

## The Long Road to Charlemagne

A friend of mine when he heard the title of my speech, “The Long Road to Charlemagne”, told me that his longest way to Charlemagne was typing the 42 generations! I am sure that many of you felt the same way, although the task has been improved by Tracy Crocker’s computerized application. My friend was not quite right, as we all have had a long period of research before we have extended our lineages back as far as that great King of the Franks and Holy Roman Emperor. That is unless we are lucky enough to have someone who has already done all the work. In choosing the title, I began thinking back about my first interest in family history, which eventually led to a career and a special interest in Charlemagne and his descendants.

It took a longer time for me to find my way back to Charlemagne as an ancestor than most of you, as I started on my basic genealogical trip when I was only 4, and did not arrive at my destination, until some 30 years later. When anyone starts their research, they are not sure where it is going to end. In my case I was so young that I did not even realize that I was doing research! But we all have to begin with the oral tradition and hope that there are people in the family who can lead you forward and channel you to your ancestors. In my case I did the right thing without realizing it!

I did learn about Charlemagne, when I studied rudimentary European history at the Indian Mountain School in Lakeville, CT, around the age of 12. He was presented as an historical figure and there was no suggestion that he was actually an ancestor of modern people. In talking about ancestors one might hear people say that their ancestors came over to England with William the Conqueror, or that they were descended from him. In any event William seemed to be the ultimate goal for many people interested in Royal lineage.

As I said at the tender age of 4, I started to inquire about the people for whom my brothers and I had been named. I was shown the diploma from Yale earned by my namesake the Rev. Timothy Field in 1797. This was given to me at birth, and was being held in safekeeping. Today it is in the top drawer of my bureau! I was also told that I was named for his father, Capt. Timothy Field of East Guilford (now Madison, CT) who fought in the Revolution. It was said that he threw down his plow and answered the Lexington Alarm! My brother Henry Sudler Beard was named for my mother’s parents Henry Turner and Elizabeth Sudler from the State of Delaware, while my oldest brother, Stuart-Menteth Beard III, was named for my father, Stuart-Menteth Beard II, who was in turn named for his uncle, Stuart-Menteth Beard, who bore the hyphenated surname of his mother, Philadelphia Stuart-Menteth, as his fore name.

As a child I spent a lot of time with my mother’s family. Even though her father died in 1896 and her mother in 1905, there were numerous uncles, cousins and great aunts

around who had raised her. They had lots of colorful family stories, and they gave me the names of some ancestors. They were good story tellers, but not keen genealogists.

Sometimes there was even a bit of exaggeration and a few Eastern Shore privates were promoted to generals in the Revolutionary War!

A distant cousin of my father gave me a genealogy of a part of the Field Family when I was 7 and my father's mother, Gertrude Field Finley Beard, my only living grandparent, gave me a Field genealogy which included her mother, Louise Howell Field, just before she died when I was 10. These books dealt with the Field Family from the time that they arrived in Hartford, CT, in the 1630's, with only a few clues about their English origin.

My father, who said he knew very little about genealogy, did know the names of all of his great-great grandparents and some ancestors further back. When I said that he seemed to know a lot, he stated that he must have taken it by osmosis. There had been a handsome family tree on vellum prepared by an English cousin, with all kinds of Royal descents. I saw it only once. It was hidden away in a jam packed closet, and thrown out by a manic friend who decided, he was going to help my parents straighten things up! The earliest ancestor featured on the chart was William the Conqueror and there were several intricate lines of descent shown for the Stuart-Menteth family. Not a mention of Charlemagne.

By the time I was 12, my parents had been driven crazy, and they were exhausted by my questions. It was then that they put me in touch with my grandfather's first cousin, Philadelphia Stuart-Menteth Vines of Canandaigua, NY. She proved to be a goldmine of information and helped me on the path that would lead to Charlemagne, although I don't think that she ever evoked his name! Over a period of some 25 years she wrote me a letter every week or so. They were filled not only with family stories, but genealogical details and guidance where to go to do further research. Also, she noted ancestral places to visit in Scotland, England and Ireland. She made me realize that it is not just the names and dates of ancestors that are important, but that you need to find out as much as possible about these people to make them come alive and be interesting, as you work your way backward.

