

OUR BRYAN PIONEERS

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Part I

Webster's Dictionary defines "pioneer" as either a member of a military unit that precedes the main body and builds bridges, roads, trenches, etc., OR as one who goes before into that which is unknown or untried, to prepare the way for others. When you have read about our Bryan pioneers, we think you will be struck, as we were, with how well these words describe them.

In any history of the Bryans, the first thing that strikes you is that they did so much. The second thing that stands out is that they were either the first to do something or, failing that, the youngest! They brought a family tradition of public service, private enterprise, and ingenuity down to Broward County from Hamilton and Volusia counties and, before that, from Georgia and from Bladen County, North Carolina.

Let us start the real-life saga of the Bryans with a brief mention of the patriarch of the clan in Bladen County.

But, first, let us digress for a moment. This is essentially a work of genealogy and, as such, there are some instructions we would like you to have before you begin reading. The expression, "You can't tell the players without a scorecard," is never more apt than in genealogy. The Pedigree Charts (Ped. #) and Family Group Sheets (FGS #) are the scorecards which accompany this two-part article.

Peruse them as you go along. They give more detailed information on family relationships than is possible or practical in the main body of the text.

WILLIAM BRYAN (1757-1838) and his wife, Sarah Singletary Bryan, spent their lives in Bladen County, North Carolina, and are buried in the William Bryan Cemetery in Tarheel. William was a soldier in the Revolutionary War, serving in the Bladen Militia. He and Sarah raised nine children, two girls and seven boys, on their 750 acres in Hollow Township.

Three of their seven sons -- PHILEMON LEIGH, JAMES, and JOSEPH -- moved south into Georgia and were in Hamilton County, Florida, by the time the 1830 census was taken. A fourth son, LEWIS, arrived in Hamilton County not long afterward.

The three Bryan sons, in 1830, were part of the eighty-seven heads of household with a total of 553 persons making up the population of Hamilton County. By the 1850 census, there were 2,500 persons in the county. This was the era of military land grants and the Armed Occupation Act of 1842. This last act lured settlers to Florida and particularly to the area below Micanopy where most of the Indian uprisings had occurred. The act gave 160 acres to anyone brave enough to homestead the land for at least five years.

This land giveaway deal was not quite the prize it appeared to be. Along with the usual back-breaking hardships, settlers had to contend with Indians who had no intention of honoring this 1842 act. Even fourteen years after it went into effect, on December 23, 1856, they killed and mutilated a family in New Smyrna, Volusia County.

There were so many Bryans, and they were involved in so much of the early growth of Hamilton County that we will concentrate on the families of just two of them -- JOSEPH BRYAN and PHILEMON LEIGH BRYAN, sons of William of Bladen County.

JOSEPH BRYAN (1790-1846) had two sons who were important to Hamilton County. One son, MILTON JAMES BRYAN, was the county's first sheriff after the territory of Florida became the twenty-seventh state to join the Union in 1845. In 1846, Milton was a road commissioner. In 1847, he was a state representative, and in 1863 and 1864 he served as county commissioner. Between 1836 and 1857, he and his wife, Mary Maria Stewart, had twelve children. The last, a daughter, they named Kansas Nebraska Bryan.

Another son of Joseph Bryan, THOMAS BRYAN, married Matilda D. Stewart and had ten children, five sons and five daughters. Thomas was constable of Hamilton County in 1839.

Bryan Family

Pedigree Chart Z

WILLIAM BRYAN
1757-1838



PHILEMON LEIGH BRYAN
1779-1858



WILLIAM JAMES BRYAN
1813-?



NATHANIEL CLAY BRYAN
1846-1918

JOHN MILTON BRYAN, SR.
1838-1911



ANNIE LOUISE
BRYAN
1881-1966

WILLIAM QUINCY
BRYAN
?-1921

MARY ESTHER
BRYAN
1878-1932

NATHANIEL
PHILEMON
BRYAN
1872-1935

JOHN MILTON
BRYAN, JR.
1874-1936

WILLIAM JAMES
BRYAN
1876-1908



JAMES PHILEMON
BRYAN
1918-1984

ELIZABETH BRYAN

LOURCEY BRYAN
1919-

(JOHN) MURRAY
BRYAN
1905-

DONOR'S NAME: WILLIAM LEIGH BRYAN
 When Born: 1879 Where: Blaine Co., N.C.
 Occupation: _____
 When Died: JANUARY 1938 Where: Hamilton County, Fla.
 When Buried: _____ Where: Trinity Church Cemetery
 What Material: _____ Where: Blaine County, Blaine Co., N.C.
 Date of Material: _____
 No. of Pages: WILLIAM BRYAN (C.S.S.) No. of Mother's Marriages: None

