

FOREWORD

THE RAFFETY FAMILY IN AMERICA

(A Thumbnail Sketch of the Early Generations)

The Raffety's---Americans since 1750! Sired by an emigrant from England, Thomas Raffety, who served under Washington in the French and Indian War and who was an established land holder in Virginia years before America became a nation, an associate of the greats of the Old Dominion in what some consider the golden age of the colony and in the early days of the nation. Three of his sons were to see service in the Revolution, two to live through the terrible winter at Valley Forge and one to die after three months of service.

From their very start in America the Raffety's have established themselves in their own right, first near Williamsburg, then in Augusta County, Virginia, and later in the Ohio Valley and through the generations they have been kinfolk by marriage to some of the Nation's outstanding citizens---the Turners, the Morris's and the Keens, who date back to 1635 in the colony, the Robertsons, the Grafton Johnsons, the Cowherds of Orange County, the Herndons of Lincoln fame, the Rockefellers (Rockafellers), the Fords, the Craigs of Kentucky, the Lawrences of Indiana and to Chester A. Arthur, President of the United States.

Personal friends and business associates of the family include James and Dolly Madison, the Lees, and the Lewis family, one of whom would gain fame in the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the Boones, the Lincolns, the Holmans, and the Tafts.

The family story has been painstakingly and religiously compiled from gravestones, cemetery files and county records in more than half a dozen states. It is a compendium of documents prepared by a member of the sixth generation, Charles E. Raffety--- the "Count" to his friends---who is now a resident of Washington, D.C. but a Kansan by birth and a resident for long or short periods in many states of the Nation.

The Raffety story---in truth a genealogical opus of magnificent proportions---deals with those members of the family---1200 of them---carrying the family name into posterity. The women of the family have not been deliberately overlooked but have been temporarily by-passed in this opus because time did not permit the Count to follow all the distaff leads which, God willing, he hopes to do at a later date.

The difficulties in following the distaff lines is clearly shown by the fact that even the maiden names of the two wives of Thomas, progenitor of the family in America, are not known but several members of the clan are determined to dig and dig and dig until those names are known. It is believed that Esther, Thomas' second wife, was the offspring of one of the Old Dominion top families, conceivably the Madison's or the Lewis'.

Practically nothing is known of Thomas' first wife who in the course of six years gave him five sons,

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one son giving his life in the cause of liberty. The two offspring of the marriage of Thomas and Esther were girls and protracted research will be necessary to trace them and their offspring for research done to date does not reveal the names of the men they married.

The same mystery hangs over the wives of Thomas Raffety's sons for as yet there is no record of the maiden names of those pioneer women who and whose progeny played an important part in the affairs of Virginia and North Carolina and later to follow the Boones and the Lincolns over the Wilderness Road to Kentucky, thence to Tennessee, Indiana, and Illinois.

Thomas Raffety was about 22 years old when he arrived in Virginia, from England and landed in Nansemond County across and down the James River from Jamestown. He married soon after he arrived and sired five sons: Thomas (Jr.) in 1752, with William, John and Richard coming along in that order at approximately one interval, then James in 1757.

In 1755 and 1756 he served in Major Andrew Lewis' company in the French-Indian War. Major Andrew Lewis of Augusta County Virginia was an officer under Lt. Colonel George Washington, and went on to become a top general, whose life sized statue is in the Capital Square in Richmond.

It is presumed that the mother of the five Raffety boys died in the late 1750's or in the early 1760's in Augusta County, Virginia, for it was there in 1762 that Thomas married Esther Grove, the wealthy widow of a Matthew Grove. The Groves had six children but since none of them entered the Raffety lineage in any way no history has been developed about them.

Thomas and Esther had two daughters, Elizabeth in 1763 and Margaret in 1765. The daughters and Esther shared Thomas' personal property when he died in 1779. This amounted to 6544 pounds, a considerable sum in those days. Thomas Raffety's real property passed to his four sons, probably before Thomas' death. One son, James, the youngest, had given his life for the cause of liberty in 1776. Most of the Raffety real property went to Thomas (Jr.), the oldest, in accordance with the custom of the times.

In 1770 Thomas and Esther move to Devils Den in Botetourt County (now Montgomery County 1771) where they owned a 535 acre plantation. It was from here that his three youngest sons must have enlisted in the Revolution in 1776. It is here that U.S Tennessee Valley Authority maps show Rafferty Cove (creek) and Rafferty Knob (mountain) as monuments of his passing.

The four sons had acquired over 3200 acres of land by land grants and deeds in Virginia and North Carolina. About 26 years after the death of their father they commenced to sell their land, took their slaves and settled in three different locations in Kentucky. The descendants of James, who died in the Revolution, also moved to Kentucky. Two families spent 19 years in Tennessee. After about twenty

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years in Kentucky many of the Raffety's from all branches moved to Indiana and Illinois. Remnants of two branches still live in Kentucky. Many are buried there in Taylor County in Rafferty Cemetery, shown on U.S. Geological Survey Maps as a reminder that Rafferty's also contributed to the early settlements in Kentucky.

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