By the time I really got to know Cousin Phil, she had only one leg. This was the result of an infection in her left leg that seemed to have stemmed from an operation that she had had in India in the early part of the century. She broke her leg several times when she was in her early 60's. The bone disintegrated and her leg had to be amputated. Fortunately she had a good sense of humor. Her regular wooden leg she called Mortimer Snerd and the backup leg was Charlie McCarthy. She smoked cigarettes in a long holder, and at times it seemed as if the cigarette might fall out, and there were enough burned spots around to prove that they did at times. She enjoyed a double Manhattan before lunch, which could be dangerous, as she did not eat breakfast. She rented the second floor of the house where my father was born at 79 Howell Street in Canandaigua, New York. She told me that when in the bathtub she often thought of all the generations my grandmother's family who had bathed there. They were not her relatives, but she had known them all, and she

felt quite at home. The place was certainly not designed for a handicapped person. The stairs were very steep. One time when my wife Ann and I went to take her out to lunch, she stood at the top of the stairs and suddenly fell down the complete flight in front of us.

We were frozen in horror. She looked up at us from the floor and said that she had learned to make herself like a rag doll when she fell. It evidently worked, as she was fine. In fact as we helped her up she said; let's get on our way I am really looking forward to my Manhattan.

Cousin Phil was named for her aunt, my great grandmother, Philadelphia Stuart-Menteth Beard, wife of Dr. Cornelius Collins Beard of New Orleans, LA. From her letters and stories, I learned that Cousin Phil's grandfather, my great-great grandfather, Capt. Thomas Loughnan Stuart-Menteth, was a native of Dumfries, Scotland. He was a retired officer in the British Army who arrived in Canandaigua, NY, in 1832, after serving with the 17<sup>th</sup> Lancers at Waterloo and in India. He settled on the shore of Canandaigua Lake to raise grapes and make wine. He was the 2<sup>nd</sup> son of seven sons of Charles Granville Stuart-Menteth of Closeburn Hall, Dumfries and his wife Ludivina Loughnan. Ludivina Loughnan was one of four daughters of Thomas Loughnan, an Irish wine merchant of London and Madeira. Their liting names were Ludivina, Zepherina, Philadelphia and Clementina. The girls were born in Madeira and later baptized in London as Anglicans, although their grandfather Andrew Loughnan was listed in London records as an Irish Papist. The Loughnans had extensive liquor connections around the world. For example they were distillers in Kilkenny, dealt in wine in Spain, and had a Rum interest in Jamaica. Philadelphia Ferguson, the wife of Thomas Loughnan bore a fore name that dated back to an ancestress Philadelphia Johnstone who was born in Edinburgh in 1688, and this name has continued right down to my niece Philadelphia Beard who is a lawyer in Fort Myers, FL. Thomas Stuart-Menteth inherited his mother's share of his grandfather Loughnan's fortune. It was in correspondence from a Scottish family friend, John Greig, who had immigrated to Canandaigua some years earlier that he learned that grapes grew well around the lake. With the Loughnan money he came to America, and purchased a large piece of property that became known as Menteth's Point. In 1832, not long after arriving in Canandaigua, the 36 year old Thomas wed a 14 year old Irish girl named Isabella Maria Tobin. Their daughter Philadelphia was born the next year. Isabella or Minnie as she was known had no more children until she was 24. When her son James Stuart-Menteth was born in 1841. Thomas never informed his English family of the birth of James until some years later, and therein lay the beginning of a long family dispute. In 1838, his father was created a Baronet by Queen Victoria. This is a hereditary title. James Stuart-Menteth, the older brother of Thomas had no children and the son of a third brother was being groomed to succeed his grandfather and uncle in the Baronetcy. Thomas did have inkling that his son might be the heir, even though he was an American citizen, and he took both his daughter Philadelphia and his son James to Montreal to be baptized on British soil! I have the prayer book in which this is recorded with the signatures of the rector, the parents and their grandfather James Tobin. Notarized copies of this entry were later used in to prove his birth and eligibility to be the heir. Thomas Stuart-Menteth died in 1854 suffering from gout, probably due to too much consumption of his own wine!

