

THE GOOD(K)NIGHT (GUTKNECHT) FAMILY  
IN AMERICA  
By S. H. Goodnight

(Prefatory Note. -The title is perhaps too ambitious. This paper contains the story of the immigrants Michael and George Gutknecht, brothers, and of the first generation of their descendants. The story of the family of Christian Gutknecht, the first known immigrant of the name, remains to be written. It is hoped that this effort may inspire the other story. For materials painstakingly collected during many years and generations placed at the writer's disposition, grateful acknowledgement is hereby made to Lillian Prewitt (Mrs. Clifton Shealy) Goodnight of Honolulu, Hawaii, to Asbury and Sherman Goodnight, of Sedalia, MO, to Gilbert Goodnight, of Knob Noster, MO, and to John, the son of Cloyd Goodnight, deceased, of Bethany, West Virginia. To many others who have been kind and helpful, the writer hereby expresses his sincere thanks.)

Many versions of this story are extant, virtually all of them based on family traditions as handed down, verbally in earlier days, and chiefly by letter in later times, in various branches of the family. As might be expected in the case of such transmittal, especially when two centuries have elapsed and the descendents are widely scattered, there are many and serious discrepancies among these stories. There is a great confusion of statement as to the origin of the ancestor Michael, to whom all seem to try to trace themselves, as to when he came to America, where he first settled, who his children were, and whether he had brothers who came with him

To illustrate forcibly the confusion that confronts him who has the temerity to attempt to unravel the tangled skein, it may suffice to note that, in one bio- graphical sketch (1), it is affirmed that "Michael Goodnight fled from France to Germany to escape religious persecution, thence to America, 1694, and settled in Germantown, Pa.; removed to Rockbridge Co., Va., 1708," etc.; in another (2), that he "came from the lowlands of Germany to Philadelphia about 1735, and settled at Rockbridge, Va., about 1737"; while a thirds chronicles, "Michael Goodnight, who was born in Germany in 1694, and emigrated to America in 1708, settling in Rockbridge, Va."

None of these conflicting statements appears to be backed by the slightest evidence, diligent search has failed to discover documentary verification for any of them, and some of them can be clearly disproved. For example, the land that now Rockbridge County, Va., was an unexplored wilderness in 1708. Not even the fertile Shenandoah Valley was occupied that early, and there were no white settlers in the present Rockbridge until 1739-40. Obviously then, we cannot accept any of these varying accounts as authentic.

It is to the task of establishing the actual facts by searching out documentary evidence that the present writer has devoted his efforts for the past two years and fortune has smiled upon him. We now know the exact date of Michael's landing in America, and, with some lacunae, are able to give a fairly accurate account of his career in this country. We know nothing of his first wife or wives, relatively little about his children by them, and there is still a good deal of uncertainty regarding 'is whereabouts during the first decade of his sojourn in the colonies; but the rest is reasonably clear.

Michael Goodnight was one of the many thousands of Germans who fled from intolerable conditions in the homeland and sought refuge in the British colonies of North America during the

first three quarters of the eighteenth century. The exodus from Germany, and particularly from the south German state, began after the War of the Spanish Succession had devastated the Palatinate in 1707. By October 1709, thirteen thousand impoverished German emigrants were congregated in London. The English were kind to them and passed many of them on as settlers to their colonies in America. Later, William Penn invited oppressed Germans still in the homeland to come to his new colony where he could guarantee them religious liberty as well as cheap land. A tremendous immigration began, and it is estimated that, by 1775, there were 225,000 Germans in the colonies (4). Michael Goodnight was one of these "Palatines," as they came to be called here, because so many came from the Palatinate. Whether he actually came from there or from some other German state, we do not know.

In virtually all of the sketches, family letters and clippings which have come to the notice of the present writer it is assumed that there is only one Good(k)night family in America and that all who bear the name have inherited it from the one common progenitor, Michael. The investigations underlying this study make this theory appear highly improbable.

