

THE BRYANT FAMILY

As in many cases in the early times, the spelling of names varied and depended on who wrote them down. Many of the early settlers were illiterate and so recorders wrote the name as it sounded. In this particular family, I am using the most common spelling, Bryant. However the name was originally Bryan and yet when Joseph Danner married, his in-laws used the spelling of Briant. You pay your money and you take your choices.

One of the earliest families to settle in Davie County, North Carolina was that of Morgan Bryan. Morgan was a Quaker from the New Garden Community in Chester County, Pennsylvania. He brought his family to Rowan County, North Carolina and the 'Forks of the Yadkin' in 1748. He originally settled in what is now the present day Yadkin County, but quickly continued down to what is now in Davie County north of Mocksville, North Carolina and settled along the banks of Dutchman's Creek.

Morgan Bryan was a very successful Indian trader. He had owned lands in Virginia before coming to North Carolina. He was 77 years old when he came to Davie County. Some nine of his eleven children came with him and the area was quickly known as the Bryan Settlement. Squire Boone, Daniel's father, moved to the Bryan Settlement by the early 1750s.

Squire Boone's daughter, Mary Boone, had married William Bryan and was living in the Bryan Settlement. In 1756, Daniel married Rebecca Bryan, daughter of Joseph Bryan. Joseph was Morgan's eldest son.

Daniel Boone was constantly in debt. It was said he went to Kentucky as much to escape jail as anything else. He moved permanently to Boonesboro, near present day Lexington, Kentucky in 1775. Several families of the Bryans, including William, Joseph, Morgan junior and James went to Kentucky with Daniel Boone.

There were serious Indian problems in the area at the time and several Bryans were killed, while others returned to the safety of North Carolina.

All of Kentucky was considered a part of Virginia up until 1776 and the American Revolution. Many of the lands owned earlier by the Bryan/Bryant families was declared illegal when Kentucky was established as a state by itself.

In about 1779, William Bryant founded Bryant's Station near the present area of Lexington, Kentucky. This was an early Pioneer Fort and equally famous as was Boonesboro. Accounts indicate that there were four Bryant brothers whom all came from North Carolina together. These accounts indicate that William's spouse was Rachel Willcoxon, a niece or cousin of Daniel Boone and not a sister as I had earlier read.

An interesting footnote. Rachel Willcoxon was a sister of the illustrious Captain Elijah Willcoxon. A son of Elijah Willcoxon married Prudence Putman, a daughter of my ancestor Reding Putman when both families were living in Fulton County, Illinois in the early 1830s.

The fort at Bryant's Station was quite famous during the many Indian uprisings during the early 1780s. William Bryant was severely wounded in one battle during May of 1780. Several accounts said he died of these wounds, but more recent investigation indicates he not only

survived but lived a good many more years before he finally died in Boone County, Missouri many years later. Old records show that Daniel Boone and William Bryant were in the Kentucky area as early as 1775.

William Bryant was a volunteer soldier and Lieutenant in the army of General George Rogers Clark against the Indians in 1780.

William Bryant applied for a pension in June of 1833 while living in Boone County, Missouri. He had moved here along with Daniel Boone years before. The pension request shows he was born in Orange County, North Carolina in 1754. According to his statement, he enlisted in the North Carolina Militia in 1781 and served as a private in Captain Hemphill's Company in the Battle of Guilford and then enlisted on March 30, 1781 in Captain John Dial's company and served with him at the Battle of Yorktown and was discharged in December of 1782.

The pension request shows the spelling of Briant that is the way it was spelled on the marriage record of his daughter Catherine to Joseph Danner. After the Revolution, Bryant returned to Kentucky and remained there until after 1810. He later went to Calloway County, Missouri and then to Boone County in Missouri where he died on September 6, 1834.