In 1872 the American born James Stuart-Menteth of Canandaigua, NY, inherited the title and became Sir James Stuart-Menteth, 3<sup>rd</sup> Baronet of Closeburn Hall, much to the chagrin of his British relatives who had consulted lawyers and tried to have him disqualified. They did not succeed, and he held the title until his death in 1918, although he continued to live in Canandaigua. The estate of Closeburn Hall in Dumfries actually had been previously sold by his uncle, and a smaller one, Mansfield Park, had been purchased in Ayrshire. The profit from the sale was evidently given to the cousin who was the disappointed heir. Jane, Lady Stuart-Menteth, the widow of his uncle, continued to live there until her death in 1905, when the Ayrshire property finally came to him. Uncle Jimmy was left 5,000 pounds, by the widow on condition that he would not remove the family portraits from the house. Since he had no sons, it was fairly sure that the son of one of the English cousins would eventually inherit the title and the estate, as a baronetcy cannot descend in the female line. The elder of his two daughters, Philadelphia Stuart-Menteth was born at Menteth's Point, Canandaigua Lake, in 1874. She and her younger sister Isabella, known as Belle, born in 1875, did visit Scotland as girls. Even though their reception on the part of some relatives was cool, she did meet some sympathetic cousins and she developed a great interest in family history. In the 1890's one of the British cousins, T. Humfrey Vines, came to America to take courses at Harvard. He had been educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and was the Headmaster of the Sind Madrassah Tul Islam, a school for Mohamadan boys in Karachi, India. How the world has changed since those days, as the boys would now probably be called Muslims and Karachi is in Pakistan. Humfrey's mother was Catherine Stuart-Menteth, daughter of the Rev. Francis Hastings Stuart-Menteth, a brother of Capt. Thomas of Canandaigua, and the wife of the Rev. Thomas Hochkin Vines, a Canon of Lincoln Cathedral. Humfrey made the trip to Canandaigua and met cousin Phil. Ten years later he wrote and proposed marriage! He came from India for the wedding, which was celebrated at Menteth's Point in 1906. A few days after the ceremony, Humfrey Vines took his bride to England across the Atlantic. He had not told his parents that he was getting married! However, his mother forgave him, since he had married one of her own family! Through the years Cousin Phil met many more of the English and Scottish relatives in England and in India, where so many of the Stuart-Menteths and their kin had worked and lived since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In fact she became very friendly with her cousin Fred Stuart-Menteth who eventually would succeed her father in the title. In those early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, before the First World War Cousin Phil increased her knowledge of the family lore and genealogy. She visited churches and old houses, and saw many family portraits, some of which she even photographed. She interviewed relatives and managed to obtain two copies of the family tree on vellum that I mentioned. I have noted how the one that she gave my father disappeared. I inherited the other from her and there must have been a jinx on those charts. In 1969, we vacated our house in Greenwich Village for a month to let a contractor do some interior work. It was only a week or so after our return that I realized that the chart must have been thrown away in the house debris!

Her letters to me in the 1940's, 50's and 60's and her gifts of family documents, genealogies and Bibles allowed me to make connections to some royal ancestors. In the account of the family in Burke's Peerage, which she sent to me, it noted some clues. There was mention that Thomas Stuart-Menteth's, Ludivina Loughnan through her

mother, Philadelphia Ferguson, was a great granddaughter of Annie Laurie, celebrated in Scottish song, and she was also descended from Sir William Douglas of Drumlanrig, the 1st Earl of Queensberry. Cousin Phil told me that Ludivina and Charles were married at Drumlanrig Castle in Dumfries. This was the home of her cousin the Duke of Queensberry. The Queensbury Earls having been elevated to a Dukedom. I later found an account of this marriage in bound issues of "the Scots Magazine" for 1791 in the New York Public Library. Through the Douglas family of Drumlanrig, there were descents from the Scottish Kings and through them from the English Kings and that old chestnut William the Conqueror!