Information on this card abstracted from:
 "Times of News-Sun Co. Co."
 by Buford, Verba E. Deane,
 Great Point, Fla., Mrs. Selma W.
 Howell - "An Early History of
 Hamilton County, Fla." 2nd
 Edition -

WILLIAM LEIGH BRYAN
 (Mother's Full Name)
 ANNE "MAMIE" BANTON
 (What Name Used)
 Date: June 1938
 Complete: J.L. "Tex" Neade
 Address: _____
 City: _____

WIFE MARRIAGE NAME: ANNE "MAMIE" BANTON
 When Born: ca 1881 Where: Blaine County, N.C.
 Occupation: _____
 When Died: ca 1938 Where: Hamilton Co., Fla.
 When Buried: _____ Where: Trinity Church Cemetery, Hamilton Co.
 What Material: _____
 Date of Material: _____
 No. of Pages: JANE BANTON (C.S.S.) No. of Mother's Marriages: SARAH SEARIGHT (C.S.S.)

Order	CHILDREN (Name & Date of Birth)	When Born (Day, Month, Year)	Where Born (Town, State)	When Died (Day, Month, Year)	Where Died (Town, State)	Mother's Name	When Married (Day, Month, Year)	When Died (Day, Month, Year)	Where Married (Town, State)	When Died (Day, Month, Year)	Where Died (Town, State)
1	BENJAMIN	ca 1880				None					at age 11 in
2	WALTER W.	1880-1882	Blaine Co., N.C.			MAMIE	11 Jan				at age 11 in
3	SPENNA	1884				JOHN S. STEWART	1881				
4	WYNONNIE	1887				ALICE SINGLEDAY					
5	JANE	1890				EMMA SINGLEDAY		1873	Columbia Co., Fla.		
6	WILLIAM JAMES	25 Feb				MARY ANN PERRY			1884	Fla. Mason	
7	LOUIS BANTON	17 Oct	Georgia			ANNE ELIZABETH DOWE	4 January		1882	Fla	
8	MARIE ANN	1818	"			WILLIAM BRYAN	17 August	ca 1838	Clack Co., Ga.		
9	JOSEPH D.	1822	"			MARIE C. STEWART	1822			Volusia Co., Fla.	
10	MAMIE	1824 or 1827	"			JOSEPH A. FLINN	1824				
11	STONEY/STONEY	1837	"			WILLIAM S. BRYAN	1848				

F.G.S.
#5

DONOR'S NAME: WILLIAM JAMES BRYAN
 When Born: 23 FEBRUARY 1881 Where: Worrenville, Georgia
 Occupation: _____
 When Died: _____ Where: Lake County, Fla.
 When Buried: _____ Where: Fort Meade Cemetery, Lake County, Fla.
 What Material: _____
 Date of Material: _____
 No. of Pages: WILLIAM BRYAN No. of Mother's Marriages: ANNE MAMIE BANTON

Information on this card abstracted from:
 Mrs. Melvin Ingle - 1920
 Via Census of Hamilton County,
 Fla. - from 1918 address given by
 Bryan Simpson

WILLIAM JAMES BRYAN
 (Mother's Full Name)
 MARY ANN PERRY
 (What Name Used)
 Date: June 1938
 Complete: J.L. "Tex" Neade
 Address: _____
 City: _____

WIFE MARRIAGE NAME: MARY ANN PERRY
 When Born: 13 APRIL 1813 Where: Ga.
 Occupation: _____
 When Died: _____
 When Buried: _____
 What Material: _____
 Date of Material: _____
 No. of Pages: _____ No. of Mother's Marriages: _____

Order	CHILDREN (Name & Date of Birth)	When Born (Day, Month, Year)	Where Born (Town, State)	When Died (Day, Month, Year)	Where Died (Town, State)	Mother's Name	When Married (Day, Month, Year)	When Died (Day, Month, Year)	Where Married (Town, State)	When Died (Day, Month, Year)	Where Died (Town, State)
1	WILLIAM PERRY	31 Feb	1824	Fla.		GATIE BANTON	14 Jan	1843			
2	JOHN WILSON	4 Nov	1830	"		LOUISE NORTON	1847	1841			
3	MARTIN ANN	25 April	1841	"		WILLIAM G. BRYAN					
4	ROSA JANE	23 Sept	1843	"		MARION TUCKER					
5	WYNONNIE CLAY	14 January	1846	"	Hamilton Co., Fla.	MARTIN JANE HENRIE	15 October	1870	1828		
6	MAMIE ELIZABETH	2 December	1847	"		WILLIAM BRYAN	1848	1852		Seas Beach, Fla.	
7	LEWIS CARROLL	10 July	1852	"		ANNE BRYAN					
8	LEONDA	29 Nov	1855	"		MARSHALL PERRY					
9	MARY ANN ROBERTA	5 October	1860	"		MARY ANN					