In the first place, the names Gntknecht (high German form) and Gudknecht (low German form) are by no means of such rare occurrence in Germany as is "Goodnight" in America. Several wholly unrelated Gutknechts and Gudknechts may have come to America during the 18th century and become the progenitors of families here. If one of them remained in a community such as Germantown, in which the German element predominated, the name might never be translated or Anglicized. The writer has several letters from Miss Sara E. Gudknecht, of Philadelphia whose ancestors have resided there for nearly two centuries. Her researches have now brought to light that in land deeds of the 1780s, the name appears as Gutknecht, Goodknecht, Goodneck and even Goodkneight and Goodnite.

In a non-German speaking community, however, the name Gudknecht would inevitably be Americanized into Goodnight. If it were accurately translated, it would become Goodservant (5), but the cognate form Goodnight is obviously the one which would be chosen. From there, the omission of the k is merely a matter of carelessness or of abbreviation. Beyond doubt, every bearer of the name has a perfect right to use the k; it is probably the seeming petty vanity of appearing to seek to ennoble the inherited family name, under which we have grown up without giving the matter much thought, which keeps most of us from making the change in later life. It is, however, significant that most of the legal documents concerning Michael Goodnight which have come under the writer's observation, whether from Virginia, North Carolina or Kentucky, spell the name without "k."

Returning now to the question of whether all the Goodnights in America are descended from Michael, we find ourselves confronted by the indisputable fact that several immigrant Gutknechts entered the country about the middle of the eighteenth century. How many may have entered through such ports as Boston, New York, Charleston, and Savannah, we have no way of knowing. We have record, however, of three who entered with the great tidal wave of German immigration during the mid-century through the port of Philadelphia.

The German Society of Pennsylvania has recently published a stout three-volume work entitled *Pennsylvania German Pioneers* (6). In 1727, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, alarmed at the

vast numbers of continental foreigners being incessantly landed there, passed a law requiring all male continental immigrants between the ages of 16 and 60 to sign certain oaths of allegiance upon arriving at Philadelphia. Ship captains were also required to submit lists of all male adult immigrants imported in their ships. Unhappily, not all the lists have been preserved, but this recent work contains those that have come down to us in the Pennsylvania archives, and shows in both printed lists and in facsimile reproductions of the original sheets the names of the men arriving in 324 shiploads from the year 1727 to 1775. Women and children were not listed, and there is no indication as to which men single and which were heads of families. It is estimated that at least 65,000 German immigrants landed in Philadelphia from these 324 shiploads. The majority were from the southern German states which had been so heavily scourged by war and famine.

In list 130C of volume I, we find that "Christian Gutknecht" was "imported in the ship Christian, Capt. Thomas Brady, from Rotterdam but last from Cowes, England," and took "the usual Oaths to the Government" on Wed. the 13th of September 1749.

In list 187C, same volume, we find that "Hans Michael Gutknecht" came "in the ship Neptune, Capt. John Mason, from Rotterdam and last from Cowes, England," and took the oaths on October 4, 1752.

And list 229A shows that the "Ship Recovery, Amos Jones, Master, from Rotterdam and Cowes," brought "Gerick Goodnight" who took the oaths on October 23, 1754.

The facsimile list show that both Christian and Hans facsimile made their mark, the names both cases having been written for them by some one else; it may have been that neither knew how to write.

The last of the three entries is from a "captain's list"; the facsimile of the original sheet shows all names written by the same hand, as English hand. To a German well versed in German, the "Gerick" is utterly strange name and non-German. But it occurs several times in this particular list and in this list only: "Gerick Au." "Gerick Timmer," "Gerick Goodnight," "Gerick Holander," and "Gerick Millar." It must be a corruption of a German given name of frequent occurrence. The writer of the list was an Englishman who doubtless understood no German. He probably asked the Germans their names and wrote down what he thought he heard.