But it was through the mother of Sir Charles Stuart-Menteth, Catherine Maria Wheler, daughter of the Rev. Granville Wheler of Otterden Place, Kent, the wife of the Rev. James Stuart-Menteth, that the closer descents from the royal lines came. Her mother Lady Catherine Maria Hastings was a daughter of Theophilus Hastings, the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Huntingdon, who was the lineal senior representative of poor Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, and granddaughter of King Edward IV. She was the last of the Plantagenet's. King Henry VIII had her head chopped off at the Tower of London when she was 72 years old. The account of the beheading is gruesome, as she continued to run around the Tower Yard, after she was partially decapitated! Henry VIII was in dispute with her son Reginald Cardinal Pole who had taken the Papal stand against him in his divorce from Katherine of Aragon and marriage to Anne Boelyn. Since these Plantagenet descendants also caused a threat to his claim to the throne, he not only executed his cousin Margaret, but her son, our ancestor, Henry Pole, Lord Montagu.

Then Cousin Phil showed me how we were descended from Henry VIII's sister Mary Tudor, the Dowager Queen of France, and wife of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk! Family disputes in those days remind us a bit of the mafia family executions in recent years. No one was safe from their relatives.

As I began to create a chart to take place of the ones that had vanished, I discovered that my great grandmother had at least 90 lines from Edward III of England! The intricacy of relationships and constant intermarriage made me wonder how we were still able to function normally! It must have been the occasional infusion of yeoman blood that prevented this. The chart is still in pieces, as it was too extensive to fit on any table surface, or floor, of my house!

In 1955 when I was stationed in Bordeaux in the U.S. Air Force, I had a chance to go to England and meet some of the Stuart-Menteth cousins, and see many of the family portraits and heirlooms. In 1958, I helped run the Easton Court Hotel in Chagford, Devon, near the edge of Dartmoor where my Beard ancestors had their origins, and I met more of my British cousins at that time. In later trips to Scotland, I was able to see the remains of Closeburn Hall, and the 1847 grave of Sir Charles. My cousin Addie (Alexander) Stuart-Menteth, a retired Admiral, gave me the directions to find this cemetery. I thought that his directions were faulty, as I wandered through some dirt roads that seemed barely passable, until I came to a dead end at a farm yard. He had told me to go through the yard pass the farm, which I did. There beyond one of the plowed fields was a large cemetery, and in it I found the grave. I doubt I could find it again, or even tell

anyone else how to do so. Later I found the 1852 grave of his wife Ludivina in an easily accessible cemetery in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. She was painted by Gainsborough as a girl, Raeburn as a young matron, and by some other artists in middle and old age. One image of her that I would like to forget is the photograph a cousin showed me. It was taken in 1852, after she had died! I did discover that she was illegitimately descended from Margaret Tudor the other sister of Henry VIII, and I would rather think about that than the grizzly photograph.

In 1961 I decided to get a Master's Degree in Library Science from Columbia, and to help pay my fee I took a job with the American Historical Company. They had an amazing salesman Mr. Bateman who knew little about genealogy, but a lot about human nature. Once some Royal gateway ancestors were found for wealthy clients, he would sell them charts showing their lines of descent from these famous ancestors. Of course William the Conqueror was one of the popular destinations. They would get a wonderful chart in color with coats of arms which they could frame and then their lineage and the chart would be published in a series called "Colonial and Revolutionary Lineages of America" or the earlier version "Colonial and Revolutionary Lineages of Pennsylvania". He sold the lineages and charts at astronomical figures - \$50,000 and \$100,000 at a time. He did this faster than we could do the research, or the artist could draw them. Of course we were paid minimum wage, while Mr. Bateman and the company reaped the profits. It was a great learning experience, in more ways than one! It led me to many new sources for research. I spent a lot of time at the New York Public Library Local History and Genealogy Room, which I had first used when I was 12. At this time one of the librarians left, and before I had graduated from Columbia they hired me for the job.