F.G.S.
#6

DONOR'S NAME: JOHN WILSON BRYAN (C.S.S.)
 When Born: 8 May 1830 Where: Hamilton Co., Fla.
 Occupation: _____
 When Died: 14 August 1911 Where: Orlando, Fla.
 When Buried: 18 January 1887 Where: Clay County, Fla.
 What Material: _____
 Date of Material: _____
 No. of Pages: WILLIAM JAMES BRYAN No. of Mother's Marriages: MARY ANN PERRY

Information on this card abstracted from:
 Mrs. Melvin S. Ingle
 Tallahassee Veterans Recorder
 Tallahassee News, Vol 5, 1913-
 Miami Post-Tribune newspaper
 SOCIETY/ARTICLE 1924 "Bryan's Legacy"
 reprint of article Nov 1925 of
 speech by Bryan Simpson at the
 unveiling of portrait of J.W.
 Bryan at Lake County Courthouse

JOHN WILSON BRYAN
 (Mother's Full Name)
 LOUISE MARGARET NORTON
 (What Name Used)
 Date: June 1938
 Complete: J.L. "Tex" Neade
 Address: _____
 City: _____

WIFE MARRIAGE NAME: LOUISE MARGARET NORTON
 When Born: _____ Where: Clay County
 Occupation: _____
 When Died: _____
 When Buried: _____
 What Material: _____
 Date of Material: _____
 No. of Pages: Exp. Selma Neade No. of Mother's Marriages: _____

Order	CHILDREN (Name & Date of Birth)	When Born (Day, Month, Year)	Where Born (Town, State)	When Died (Day, Month, Year)	Where Died (Town, State)	Mother's Name	When Married (Day, Month, Year)	When Died (Day, Month, Year)	Where Married (Town, State)	When Died (Day, Month, Year)	Where Died (Town, State)
1	ANNE	1844				Charles Averette Carson	1844	1840			
2	HEBERT-STEVEN	1870				None		1874		Fl. Mason, Fla.	
3	MARGARET PELLIOW	23 April	1872			ELISA INGRAM SMITH	28 Nov	1898	1870	Jacksonville, Fla.	
4	JOHN WILSON, JR.	18 July	1874			WILLIAM ROSE WENBART	1874	1878		New Smyrna, Fla.	
5	WILLIAM JAMES	10 Oct	1875		Fl. Mason, Orange Co., Fla.	LADY GEORGE ALLAN		1878		Wash. Washington, D.C.	
6	MARY ELIZABETH "Bessie"	20 Sept	1877			KATHERINE ALLEN TUCKER	5 June 1900	11 Nov	1900	Jacksonville, Fla.	
7	MARGARET BANTON	1883				MATHEE DANIEL DORRIS	1 Dec 1920	1955		Jacksonville, Fla.	
8	FLORENCE WELSHAM	1883				ROBERT MARSHALL PRICE		1887		Miami, Fla.	
9	DAVID STEWART	1884				LAWRENCE BAYNE HILTON		1917		Jacksonville, Fla.	
10	MARY GILL	1885				None		1928		Surfside/Jacksonville, Fla.	
11						FRANK CLAYD ROSE		1922	1948	Jacksonville, Fla.	

F.G.S.
#7

This brings us to PHILEMON LEIGH BRYAN, son of William of Bladen County and ancestor of most of the Bryans familiar to Broward Countians. PHILEMON LEIGH BRYAN was born in 1779 in Bladen County, North Carolina. As mentioned above, Philemon Leigh arrived in Hamilton County before 1830, probably about 1828, with his wife Anne Hawthorne Bryan and many of their eleven children (see FGS #5).

Earlier, Philemon had settled in Appling County, Georgia, when it was opened to settlers, moving his family from the former Wayne (now Brantley) County. As county lines were rearranged, he found himself eventually living in Ware County without having made any move at all.

Philemon Bryan was one of the first justices of the Inferior Court of Appling and Ware counties. He served two years of his four-year term, resigned in 1827, and moved his growing family to Hamilton County, Florida. Once there, Judge Bryan became a county commissioner and a charter member of the Prospect Church.

