

## The Byrd Family

### A Brief Summary

John Bird was born in Virginia in 1742. He was a Patriot in the American Revolution. He married Mary Sarah Dean. In the first census, 1790, he lived in Fayette, Anson County, North Carolina. It was here that his son, Thomas, was born in 1766. By the turn of the century the family had moved to South Carolina. Thomas had married Judith May in Anson Co., NC., in 1790. They had many children, one of whom was Daniel Hammond Bird, born in 1807 in the Pendleton District of South Carolina.

In the mid to late 1820's the family removed to Hall County and Cherokee County, Georgia. This coincided with the collapse of the cotton market on the coast. John and Thomas Bird are buried in the Bird-McClesky cemetery in Alpharetta, Ga.

Daniel H. Bird was one of the early settlers of Cherokee County, Ga. He had married Mariah E. Humphries Jackson, a widow, of Milledgeville, Baldwin County, Georgia. All of his children were born in Cherokee County. In the Mexican War of 1847-48 Major General Daniel H. Bird commanded the 12<sup>th</sup> Division of the Georgia Militia. In the mid 1850's he moved his family to Springfield, Greene County, Alabama, about three miles north of Eutaw. His name appears on the 1858 Snedecor's map of Greene County which indicated he owned property in the Springfield precinct, Boligee precinct, and Garrett's shop precinct. He appears in the 1860 Federal Census, with his family, as residents of Springfield. He enlisted in Capt. Crawford's Company, a local defense militia, in 1861. He died in 1865, and is buried in Mesopotamia Cenetry in Eutaw, Alabama.

Of his many children, two, William and Winfield S. Bird, served with Company B., 11<sup>th</sup> Alabama Infantry, in the War Between the States. They fought in many of the major battles of the War, including the Battle of Gettysburg.

Another of his sons, Alexander Hamilton Bird, was a boy of 12 years when the War started. The 1870 census indicates he was farming in the Boligee Precinct in Greene County, on what was known as Hohenlinden Plantation. He attended the University of Virginia. It was about this time that the

spelling of his last name changed from Bird to Byrd. The 1880 Federal Census indicated he was a physician. He married Julia Watson Blocker, daughter of John Rufus Blocker, who resided at BriarBed Plantation near Forkland, Alabama. This is how the two families became connected.

Around 1883 Dr. Byrd moved his family to Eutaw, Alabama. Dr. Byrd died in 1904, and is buried in Mesopotamia Cemetery, Eutaw, Alabama.

One of his sons, John Blocker Byrd, Sr., was born in Eutaw, Alabama, in 1884. In 1911 he married Martha Thompson Campbell, daughter of Edward F. Campbell, and Mary Esther, "Mittie", Borden Campbell. This is how the Byrds and Blockers became connected to the Campbells, of Augusta, Georgia; and the Bordens, of Hale County, Alabama. They had one child who survived infancy, John Blocker Byrd, Jr. John Byrd, Sr, died in July, 1957. Martha Byrd married Leonard B. Barnes, of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in 1959. She died in 1964. Both are buried in Mesopotamia Cemetery in Eutaw, Alabama.

John B. Byrd, Jr., graduated from Greene County High School in 1937 and attended the University of Alabama where he earned an Associate Degree in Metallurgy. During WWII he worked at Oak Ridge National Laboratories. It is said he contributed to the development of the metal casing for the atomic bomb while at Oak Ridge. In 1946 he was working in the steel industry in Gadsden, Alabama. It was here that he met and married Bernadette Veronica Smith. She was born and raised in Philadelphia, Pa.; attended Mount Saint Joseph School of Nursing in Gadsden, Alabama, and in 1943 joined the US Army Nurse Corps. She received her initial Army Officer training at Camp Rucker, Alabama. She served in England, possibly at Bentwaters Air Field. Her daughter, Mary Elizebeth, was born in New Jersey in 1945. Together John and Bernie had six sons. John died in 1958. After his death Bernie moved the family to Demopolis, Alabama. Bernie died in 1968 in Demopolis. They are both buried at Mesopotamia Cemetery in Eutaw, Alabama.