When Cousin Phil heard that I had been hired to work there, she was ecstatic. She gave me the names of numerous references to check, and I found many that she did not know. It was in my job at the New York Public that I discovered works that showed descents from Charlemagne for both William the Conqueror and his wife Matilda of Flanders. A groundbreaking book showing their connection to Charlemagne was Erich Brandenburg's "Die Nachkommen Karls des Grossen" originally published in 1935 and reprinted in Frankfurt in 1964. This was the first book to try to note all the descendants of Charlemagne for several generations. Wilhelm Karl, Prince von Isenburg compiled charts of European Royal families and showed some descents from Charlemagne in his "Europaische Stammtafeln ". Some of the volumes were first published in 1936, and re-edited again between 1956 and 1975. G. Andrews Moriarty published many articles dealing with the Carolingians in "The New England Historic and Genealogical Register", and he sparked a new interest in Charlemagne in this country. All of this scholarship enabled Siegfried Rosch to compile his "Caroli Magni Progenies" for Degener publishing in Neustadt a der Aisch, Germany, in 1977. I still feel that this is the best compilation of the first seven generations from Charlemagne. Roderick Stuart in his "Royalty for Commoners" 4<sup>th</sup> ed. published by GPC in 2002, translates and provides in English many Carolingians descents and adds material that connects Charlemagne's mother, Bertha "au Grand Pied" (Broad foot) of Laon, and his wife Hildegard back to the Merovingian Kings. Ian Wood's "The Merovingian Kingdoms (450-751)" was published at Harlow,

England by Longman Pearson in 1994. This is a scholarly historical and genealogical work that sheds much light on the formerly shadowy Merovingian Royal Family for whom the immediate male line ancestors of Charlemagne were Mayors of the Palace.

In the 1960's I began to join hereditary organizations. I started with the Sons of the Revolution in 1965, using my descent from Timothy Field, and from there went on to join the Society of Colonial Wars and the St. Nicholas Society of the City of New York. My friend J. Orton Buck, who was also a member of these groups, told me about the Order of the Crown of Charlemagne, which he had joined in 1967. In 1969, I also became a member and attended my first meeting that year. Through the years I have learned that my Field ancestors through their descent from Ann Lloyd, the wife of Theophilus Eaton of New Haven, CT, have descents from Charlemagne. It turned out that my grandmother Elizabeth Sudler Turner also had lines back to him through Richard Wright of Northumberland Co., VA, Robert Drake of Accomac Co., VA, and Christopher Thomas of Maryland.

My Cousin Phil died in 1967 at the age of nearly 94, before I had concentrated on Charlemagne, but she put me on the right track. She passed on so much information about our family that would have been lost, and gave me the family memorabilia for which I am so grateful. She had survived not only her own generation, but also that of my father and some of my own. Her landlord evicted her, and she had to leave the house where my father was born. The landlord was afraid that she would burn the house down with her cooking, not to mention her cigarettes! I found a nursing home that was in the house of old family friends and surrounded her with some of her furniture. No longer independent and in control of her situation, she went downhill quickly and died a year and a half later. My wife saw to it that she was buried with her wooden leg. We thought at the time that it was Mortimer Snerd, but we could never quite tell the difference between Mortimer and Charlie McCarthy.

When my 9 year old great niece, Emily Beard, began to ask me questions about the family last Thanksgiving, I was very encouraged. I jokingly told her that she was beginning a little late. As she listened to family stories, her 7year old brother Stuart-Menteth Beard V, sat nearby, but did not appear interested. However, he may taken it in by osmosis, the way my father did! In family tradition young Stuart's father, James Sudler Beard, named his son after his brother, Stuart-Menteth Beard IV. I am writing her letters that will gradually transfer some of the family stories to the younger generation, and I have given her books which give her line back to Charlemagne. All of us, who have completed our long journey to the world of this amazing King and Holy Roman, hope that there will be at least one other person in the next generation to whom we can pass the genealogical torch.