to Susan.”

Patricia Clayborn responded: “Thank you so much for your message. Alex Waldrop is among those to whom I am sending this message, and, of course, he is our best expert on this question. However, maybe I can take a stab at it.”

As you know, Thomas Claiborne Jr. was born about 1557. He was the Mayor of King’s Lynn in 1592 and Alderman in 1591. He married Sara Smyth James, the widow of Roger James, on November 21, 1598 at St. Dunstan’s Parish, in Stepney, London, and it is my understanding that afterwards they took up permanent residence there.

An interesting site entitled “Our Southern Cousins” states that “Thomas and Sara Claiborne were the owners, among other assets, of “The Royal James,” a tavern that stood between Shakespeare’s Globe Theater and the River Thames” [http://oursoutherncousins.com/claiborne.html]. When I read about what St. Dunstan’s, Stepney was like at that time, it states: “The parish, situated on the northern bank of the Thames, is chiefly inhabited by persons connected with shipping, and contains extensive warehouses, especially in the Commercial-road, leading from Whitechapel to the East and West India Docks.”

I believe that Colonel William Claiborne’s older brother, Thomas III, was born around 1599 in St. Dunstan’s Parish, Stepney, after which Thomas and Sara moved to the Parish of Crayford in Kent. William was baptized on August 10, 1600 in Crayford and grew up there. Thomas Jr.’s will was probated in Crayford, Kent in 1607.

Thomas III married Jane, and one source states his children were: Jane, baptized August 24, 1627 at St. Martin’s Within Ludgate, Thomas, baptized January 7, 1629 at St. Martin’s Within Ludgate, and George, baptized January 12, 1630 at St. Martin’s Within Ludgate, and then buried February 11 the next year.

When Colonel William Claiborne returned from Virginia to England and then went back to Virginia in May 1631, he brought his older brother Thomas with him, along with his brother’s wife Jane. He also brought Thomas Butler (brother of Elizabeth Butler Claiborne) and his wife Joan. Both families were among the first settlers on Kent Island. This reminds me that I would like to learn more about Elizabeth Butler and her amazing Butler Family ancestry. My first draft attempt to reconstruct her family tree follows. After his time in Virginia, Thomas Claiborne III returned to England and died in London in approximately 1633. I would also like to learn more about what his life in London was like.

After leaving King’s Lynn, Thomas II lived in St. Dunstan’s Parish, Stepney and then Crayford, Kent. Thomas III lived at St. Martin Within Ludgate. The nearby Deptford Dockyards housed the ships of the British East India Company.
Ancestors of Elizabeth Butler
By Patricia Clayborn

The distaff side is equally important, and Elizabeth Butler's ancestry is fascinating. The Butlers can trace their descent from Thomas Pincerna. Like chamberlain, dapifer, and dispensator, the position of "pincerna" or "le boteler" or "cup bearer" was a high ranking office of responsibility in early royal households, but, over time, became merely honorary.

The descent is as follows:

Thomas Pincerna b Worcestershire
Robert Le Boteler Pincerna b Worcestershire
Robert Le Boteler Pincerna b London
John Le Boteler b London m Anne Hanbury
John Boteler b London m Lady Margaret Froxmere
Nicholas Boteler b London m Jane Butler
William Boteler m Margaret Wilbe
William Boteler m Yatton m Elizabeth Bradwell
William Boteler m Yatton m Jane de Backecott
George Boteler m Yatton m Mary Throckmorton
John Boteler m1 Cressett St. John
John Boteler b Bedfordshire m Jane Elliott

Elizabeth was the daughter of John Boteler and his wife Jane Elliott of Little Birch Hall, in the Parish of Roxwell, County Essex. John was the second son of John Butler and his wife Cressett St. John of Thobie Priory. Jane Elliott was the daughter of Edward Elliott and his wife Joan Gedge of Newland Hall. Joan Gedge was the daughter and co-heir of James Gedge of Shenfield, Essex.

