

EARLY HISTORY OF THE FAIREY FAMILY

The early history of our Fairey Family is found on our crest and in records you handed in at the first family reunion and since. On our crest notice the fleur de lis in the background. That means we came from France for the fleur de lis is the white iris, which is the national flower of France. It is also the symbol of the Holy Mary, which is Catholic. Also on our crest is the St. Andrews cross which was given to a crusader and the crusaders were also Catholic.

Maude Fairey, a professor of English at the University of South Carolina, went to France and found our De Fere Family there. That was our French name. Since then our name has changed many times. The short time she was there, Maude gathered up much information on our family. Her report was most interesting and helpful.

The next step is that of our old knight, Rauf De Fere, going to Scotland. Seven hundred knights were sent by the King of France in 1250, to the aid of Scotland in the battle with England for independence. One was a De Fere. The writer, Black, states that before then there were no members of the De Fere Family in Scotland. A helmet is on our crest and knights wore helmets. John D. D. Fairey's record stated that we descended from nobility and gentry. Knights were of nobility. A commoner could not be a knight. John D. D. Fairey also told us we would find ourselves in old history books and geographies. So, William Arthur Fairey, our assistant historian, and a graduate of Duke University, looked in those old Scotch Histories at his Alma Mater and found the story of our knight having been granted the St. Andrews Cross by King Robert Bruce of Scotland, in the battle for independence.

The battle was won at first, but finally Scotland lost to England. The author, Black, states that many knights married and settled in Scotland. Rauf De Fere, married a Ferguson, settled there and paid homage to England in 1296, and that is when the English wolf was placed upon his crest. The marriage into a Scotch Family, (of royalty twice) put the Scotch blood into our veins, as our old records stated. The earliest people to Scotland, on record, for no records were taken for centuries, were Greeks, and they left their influence, for the old custom of Scotland is Greek, and the father chose a husband for his daughter. (This came over TV recently.) Scientific research today is giving us facts. We are now of a French Catholic Family, married into a Ferguson (of Gaelic origin, who were Celts), who inhabited the Highlands of Scotland and spoke the Gaelic language. The Ferguson Family was in Ayrshire, Scotland, and that is where our knight was, and called Rauf Fairey of Ayrshire. After he surrendered, they fixed him up to suit themselves, name and all.

Black states that a family named Farie of Farme is said to have settled in the Parish of Rutherglen for about 600 years. Again the spelling of the name changes. Rutherglen is in Ayrshire, and that is where Charles Savage found the old castle. Ayrshire is where the Kennedy Family is from also. They were also of Gaelic or Celtic origin. Later on, 1724, in County Down, Ireland, we find part of our family and Robert Kennedy associated together in the rabbit business.

The Romans invaded Scotland also at one time, so here we find our French knight living under Greek influence, under Iberian influence (among the earliest inhabitants) under Celtic influence, under Roman influence, but under English rule. What a mix-up! Much like America was before the Revolutionary War. No wonder we find a flock of our people in Northern Ireland.

A few years ago, Charles Savage and his wife, went over to Rutherglen and Edenburg. They found where the old castle was and near by two members of the Fairey Family. One, a doctor, is at the head of the large hospital at Edenburg. Our assistant historian also made a trip over there and into other countries. They all deserve much praise for doing such in behalf of our family.

We stated members of our family stepped over into Northern Ireland, just forty miles across the Irish Sea. This must be when we dropped the wolf from our crest, and placed the rock there, which is a symbol of firmness and dependability. Fere means "shod with iron". Some of them seem to be shod with iron, sure enough. The crest with the rock is the one our family accepted many years ago, and many of us have copies of it. Mrs. Clara Solomans, a heraldic artist of Orangeburg, S.C., found it for us. The other crest belongs to the ones who remained in Scotland, under the rule of England.

Surely, while in Ireland, we married into Irish families. How else did Irish blood get into our veins? Our old records stated that we were Scotch Irish, when we came over to America. Guess the French blood was so far back it was forgotten. We followed clues and found it. The question now is: "Where in Northern Ireland did all these people of ours settle?" An exchange Presbyterian Minister, found in the Christian Herald Magazine last year from Ireland, put us in touch with the Ulster Scot Historical Society of Belfast, and they sent us a map which shows where many members of the family settled in County Antrim. They are found in fourteen places with many Johns and Williams, so that has been a popular family name for centuries and still is. A William has appeared since 1586. Now we understand why our old John William Fairey put the name William in all three of his sons names.

In case all the sons died except one, there would still be a William alive. Many did die in those days of disease and hardships. Surely the William Fairay of 1586 is the one we descended from, for his name is spelled exactly like our William Fairay was spelling his name when he came to America. Mildred Rebecca Fairay Council in her letter to Lula Fairay, stated that he was called by the name William, and the last name spelled Fairay. Somebody, somewhere, turned it around and spelled the last name wrong, with "e" between the "r" and "y". On the royal land grants, the name William is O.K., but the last name is not spelled as it should have been.