The 1830 census shows three Bryans as heads of households — Joseph, James, and Philemon. By 1850, there were ten heads of household surnamed Bryan. Between 1833 and 1870 so many Bryans held the offices of constable, county clerk, justice of the peace, and county and road commissioner, that listing them all would only serve to confuse matters further.

Many of the children of Philemon Leigh Bryan lived out their lives in and around Hamilton County; others, like LEWIS HAWTHORNE BRYAN, kept heading south, and settled at New Smyrna, Volusia County, Florida. LEWIS HAWTHORNE BRYAN and his brother, WILLIAM JAMES BRYAN, produced children who filtered on down to our neck of the woods when it was still Dade County, Florida.

WILLIAM JAMES BRYAN, sixth of Philemon Leigh Bryan's eleven children, was born February 25,



Nathan P. Bryan

1813, in Waynesville, Georgia. He married Mary Ann Perry of Georgia and produced nine children (see FGS #6). His second child, JOHN MILTON BRYAN (1838-1911), was profiled in the Winter/Spring 1984 issue of *Broward Legacy*.

John Milton Bryan was the father of ten. Two of his sons distinguished themselves in Washington. Lawyers in partnership, NATHAN P. (Nathaniel Philemon) BRYAN was a United States Senator and then a federal judge while his brother, WILLIAM JAMES BRYAN, was also a senator. William James served less than a year, from December 26, 1907, until March 22, 1908, when he died of typhoid fever in Washington, D.C. (see FGS #7).

NATHAN BRYAN was also the first chairman of the Florida Board of Control and acting attorney for the state's attorney in 1906 when

Lake City and Gainesville were involved in a tug-of-war over the final domicile for the University of Florida.

Prior to 1905, there were eight state-supported institutions of higher learning dotted around Florida. The Florida Legislature, in 1905, decided to reorganize the system into just three colleges. Florida Female College and the all-black Florida Agricultural and Mechanical would be located in Tallahassee. The University of Florida college for men would be located in either Ocala, Jacksonville, St. Augustine, Lake City, or Gainesville. All of these cities hoped to win the men's college, but only the latter two had a good chance of achieving that goal. Both also had much to lose if they failed. Lake City seemed to have the most to offer. It had already established an agricultural college, which had a new gymna-

sium and three buildings courtesy of Henry Flagler, the railroad magnate. However, Gainesville also already had a college -- the East Florida Seminary.

Both sides wooed hard, but Lake City could not top Gainesville's offer of 517 acres, \$70,000, and free water. Gainesville won. Lake City carried on a court battle for almost two years after the decision, but to no avail. Among other things, Lake City challenged the Board of Control's authority to take the college away from them. There was so much anger that, for many years afterward, residents of Lake City would not send their children to school in Gainesville.

When the final days arrived for the college at Lake City, tempers were still running high. Mayhem was so distinctly a possibility that Nathan P. Bryan sent a telegram to W.P. Jernigan, business manager for the university, asking, "Has anybody been arrested? Answer quick." On July 23, four mule teams loaded with library books and other contents of the college headed for Gainesville with the admonition from Nathan Bryan not to offend anyone, not to argue with anyone, and to "attend strictly to business." Bryan Hall, housing the original University of Florida Law School, was named for Nathan P. Bryan.

After Bryan served as United States Senator from 1911 to 1917, he was twice offered the post of Governor General of the Philippines by President Wilson. Twice he declined, stating that he felt he should continue his work in the states because of the precarious condition of world politics at the time. In 1920, Wilson appointed Bryan circuit judge of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, a position he held until his death in Jacksonville in 1935.

The fifth child of William James Bryan was NATHANIEL CLAY BRYAN. Born in Hamilton County in 1846, he married Martha Jane Howell in 1870. By 1896, they were living in Lemon City, Dade County, Florida. From Lemon City they moved north to Hallandale, Florida.

Four children were born to Na-

thaniel Clay Bryan. One of his daughters, Esther (1878-1932), was the second schoolteacher in Fort Lauderdale. Both Esther Bryan and her sister, Annie Louise Bryan, married brothers named Ingalls who were themselves Broward pioneers.

WILLIAM QUINCY BRYAN, called Quince, was the only son of Nathaniel Clay Bryan. Quince was the first tax assessor for Broward County -- from 1915 until his death in 1921. He died at forty-four, leaving a twenty-five-year-old widow, a three-year-old son named James Philemon, and a daughter, Elizabeth, less than a year old.