John Butler of Thobie Priory was the son of George Boteler and his wife Mary Throckmorton of Shambrook, Bedfordshire. Mary Throckmorton was the daughter of Richard Throckmorton of Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, and granddaughter of the Sir Robert Throckmorton who was knighted by Henry VII, and made a Knight of the Bath in 1494 along with the future King Henry VIII.
Edward Elliott (d. 1595) and his wife Jane Gedge Elliott of Newland Hall are memorialized along with their children in an elaborate monument in the All Saints Church in Writtle, Essex.
The Throckmortons were not-so-distantly related to relatives involved in the Throckmorton Plot and the Gunpowder Plot. With hindsight it is difficult to understand why a family like this, with so much at stake, would plot to overthrow Queen Elizabeth or King James. The fact that the family survived these calamities shows how well entrenched they were within the aristocracy.

Cresset St. John was the daughter of Sir John St. John of Bletsoe, Bedfordshire, and his wife, Anne Neville, daughter of Thomas Neville. Sir John St. John was Sheriff of Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, Knight for the Shire of Bedfordshire, Knight for King Henry VIII, guardian to Princess Mary Tudor, and Chamberlain of the household to Princess Elizabeth Tudor – later Queen Elizabeth I. Cresset was also the granddaughter of the Sir John St. John who was made a Knight of the Bath by Henry VII in 1488.

Cresset's great-great-grandmother was Margaret de Beauchamp, daughter of John de Beauchamp, 3rd Lord of Bletsoe. His grandfather, Roger de Beauchamp, was Lord Chamberlain of the Household to King Edward III. He owned Bletsoe manor till his death in 1379, when his son Roger Beauchamp succeeded, being followed in 1406 by his son Sir John. This John died in 1412, leaving a son John, who was still under age at his death in 1420, when Bletsoe Manor passed to his sister and heir Margaret, then aged eleven.

Margaret's first husband was Sir Oliver St. John and she had seven children by him before he died in 1437. She later married John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, and had a daughter: Lady Margaret Beaufort.

Lady Margaret was married to Edmund Tudor when she was only 12 years old. She eventually became the matriarch of the Tudor dynasty, as mother of King Henry VII and grandmother of King Henry VIII. However, Lady Margaret remained close to her seven St. John step siblings throughout her life.

The St. John Family is memorialized in an extravagant monument in St. Mary’s Church in the village of Lydiard Tregoze in Wiltshire, and includes a pediment featuring Margaret de Beauchamp. The St. John Family was originally from the Castle St. Jean le Thomas, near Mont Saint-Michel in Normandy. Sir John St. John, son of Oliver St. John, was educated alongside Henry VIII. He served as Margaret Beaufort’s chamberlain, and was an executor of her will. In addition, as mentioned above, he was appointed by Henry VIII to be guardian and chamberlain to princesses Mary and Elizabeth and chosen chamberlain elect to Elizabeth when she became Queen Elizabeth I.

These are only a few stories from Elizabeth Butler's ancestry. Can you help me find more?
Sources:
The Visitation of Kent Taken in the Years 1619-1621 The Harleian Society. Volume XLII: Page 223.
The Visitation of Bedfordshire Taken in the Years 1566, 1582, and 1634. The Harleian Society, Volume XIX. Pages 51-53.
We have read about how Thomas of Hay Close was involved with Richard Lowther in a plot to put Mary Queen of Scots on the throne in place of Queen Elizabeth. The “Victoria History of the County of Cumberland” tells how Richard Cliburn, brother to Thomas, and the same Richard who rebuilt Cliburn Hall, escaped capture as follows:

“In 1581, the year in which the chief penal act against papism was passed, the real troubles of those who had papal sympathies may be said to have begun. By this statute (23 Elizabeth, c. I) it was made high treason to be reconciled to the Roman church, and seminarists saying, and persons hearing mass were subjected to fine and imprisonment. Further penalties were laid upon those who neglected to attend the church service. The necessity for this oppressive legislation was ascribed to the efforts that were being made at that time to withdraw English subjects from their natural allegiance to the Queen. From this date the conflict between England and Rome became acute. The local authorities were on the alert for the presence of strangers; domiciliary visits were made to the houses of persons suspected of harbouring seminarists; the boundaries of the diocese of Carlisle were watched and notes taken of the personal appearance of suspicious characters who passed in or out; the clergy and justices of the peace were obliged to inform the bishop or the lord warden of what was taking place in the country; the eyes of Walsingham’s spies looked into every corner of the two counties. Lord Scrope could report in February 1583-4, that spying search had been made in all suspected places for writings and letters touching ‘the present state of religion.’ Andrew Hilton, ‘a wicked pillar of papistrie,’ was in the sheriffs close ward; so was Lancelot Bost, brother of the notorious seminarist; and Richard Kirkbride of Ellerton was also safe under good bond. A few days later, in answer to letters from the privy council, Lord Scrope and the Bishop of Carlisle stated that they had failed to apprehend Richard Cliburne and one Mouneforde a semainarie Scottes preist, though diligent search had been made throughout the two counties by Humfrey Musgrave, Thomas Hamonde, chancellor of the dioceze of Carlisle, Richard Dudley and Henry Leighe. Damning evidence against Hilton as the associate of Bost and a retailer of news from Scotland to foreign intriguers was transmitted; Richard Kirkbride of Ellerton, brother-in-law of Cliburne, had been apprehended, but they had admitted him to bail as he was an honest conformable man, and although he was a brother of Percival Kirkbride, ‘a verie notable papiste,’ yet the said Richard was one of the jury that indicted his said brother for not coming to church.”

As we know from the book “William Claiborne of Virginia: With Some Account of His Pedigree” author John Herbert Claiborne says of Richard Cleburne: “in 1571 he was again mixed up with the Lowthers in a plot in which the Duke of Norfolk was a principal, and in which the latter lost his head, when all these ambitious schemes came to an untimely end. Full of intemperate zeal for his religion, Cleburne continued to make himself obnoxious to Rokeby, Walsingham, and Leicester, ‘who thought it pious merit to betray and ensnare those eminent persons who were not yet quite weaned from the Church of Rome.’ By them he was closely watched and persecuted, and was several times indicted and imprisoned in the “Fleet.” Accused by Rokeby of being a ‘Recusant,’ and of being ‘carried away with blind zeal to favour and hold with the Romish Church;’ and harassed by his affairs, his health gave way, and in 1577 he was obliged to spend six months at Bath. In October, 1584, he was so completely down that Rokeby declared him to be ‘aged, infirm, and sickly,’ and again ‘he had permission to repair to Bath, where he remained from 30th January to the 1st May, 1586, on account of his health.”

The Reverend Frederick W. Ragg, states in “Cliburn Hervey and Cliburn Tailbois: Part II” that “of Richard himself tradition through the Irish and American Cleburnes handed down is this:—That by purchase of Killerby which he obtained through the family of Bowes (Sir George Bowes his own words say) he placed himself under the power of the extra-protestant Bowes family of whom he practically held Low Killerby in lease for years. He remained Catholic himself and that made things no better.

Sir George Bowes was son of Elizabeth Bowes who fell under the influence of John Knox, by whom she was adopted as a relative. And John Knox married her daughter Marjory. The incumbent vicar of Cliburn, Edward Knipe, who was also vicar of Warcop from 1556 to 1574, is said to have uttered a curse on the Cleburnes because of this, and was not likely to take to them kindly in a country-side where sympathy with Mary Queen of Scots was full; later on in the 17th century, Thomas Bowes (on 27 June, 1630) calls the Thomas Cleburne of that date “Cosen Cleburne”; and Queen Elizabeth was godmother to a daughter of Sir George Bowes. [Sir George Bowes was the grandfather of the Elizabeth Hutton who married Edmund Cleburne. Sir George was also an ancestor of the recently deceased Queen Mother, Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon.]
All this makes the curse intelligible, double curse as it is. First the Killerby complication:

‘Curst be the race, when Clyburn sells his owne
And Killerbie another lord shall own,
Bampton they've held full long and should not be connect
With heresyes with which they've been infect.”

