

ABRAHAM BOCKÉE.⁶

ABRAHAM BOCKÉE⁶ was born at The Old Place, now Shekomeko, February 3, 1784, and died there, suddenly, while sitting in his chair, June 1, 1865.

He was graduated at Union College, May 4, 1803, and studied Law in Poughkeepsie with William Slosson. The license from James Kent, authorizing him to practice as Attorney at Law in the Supreme Courts of the State, is dated May 16, 1806; that, as Counsellor at Law, November 1, 1811. He practiced Law in Poughkeepsie until his return to the homestead in 1815. He was later concerned in state and in national politics, but singularly unambitious; every office came to him unsought. He was a strong Federalist, and later, a staunch supporter of Jackson, but though an uncompromising Democrat of the Old School, one of the last public acts of his life, was on an inclement day, in November, 1864, to ride several miles to Millerton to vote for Abraham Lincoln.

He was a member of the New York Assembly in 1820; of the House of Representatives, 1829-1837 (the Twenty-first, Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Congresses); of the New York Senate, 1840-44. He was appointed Judge of the Court of Errors in 1843, of Dutchess County, in 1846. The extract below from an obituary written by a prominent member of the Poughkeepsie Bar gives the current estimate of his legal ability, but does not measure the wide range of learning and the intellectual resources of a man who could so easily, in middle life, leave a promising career for the seclusion of an isolated country home:—

“There were perhaps few clearer minds in his, or any other state. As a lawyer he could rise above mere forms and technicalities and grapple with the great principles which underlie both society and government, and as a Judge, his opinions delivered in the highest court of this state^a are an enduring monument to his ability. He seemed

^a See *Hill's Reports*, Vol. VI. and Vol. VII.

ambitious only to perform with fidelity any duty or trust which devolved upon him, and never condescended to seek official preferment, but to his ability, learning and experience, had there been added the shrewdness of the politician, he might have adorned the executive chair of his native state, or occupied a high and permanent seat in the temple of Justice."

March 4, 1809, he married MARTHA OAKLEY.

Issue:

- VII. 1. Catharine Jerusha Bockée,⁷ = Augustus Flint (p. 75).
 2. Jacob Bockée,⁷ M. D., = Catharine Wilkinson (p. 76).
 3. Mary Bockée,⁷ = Barak Willson (p. 78).
 4. Jesse Oakley Bockée,⁷ = Sarah Anne Flint (p. 78).
 5. Alexander Phœnix Bockée,⁷ b. Jan. 27, 1822; d. Aug. 13, 1825.
 6. Isaac Smith Bockée,⁷ = Sarah Robbins Starr (p. 79).
 7. Velina Bockée,⁷ = Archibald Wilson (p. 80).
 8. Phœnix Bockée,⁷ = Elizabeth Pugsley (p. 81).

OAKLEY.

MARTHA OAKLEY,⁵ called "Patty," born in Beekman, September 28, 1791, married in Poughkeepsie, March 4, 1809, died at The Old Place, February 5, 1866. She was educated at the famous Girls' School of the Misses Pierce in Litchfield, Connecticut. Noted for great beauty in her youth, its traces, and her dignified carriage, remained through life. Married at seventeen, she was soon the mistress of the farm at Shekomeko, and trained herself to great executive ability. Her housekeeping, the rearing of her children and often the management of the farm, went on with a wide hospitality and continuous mental culture. One of the most vivid pictures before me, is of the stately woman beside the fireplace in the great, stone-paved kitchen, attending to a cauldron, perhaps of lard or soap, but with a volume of Shakespeare in her hand.

Martha Oakley was the eighth child of Jesse Oakley,

1748-1827, and Jerushah Peters,^a 1756-1808, married February 12, 1775, with issue:^d

Mary Oakley, 1776-1833, = William Moore.^b

George Peters Oakley, 1777-1847, d. ch., = Ruth Wilkinson.^c

Patience Oakley, 1780-1794.

Sarah Oakley, 1781-1840, d. ch., = Andrew Moore.^b

Thomas Jackson Oakley, 1783-1857, = 1. Lydia Williams;
2. Matilda Cruger.

Phebe Oakley, 1786-1866, = Robert Wilkinson.^c

John Wilmot Oakley, 1788-1840, = Harriet Badger.

Martha Oakley, 1791-1866, = Abraham Bockée.

Velinah Oakley, 1793-1795.

Jesse Maurice Oakley, 1795-1848; d. unm.

A Son, 1797, d. i.

Velinah Oakley, 1799-1873, = Gilbert Wilkinson.^c

Jesse Oakley was born at West Hills, Huntington, Long Island, April 28, 1748. When a young man he came to the "new lands" of Dutchess County, settling on a farm at Hoxie's Corners in Beekman, where he afterward kept a large country store. October 17, 1775, he was commissioned as First Lieutenant under Capt. Vincent in the Fifth Regiment of Dutchess County Militia, but his name is not in the Roster of State Troops, and from the known loyalty of his wife's family, it is doubtful if he ever served. He was Supervisor of Beekman, 1792-96; Member of Assembly, 1794-97. He removed to Poughkeepsie in 1802. November 29, 1808, he married (2) Mrs. Susan (Romeyn) Linsen, 1768-1834. He died, November 9, 1827, and was buried in the Dutch Burying Ground on the North Road.