In German, the name George is one of common occurrence; it is spelled as in English, except that the final e is omitted but it is pronounced very differently; it has two syllables and may be phonetically transcribed as "Gay-urk." Slur the last syllable a bit as a German immigrant would be quite likely to do if asked his name, trill the r, and you have a sound combination that an English ship clerk might very easily, write down as "brick." To one unaccustomed to German speech, this explanation may sound far-fetched; it will not seem so, the writer believes, to a student of German. In the absence of any sort of evidence to the contrary, and because the documentary material later to be presented harmonizes perfectly with the thesis, substantiates it, the present writer is quite convinced that it was none other than Ancestor Michael who landed in Philadelphia in 1752, and that it was his brother, George, who came in 1754. This flies fully in the face of the family tradition, but if the reader will consider fairly and weigh carefully the evidence to be presented in the following pages, he will surely have to admit that this hypothesis a full, defensible one and that

it contains no such glaring improbabilities, to say nothing of demonstrable errors as are found in the old tales.

To do these old accounts full justice, it should be pointed out that in broad, general outline, they all coincide pretty well: Michael Goodnight came to the Colonies from Germany, landing in Pennsylvania, living later in Virginia, re-moving thence to North Carolina, and finally migrating during Revolutionary days to the "dark end bloody ground" of Kentucky, where he met death at the hands of the Indians on the "wilderness road."

This outline is entirely correct, and the proofs thereof will be hereinafter submitted. It is only with the exaggerated and conflicting statements regarding the early dates assigned to his arrival, his reputed signing of the Mecklenburg declaration of independence, his fabulous age when killed, his twenty-four children, of whom the youngest, a posthumous son, is alleged to have been the first male white child born on Kentucky soil etc, that the writer finds himself compelled, in the interest of historical accuracy, to take issue.

Mr. Asbury Goodknight, a descendant of Michael through his son John, and now residing at ripe old age at Sedalia, Mo., set out more than half a century ago to gather information concerning the family. The letters he then received from men now long dead have been preserved and have been made available for the present study. Two or three of them are invaluable, supplying, in spite of small inaccuracies, the frame-work of the family history, which is so well substantiated by county records, such as deeds, wills, and marriage bonds, and by entries in the Draper manuscripts of the State Historical Library of Wisconsin, that we can now reconstruct the story in a manner which, as the writer fondly hopes, may be found thoroughly convincing.

The letters are numbered as in Asbury's collection. Dotted lines indicate omission of material not deemed pertinent to the discussion.

Letter 1

Ashmore, Ill., Dec. 24, 1883.

Dear Porter and Thomas Goodknight:

Yours of the 18th is at hand ... There were two gentlemen and their wives came across the Sea from Germany of the name of Goodknight and located in North Carolina. One was named John (Michael), the other George.

George is my grandfather.

George had four sons and three daughters; the names of the sons, David, John, Peter and Michael which was the youngest of the sons and is my father.

The daughters were named Christena, Elizabeth and S. Catharine, the youngest. She married a British officer and went to Great Britain. David lived and died a bachelor; John had a family and died on Elkhorn. Peter and Michael emigrated to the Green River country.

John (Michael) had four sons, John, Isaac, Jacob and Abraham. If there was another, I don't now remember it [Henry.]

John lived on Chaplin's fork not far from Perryville. I was at his house once; know but little about his family; he had a son who had a cork leg. I spent a night with him but don't remember his name; neither do I remember whether he had any more sons, but I suppose he had. He had one daughter who was struck with paralysis whose mind was considerably impaired. John was a good man; everybody loved him.

.....

Isaac lived about fifteen miles above Boling Green on big Barren River. Raised a large and respectful family of both sons and daughters and lived to a great age.

Jacob lived on the hanging fork in Lincoln Co. not far from Stanford; he raised a number of sons and daughters and is the grandfather of J[ames] L[incoln] Goodknight the celebrated scholar and divine a Cumberland Presbyterian minister of Covington, Ohio.

Abraham got off from his people and they lost the run of him.

The two brothers, John (Michael) and George, in the days of General Logan and Boon emigrated to the state of Kentucky and met sad misfortune. George and his entire family except two sons who were in the service were captured I think at Kenton's [Ruddell's] station. George was massacred in the most barbarous manner while his children were scattered among the Indians. My father was taken to Detroit and sold to the French and taken to Canada. Elisabeth never got to her people until she was twenty-two years old.