"Accurst the race—an outcast it shall be
When Clyburn's lands are sold awaie,
When Killerbie another lord shall own
Then Cleburne's race shall be o'erthrown.'

However, it was at the cost of selling Bampton Cundale that Richard bought Killerby. One does not expect to find more than doggerel verse in such legends. But this part was only one half of the curse; the other half concerns the drowning of a fair damsel who afterwards haunted the hall as the White Lady. This drowning took place in the Lyvennet, and it is not tradition confined to the Cliburn family only. The spot is still known in the country-side and I was shown it...

The manor of Killerby was conveyed by Final Concord to Robert Bowes of Yorkshire by William Cecil, Queen Elizabeth's secretary, in 1564 (6 Eliz.), and by Robert Bowes and Sir George Bowes in 1569 (II Elizab.), with a cottage and lands to Richard Cleybourne.

The unhappy Mary Queen of Scots, dealt with by Tudor meaneness very characteristically emphasized when she had escaped from Langside and landed at Workington, was conducted as practically a prisoner by Richard Lowther, unwillingly enough I gather, in May 1568. But he was Sheriff of Cumberland and under command. Q. Mary was taken from Carlisle, to which place he conducted her, by Henry baron le Scrope, Warden of the West Marches, who apparently told Richard Lowther that he had exceeded his powers. Scrope's Castle was at Bolton (Yorks.) and thither he removed Q. Mary in July that year.

Afterwards she was removed to Tutbury (3 Feb., 1560). With Q. Mary there was great sympathy in Cumberland and North Westmorland as well as elsewhere in the North. The "old religion" was not played out, and Tudor methods were alien even to the Borderland of England and Scotland. There was a scheme to release her which, so far as we can judge, was joined by Richard Lowther himself (no blame to him) as well as Gerard Lowther, Lord Wharton, the Earl of Northumberland, Richard Clyburne of Clyburne and Thomas Clyburne and John Craggs. I do not know which Thomas Clyburne this was [but we surmise it was Thomas of Hay Close]. Gerard Lowther got as far south as Royston and then disappeared for a time. Richard Lowther and Richard Clyburne were arrested. Richard Lowther was in the Tower, incarcerated in 1569; this was because he was in office as Sheriff when he affronted the powers that were.

Another attempt to release Q. Mary took place in 1572 when Richard Lowther was again placed in the Tower. Q. Mary was removed to Coventry, and then taken back to Tutbury. [Thomas Howard, 4th Duke of] Norfolk was tried and beheaded on 2 June and [Sir Thomas Percy, 7th Earl of Northumberland, Richard Clyburne of Clyburne and Thomas Clyburne and John Craggs. I do not know which Thomas Clyburne this was [but we surmise it was Thomas of Hay Close]. Gerard Lowther got as far south as Royston and then disappeared for a time. Richard Lowther and Richard Clyburne were arrested. Richard Lowther was in the Tower, incarcerated in 1569; this was because he was in office as Sheriff when he affronted the powers that were.

In 1584, fifteen years later, and on 12 Oct. of that year, Ralf Rokeby writes to Walsyngham. He had taken examination of Richard Cliborne but could learn nothing of any importance from him except that he was a recusant without either learning or knowledge, carried away with a blind zeal towards the Romish Church, and has been often indicted and is aged and sickly. No wonder. But this looks as if he had not been in the Clink all the time and had been arrested over and over again.

In the Acts of the Privy Council, April 27, 1586, we find that his leave of absence at Bath had been extended till the 1st of August next following and he was bound to present himself at the Clink by that day; this leave was again prolonged to the beginning of the next Michaelmas term. There was no special charge made against him except recusancy and no doubt the sympathy in the North made it difficult to get any clear evidence of his joining an actual conspiracy on behalf of Mary of Scots...