The son, better known as PHIL BRYAN, grew up to be the first mayor of Pembroke Park from the time of its incorporation in 1957 until 1978. On the occasion of his death in August 1984, his childhood friend, J. W. Moffitt, described Bryan's early years as mayor, saying that Bryan "kind of ran the town like a good little business operation" and accepted about ten dollars a month during all twenty-one years of his term.

LOURCEY and (JOHN) MURRAY BRYAN, grandsons of the John Milton Bryan, Sr., mentioned earlier, shared their memories of childhood in a primitive Broward County during interviews in late 1983 with Dr. Cooper Kirk, Historian for the Broward County Historical Commission. The brothers explained the hardships encountered here since 1895, when their father, John M. Bryan, Jr., first visited this area in search of land more suitable for citrus growing and cattle raising than the New Smyrna-Kissimmee area, which had suffered a devastating frost.

Until the early 1920s, the family was still somewhat dependent upon their former hometown for the few luxuries and necessities it could offer over the relentless difficulties in the area known as Big City where they made their home. Big City was so called by Indians and settlers alike because the Indians camped there, and no other area for miles around had more people. It was located approximately where U.S. 441 and Stirling

Road meet, the present location of the Hollywood Seminole Indian Reservation.

(JOHN) MURRAY BRYAN, born in 1905, and his younger sister, Guilda Belle, came as small children to this area west of Dania. Lourcey was born at Big City in 1919 to John Milton Bryan, Jr., and Guilda Rose Murray Bryan. Even though they were considered fairly well-to-do for the times, their lives were horrendously difficult by our pampered standards. Asked what they did for recreation, they answered, "We worked."

While the Bryans lived at Big City, Murray went to Dania to school in a horse and buggy, driven by the teacher who lived with his family, Miss Charlotte Bradley. The path was sometimes impassable, either oozing muck or totally under water. To finish eighth grade, Murray lived with his maternal grandparents, Thomas Jefferson and Liza Murray in New Smyrna. By the time he graduated from Fort Lauderdale High School in 1924, conditions had improved somewhat.

At one time, John M. Bryan, Jr., had at least 2,000 head of beef cattle out at Pine Island, where the family later lived. He would bring in 500 to 1,000 head at a time to be fattened up, sold, and driven to the water for shipment to Cuba. Their brand, as well as Grandfather Murray's, was the seven cross. They both marked and branded their herd with a distinctive pattern of notches and cuts on the ears which could be identified even when heavier winter hair hid the brand.

Without the electricity we take for granted now, the Bryans used kerosene to light the lamps, and it had to be purchased from Bob Jones' grocery store in Dania. Trips to "town" were few, arduous, and strictly for necessity. Even so, Guilda Rose Murray Bryan remembered those years as some of her happiest. The family lived in an unpainted three-bedroom house, surrounded by orange trees, in the middle of nowhere. There were no neighbors to speak of -- or to, for that matter. There was a wood



Murray (left) and Lourcey Bryan at Murray's home in New Smyrna Beach, December 22, 1983.

stove, and on the back porch, a pitcher pump. They bathed in a number-two washtub, laboriously heating and carrying water. At a time when it was not unusual to kill six to eight rattlesnakes daily, the outhouse was a short but harrowing distance from the house, and they stepped lively.

Rattlesnakes were not the only danger. At night the squalling of panthers could be heard and their presence felt. Feline eyes shone in the light of the campfires that attracted them. Sometimes, in the morning, cat prints as large as a man's palm could be seen on the banks of the canals where they came to drink. Asked if he had ever been afraid while guarding horses or cattle at night, one of the Bryan boys could still make light of the situation, answering, "Well, I wasn't exactly pleased . . ."

Lourcey and Murray remember Dr. Thomas Kennedy as a man who could be consulted for help with animals as well as humans, since his was the only medical advice

around. Lourcey relates that Dr. Kennedy had an unusual way of dispensing medicine. He carried pills around in his pockets, pulling out a bunch, blowing the lint and tobacco off them, and giving them to patients. Considering that this was a mere sixty-odd years ago, it is startling to realize what changes Lourcey and Murray Bryan have seen in south Florida in their lifetimes.

In our next issue: Lewis Hawthorne Bryan and his Broward County descendants.

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BACK COVER

These Broward County pioneers were photographed at Hot Springs, Arkansas, in the early 1900s. Left to right are: Nathaniel Clay Bryan of Hallandale; his wife Martha Jane Howell Bryan; their son-in-law Charles Edward Ingalls; and Nathaniel's brother John Milton Bryan of Denia. C. E. Ingalls, who married Nathaniel and Martha's daughter Esther, was postmaster of Hallandale from 1907 to 1909, and served on the first Broward County commission. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Melvin Ingalls.)