John (Michael) and his son John went back after some of their goods which they had to pack on horses for want of roads, the Indiana came upon them at their camp fire, killed the father. They shot the son, the arrow entered one side and came out at the other and the surprising part is in that condition he made his way to the horses, stopped the bell, concealed himself and the next day went to the white settlements.

I have given the outlines of our people in. America...

Respectfully, Farewell,  
S. W. Goodnight.

From the many substantiating records presently to be introduced, it is clear that the writer of the above letter has indeed given, and given very accurately, "the outlines, of our people in America," to use his own quaint phrase. There are minor errors, corrections of which have been inserted in brackets.

Furthermore this letter, which gives such a correct account al the family history---the writer undoubtedly had it directly from him father, George's youngest son, Michael----offers what appears to the present writer to be very convincing evidence that it was Ancestor Michael who landed at Philadelphia in 1752. The immigrant's given name, as the list shows, was Hans Michael. Hans is the universal German abbreviation of Johannes, English John. His English name, then, was John

Michael Good(k)night. The letter just quoted refers to him throughout as John. As will be abundantly shown hereafter, the individual described in the letter as John was unmistakably Ancestor Michael. The present writer has therefore inserted (Michael) after John in the above copy of the letter. This letter, then, removes all doubt from the mind of the present writer that our ancestor was Hans Michael Good (k) night, who landed at Philadelphia in 1752. There is, however, other evidence of the same fact in other letters.

#### LETTER 19

Concord, Cabarrus Co., N. C., Mar 12, 1884

Asbury Goodknight:

Christian Goodknight was born in Germany, May 1d, 1747, and came to the United States with his father in the state of Penn, and served as a soldier in the Revolutionary war and after the war moved to M. C. Christian, John and Jacob were brothers, and it there were any more I have no account of them.

(Paragraphs recording Christian's descendants omitted.)

As for the name of MY great grandfather Goodknight I have no account, but from what I heard my father say he was named Abraham [Michael-correction by present writer] and was killed by the Indians between No. Car. and Ky. and your great grand• father John was wounded and got away. Christian Goodknight was buried in the Presbyterian graveyard at Bethpage.

Yours truly,  
C. M. B. Goodknight.

#### LETTER 21

Concord, N. C. Mar. 13, 1884

Asbury Goodknight;

I received a postal from you the other day.... You want to know something about the Goodknight family. I can't give a full account at present but will as soon as I can. My great grandfather came from Germany to Penn. and after the revolutionary war came to N. C. in Cabarrus Co. (7). My grandfather was seven years old when they came Cram Germany'. They lived on cold water creek till Christian Goodknight was married then great grandfather and the rest of the family went to Ky. He took John and two other sons and some girls. Great grandfather was killed by the Indians and John was shot but got away in Ky. and one of my grand aunts was stolen by the Indiana and had two sons by the Indians before she got back to her folks Christian Goodknight died 56 years ago.

John S. Goodnight.

These letters have been chosen from the collection because the narrations contained in them are so fully substantiated by the records now to be presented that there can be no reasonable doubt of their correctness. Many of the others repeat the traditions indicated in the sketches cited at the outset of this paper, which had Michael coming to America in 1694, 1708 or 1785. *No public record of any kind has been discovered by the writer which might pass as proof that any Gutknecht or Goodnights were in America prior to the coming of Christian, Michael and "Gerick" in 1749, 1752 and 1754 respectively.*

Letters 19 and 21 are from descendants of Christian Goodnight (8) a son of Ancestor Michael who remained in North Carolina when his father's family (including the John awl Jacob mentioned in

letter 19) migrated to Kentucky. Letter 19 states: "Christian Goodknight *was born in Germany, May 16, 1747, and came to the United States with his father in. the State of Pennsylvania*" and letter 21 adds: "*My great grandfather came from Germany to Pennsylvania... My grandfather (i. e., Christian) was seven years old when they came from Germany.*"

If letter 19 is correct as to the date of Christian's birth, 1747, he was only five years old, for Hans Michael lauded in 1752. Notwithstanding this slight discrepancy, however, the letters again offer strong evidence substantiating the thesis that the Hans Michael who came in 1752 was our ancestor.