I find from the tradition at Killerby which the Vicar of Catterick, the Rev. W. Kerr-Smith, has told me of, that the Killerby Cleburnes mortgaged their property to get money for Charles I and Charles II...In the time of this Edmund and of his son Timothy who married Mary, 4th daughter of John Talbot of Thornton-le-Street, the estate of Killerby had to be parted with, portion by portion, to keep up the royalist cause.

Sources:


Remembrance of Anne Claiborne Overcash

Submitted by Susan and Frank Rura

The Claiborne Society is sad to hear of the recent death of one of our members, Anne Claiborne Overcash. She was at the first Claiborne Reunion (1988) and spent many years pursuing her interest in genealogy. We shall miss her immensely but are left with many warm memories.

From Frank Rura: Very sad news. Anne's lifelong effort to discover the roots of the family, and document her findings, served as a foundation of the society. I met her long ago at a Williamsburg reunion, and I was struck by her enthusiasm and appreciation for all her cousins in the organization. She gladly shared information and provided many helpful leads which helped push Susan's research forward. God bless you Anne! ~FrankRura

From Susan Rura: At Reunion 1992 (Williamsburg, Va.), Anne Overcash and I discovered each other while enjoying a visit to ELSING GREEN, an old magnificent house on the Pamunkey River in King William County, Virginia. I was doing genealogy; she was doing genealogy. Our conversation intensified at Reunion 1995 (LaFollette, Tennessee). We were both searching in Mecklenburg County, Virginia, but she was way ahead of me. I can still hear her running through my lineage of George, William, George, William. I could barely keep the Georges and Williams straight so she recited the lineage again, quoting dates, spouses, etc. She graciously mailed me a map of the Clarksville cemetery and a copy of tombstone inscriptions showing indeed William and Margaret Clyborne were buried there. Later my husband and I visited OAKHURST cemetery and found the graves of my great-great-grandparents. Then at Reunion 2013 (Richmond, Virginia), Curly Moore brought a notebook of Anne's genealogy research. It was much, much more than I had envisioned! There were hundreds and hundreds of names collected into a Cliborn family tree, a life's work.

Anne Claiborne Overcash, we will truly miss you, but thank you for leaving us your legacy. Sincerely, Susan W.H. Rura

Anne Claiborne Overcash ~ ~ Obituary

Monroe, North Carolina – Anne Claiborne Overcash, 87, died in her sleep Thursday, January 7th, after several years of declining health. During that time she was cared for by her son Richard Overcash and his wife Robin.

Mrs. Overcash was born August 18, 1928, the fourth of six children of Henry and Minnie Claiborne of Mecklenburg County. She grew up in Charlotte, attending Elizabeth, Piedmont and Central High graduating in the class of 1947.

She married Lloyd W. Overcash in 1949 and they had three children, Barbara Brisco (Gerald) of Odessa, Florida, Richard Overcash (Robin) of Monroe, and Laurie Linn of Salem, Alabama. Mrs. Brisco is a high school economics and history teacher; Mrs. Linn, a retired Army lieutenant colonel, teaches large-animal veterinary science at Tuskegee Institute.

She married Lloyd W. Overcash in 1949 and they had three children, Barbara Brisco (Gerald) of Odessa, Florida, Richard Overcash (Robin) of Monroe, and Laurie Linn of Salem, Alabama. Mrs. Brisco is a high school economics and history teacher; Mrs. Linn, a retired Army lieutenant colonel, teaches large-animal veterinary science at Tuskegee Institute.

Mrs. Overcash was an avid genealogist who traced the Claiborne family history back to Westmoreland County, England and the Doomsday Book. She was also a committed do-it-yourselfer who laid brick, hewed lumber, set tiles, hung wallpaper, smoothed plaster, made curtains, slipcovers and her daughters' wedding dresses.

In addition to her children, she is survived by her brother Jack Claiborne (Anne Marie) of Charlotte, a sister in law JoAnn Bailey Claiborne of Charlotte and by four grandchildren Wesley Brisco, Joe Brisco, Jean Anne Linn, and Barbara Renate Linn.
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