Jesse Oakley was the youngest child of Thomas Oakley, and his wife, "Patience Cornwall," (?) who married (2), 1766, John Cornell. Their issue^d was:

^a For descent of Jerushah Peters, through Peters, Hewlett, Abel Smith, Jackson and Smith, see *A Peters Lineage*.

^b Sons of Andrew Moore and Elizabeth Dorland; grandsons of William Moore, M. D., of Antrim, Ireland, d. 1749, and his wife, Mary Palmer, 1709-1810, of Stonington, Conn., who m. (2) — Griffin, and was a noted preacher among the Friends.

^c Children of Content Moore, 1743-1834 (daugh. of Dr. William Moore) and John Wilkinson, son of William and Martha Wilkinson.

^d For further records, see *Oakley MSS.* of M. B. F.

- Thomas Oakley, = Mary Oldfield.
Phebe Oakley, = William Oldfield.
John Oakley, 1737-1833, = Ruth Rogers.
Samuel Oakley, = 1. Abigail Wood;
2. Rebecca Ralf.
Israel Oakley, 1740-1824, = Elizabeth Smith.
Andrew Oakley, 1742- , = Patience Smith.
Wilmot Oakley, 1744-1814, = 1. Patience Bayless;
2. Rebecca Ballard.
Nathaniel Oakley, = Sarah Cushew.
Jesse Oakley, 1748-1827, = Jerushah Peters.

Thomas Oakley of West Hills was undoubtedly, Thomas, the younger son of Captain Thomas Oakley of Jamaica and Foster's Meadows, whose residence and land transfers are traced from 1660, when he was one of the Freeholders at the Jamaica Division of Land, until his death early in 1709. His wife, first mentioned in conveyances of land, was Sarah Saxlay, also mentioned in 1689; April 13, 1699, wife Elizabeth is named, while September 21, 1705, is recorded the marriage contract between Thomas Oakley and Mary Burroughs, widow of Edward of Jamaica.

Of the descendants of Nathaniel, "eldest son of Thomas Oakley," there is a continuous record. If 1688, the traditional date of the birth of Thomas Oakley of West Hills, be correct, his mother was Sarah Saxlay. No record exists of the purchase of his lands in Huntington. He was living there in 1749, when is recorded the marriage of his son Thomas. In 1737, he was still in Foster's Meadows, as named in the Town Book, February 13, among those agreeing to keep up the fence of the burial ground, "Thomas Oakley for his father deceased."

But, ascending from "Thomas Oakley of Jamaica, Gentleman," often called Captain Oakley,^a begins that uncertainty which results from the deplorable neglect of family records so common in the early settlement of our country. Briefly stated, the problem is this. There came to Westchester County, New York, in 1664,

^a Various spellings exist, as Oakle, Oakloy, Oakly, Okeley, Okeloy, Okley, etc.

"Miles Oakley born in Oakley Grove, Parish of Oakley, Cumberland, July 15, 1615, and died in the Borough of Westchester, May 10, 1698."

Thus reads his gravestone in the churchyard of St. Peter's, Westchester. It is said that he was a Member of Parliament and an ardent adherent of Cromwell, but that at the Restoration, finding it convenient to leave England, he came to Boston and remained there until the English had taken possession of New Netherland. He then came to New York and settled in Westchester township. Upon its incorporation in 1675, he became its first Mayor. After coming to Westchester, he married, for the fourth time, Mary Wilmot, daughter of Capt. John Wilmot of Great Neck.^a

Contemporary with him was a Miles Oakley, born in Cumberlandshire, June 23, 1623, whose wife Mary was given Letters of Administration, November 3, 1682. He is believed to be the son of Jesse Oakley, 1600-1660. The probabilities are strong that this Jesse and the elder Miles were brothers, and that Thomas of Jamaica, who must have been of age in 1660 and hence born in 1639, or earlier, was the son of Miles and preceded him to America.

It is to be noticed that in the family of Thomas's son, Nathaniel, the name, Miles, and not Jesse, descends into this century, and of his son Thomas, the names Jesse and Wilmot, but not Miles, are repeated from generation to generation. Members of the Westchester family claimed cousinship in the third degree with Thomas J. Oakley, 1783-1857. That would be the case, if Thomas of Jamaica was the son of Miles, 1615-1698.

There is no documentary proof thereof, but cumulative evidence makes it strongly probable that this line of descent is correct:—

Miles Oakley¹ of Oakley Grove and Westchester, 1616-1698.

Thomas Oakley² of Jamaica, d. 1709.

Thomas Oakley³ of West Hills, b. 1688; d. before 1766.

Jesse Oakley⁴ of Dutchess County, 1748-1827.

It is submitted as a working hypothesis.

^a Some records give the name as Margaret, and assert that she was the mother of the only three sons of Miles Oakley. There is no evidence against the assumption of an elder son, Thomas of Jamaica, born in England.