The earliest record of Michael—so far as the present writer can discover—after his landing in 1752, seems to show that he was a resident of Bedford County, Virginia, in 1755. It is to be found in "Chalkley's Abstracts from the Records of Augusta County, Virginia." (9)

"The following Lists of Delinquents in the Tax Levies are not copies of the complete lists as returned to the Courts but contain only the names of those for whose delinquency some reason is assigned by the officer in making his return."

In the list returned by Sheriff Robert Breckinridge for the year 1755, "Michael Goodnight" is listed as "in Bedford," that is, he was a resident of Bedford County, hence wrongfully included in the tax rolls of Augusta,

The Deputy Clerk of Bedford writes, however: "We do not have the very early tax lists; but I have examined the indices to the Deed Books from 1754 to 1780, also the old Marriage Bonds from 1755 to 1800 and, do not find the name of Goodnight at all. If Michael Goodnight resided in Bedford County, it must be that he did not purchase land here or else his deed would be of record."

Inquiries in Augusta, Rockbridge, and Botetourt Counties, adjacent, to Bedford, have also proven unavailing. But the inclusion of Michael Goodnight's name in Sheriff Breckinridge's tax list of 1755 may 'be accepted as conclusive evidence that the former did reside in that region of Virginia at that time, for how else could his name have appeared there?

The stream of German migration which flowed southward from Pennsylvania through Virginia and North Carolina about the mid-century, evidently carried with it Michael and—as we shall presently see—his brother George and their families. The tax list, shows that. Michael, at least, did not remain long in Pennsylvania and that he tarried awhile in Virginia. The family chronicles, which differ so widely one some dates, do coincide on one. Michael Goodnight, whose wife had died, married Mary Landers (10) on Feb. 19, 1782, probably in Virginia. Asbury Goodnight claims to have obtained the date of this marriage from the family Bible of John Goodnight, eldest son of the marriage and great grandfather of Asbury. The Bible has since been lost in a fire. The present writer has been unable to find any marriage bond or other public record confirming the statement, but accepts it as correct.

The removal of Michael and Mary to and their residence in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, is, however, clearly documented in a deed, of which photostatic copy has been very kindly supplied by the Deputy Register of Deeds of that county. It reads in part:

This Indenture, made the 20th Day of May in the year of our Lord 1776 Between Michel Goodnight and Mary Goodnight Ins wife of the County of Meclenburg and Province of North Carolina of the one part and John Pfifer of the County and province afore-said of the other part. Witnesseth that for and in Consideration of the sum of one hundred and five pounds piece Money of North Carolina to the said Michel Goodnight and Mary Goodnight his wife in hand paid by the said John Pfifer at or before the sealing & Delivery of these Presents the Receipt whereof we do hereby acknowledge and therefore doth Release acquit & Discharge the said John Pfifer his heirs Executors and Administration by these presents that they the said Michel Goodnight and Mary Goodnight his wife bath granted Bargained sold and Confirmed and by these presents doth grant bargain sell Confirm unto the said John. Pfifer' & his heirs or assigns forever all that track or parcel of land situate Lying and being in the County & province aforesaid Containing by survey 190 acres & beginning at a Red Oak [description here omitted in part] which land lye on and near the three mile Branch Being the waters of Rocky River it being a Certain piece of Land Conveyed to the said Michel Goodnight by deed of Conveyance from James McClean bearing date the first Day of May 1764 & the same hail been Conveyed by deed of Conveyance to James McClean by his Excellency Arthur Dobbs Esquire bearing date the 24 Day of June 1762, etc.

There would seem, then, to be no reasonable doubt of Michael's removal to North Carolina at some time between his marriage in 1762 and May 1, 1764. He unquestionably resided there approximately 12 years, and the Mecklenburg Convention, which is said to have adopted an early declaration of independence, met on May 20, 1775, precisely one year before Michael sold his land in that county. It may thus have been that he attended the convention, but so far as the present writer can discover, he was not listed by historians as among the signers (11).