In faith in Ireland, we find many of us ruling elders in the Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterians, the Huguenots, and the Lutherans were reformed Catholics. The Reform was established in Geneva, Switzerland, the most peaceful country in the world today, and spread to other countries. Presbyterians and Huguenots were followers of John Calvin. He picked up the faith in Geneva, and became among the most learned writers in the propagation and defense of that belief. John Calvin was born in Picardy in 1509 and died in Geneva in 1564. It was spread in Germany by Martin Luther. The play, Prologue to Freedom, given on Parris Island, S.C., for the 400th anniversary of the landing of Jean Ribout, on Port Royal Island, gave a clear picture of how and why freedom of worship began in France. So, in Ireland we were Presbyterians who were members of the reform group which was small and confined chiefly to County Down and County Antrim. No doubt we became Presbyterians around the time the Presbyterian Church was introduced in Scotland by John Knox, about 1560. When Charles II was King of England and tried to exercise jurisdiction over the Presbyterian Church, many Scots took refuge in North Ireland, County Down, and County Antrim. This is right where the Historical Society found us.

The next step our family took was to America. No record handed in to me states what ship our old ancestor John William Fairay and his son Jesse arrived on, but may be found in the Council Journal 37, pages 15-25, meeting January 6, 1773, that William Fairay has lately arrived from Ireland into the province of South Carolina, in the ship "Lord Dunluce". He had petitioned for 200 acres of land and was getting it then, which according to our records was nine years after he arrived, which was 1764. According to our records, he arrived in 1764, and settled on a track of land at Sixty-Six, S.C., which is near Rowesville. He left his wife in Ireland, hoping to return to get her when he became settled, but in the meantime she died. He never returned to Ireland. Later on he met a widow, Patrick, who had several children. One daughter was Betsy. John married the widow and his son, Jesse, married the daughter Betsy. The widow's name was Elizabeth Patrick so an old record stated. The old home Elizabeth Patrick and John Fairay had is still there, but Sixty-Six is no more. Not even a store is there now. At one time it was right well settled with plantations around and about, but business and people went elsewhere. It was Sixty-Six miles from Charleston, S.C. Through a swap, the old place went out of the family name. John Fairay, II, who married Matilda Barr, made a swap with John Collier, who lived at Fifty-Eight, S.C. You will find him buried there beside his little daughter, Mary Margaret, and two other daughters who married into the Berry family. The cemetery is called the Fairay Berry Cemetery. Our first old home place is now called the John Collier Place, and a Collier Family lives there now.

The children born to John and Elizabeth Fairay were two daughters, Elizabeth Fairay and Catherine, and two sons, John and William Fairay. Their daughter Elizabeth married a Utsey and moved to Alabama. Catherine married John Patrick and they might have settled on the old Patrick Place near Howell's Mill Pond where they probably attended the Old Zion Methodist Church which was near there. Over in a field of the Old Patrick Place, you will find the family cemetery. The namesake, John William Fairay, married Margaret Syphret and lived on a place next to his fathers. An old land plat R. L. Fairay has, which Rena Dukes Fairay gave him, points out where that place is. This John Fairay and his half brother, Jesse, were trustees of Sardis Methodist Church, the first church of that neighborhood. The son, William Fairay, married Rachel Baxter and settled where Ott Cemetery is near Branchville, S.C. They are buried there. That might be Baxter property, for it is said that the son John inherited all his father's real estate. Jesse, the son who was born in Ireland; married Betsy Patrick, might have settled on Patrick property where the Patrick Cemetery is. That is not far from Sardis Church. David Patrick is buried there. Rev. J. J. Patrick, who died at his daughter's home near Ruffin, S.C., descended from David Patrick. Jesse, II, married Mary Ann Syphret, and they lived and are buried on their old place back of Nipson Fairay's place.

The 1790 census was the first one taken in our country. It has only one Fairay in it. If it is Jesse, and it seems so, he is recorded by his middle name, William, and in Camden District. He must have gone up there after his first wife Betsy Patrick died and he married again. To whom? Nobody seems to know. Camden is one of the oldest towns in South Carolina and Rev. Massebeau, and old minister of Sardis Church was from there. In the 1790 census we do not find our old ancestor, John William Fairay, his wife, Elizabeth, or her daughter Betsy, so they must have been dead. His four children by Elizabeth Patrick were too young to be married. Only heads of the family appear, so they are not in it.

p.94 shows "John Ferry (Fairay) 1 male 16/yr, 1 female".

In the Archives Department in the War Memorial Building, Columbia, S.C., there is a record which reads: "Paid Elizabeth Fairroy, widow of John, killed at Hanging Rock, \$8.15." This was one of the last battles of the Revolutionary War, and one in which the American side lost and suffered a big loss of men. It was near Lancaster, S.C., in 1780. This Revolutionary War Pension was given in 1785. We have been informed that if a list of those killed was made, it has been lost. Most of our records were burned or lost during the War Between the States. Some of them were put in a boat and the boat was put on the Congaree River, hoping to save them, but the boat sank, records and all. So we must dig up what records we can, here and there, and put them together for the best story we can find and be satisfied with that.

It is most certainly as Bob Fairroy said, "It does not come to you, you must go after it." That is certainly true.

From here on, we branch off and work on the five branches of the family, which are the five children of John William Fairroy and the Widow Patrick. The Jesse branch has quite a bit done on it. It is now up to you to take over the others as far as you wish. Because of old age and bad health, my husband and I cannot go after it any longer. But this story can be greatly enlarged and added on to.

We are what we are, because of the past. Then, why not know something of the past?

(Signed)

Vireen Varn Tyree

Your Past Historian