Michael Goodnight was appointed constable for one of the districts of Mecklenburg County in 1775, and George Goodnight was appointed assessor in 1778 (12). This service in public office before the end of the Revolutionary war renders direct descendants of either Michael or George eligible, if the writer is correctly informed, to membership in such patriotic: organizations as the D. A. R., the S. A. R., Colonial Dames, and others.

From the Deputy Register of Deeds of Mecklenburg County we learn further that, on August 14, 1779, George Goodnight and wife Catharine deeded land to Leonard Barbrick. The deed is recorded in book Alexander 1, page 11. Unhappily, there is no record of the date of the purchase of the land by George Goodnight.

Michael and George Goodnight sold their North Carolina lands and migrated with their families to Kentucky at a very early day. In just which year they came, and whether the two families came together or separately, we shall probably never know. However, this much we do know; The first white settlement in Kentucky was made at Harrodsburg in 1775; three of George's sons were serving as soldiers at Ruddell's station in December of 1778; and Michael Goodnight preempted land near Harlan's Station by virtue of actual settlement thereon in February of 1779, Presumably both families came in the summer—for migrations were not undertaken in winter—of 1777 or 1778. They were thus among the very early pioneers in Kentucky.

Strangely enough, the two families did not settle together. Ruddell's Station—there is a marker on the site—was located some thirty miles northeast of the present city of Lexington in what is now

Bourbon County; Harlan's was thirty-five miles southwest of Lexington in what is now Boyle County.

Since the stories of the two families are distinct from the time of the migration on, they will be recounted separately.

### THE GEORGE GOODNIGHT FAMILY

The earliest reference to this family in Kentucky is in a document now preserved in the Draper collections (13). It was found among the papers of Colonel John Bowman, the first County Lieutenant of Kentucky. It is: "A payroll of Capt. Richard May's Company Stationed in Kentucky County under the Command of Col. John Bowman from the 13 day of July 1778 till the 21 day of August 1779." Among the names are those of David Goodnight, John Goodnight, and Henry Goodnight. Each enlisted on Dec. 17, 1778. Under subsistence, each is listed as having "Paid Cap Ruddell" for 220 days. On the reverse side of the roster, the names of fourteen men are again listed—for what purpose is not quite clear—and among these the names of David, John and Henry Goodnight appear again.

Incidentally, the writer is credibly informed that this is proof sufficient for admission to the D. A., R. or the S. A. R. for anyone who can show direct descent from this John or this Henry. David remained unmarried.

A reference to letter 1 above will show that David and John are there mentioned as older sons, while Peter and Michael were younger, and Henry is not mentioned at all.

The Draper Collections also furnish the second reference (14) to this group. Shane, an historical investigator, rode about many years ago consulting old settlers and recording his interviews. Dr. Draper worked over his manuscripts, ordered and numbered the pages, underscored names and made marginal notes to make reference easy.

In Fleming County, three miles from Sherburn, Shane interviewed Jacob Lawson, born 1763, in Pennsylvania. Lawson told him:

"My father) had purchased lands on the S. Branch, but the Indians were troublesome and we didn't move for a year or 2 years after. He wasn't one of the earliest settlers. I was-small when we moved here. When we came there was no person living any more in forts on the S. Branch.

"The people forted up on the S. Branch, Ashby's fort on Patterson's Cr., and Parker's fort on the S. Br. Patterson's Cr. came into the north side of the N. Branch, The Indians, broke up Ashby's fort on P. Cr. They killed a good many. There was a grave containing 7 persons in one hole on m (y) f(ather's) place, adjoining P.'s Cr. They had been killed in Ashby's fort," etc.

A little later he says: "At the taking of Riddle's S. were taken Michael Goodnight, Peter Goodnight and perhaps John G. and their bras, and sisters."

This is, of course, a reference to one of the major catastrophes of the early Kentucky settlements, the taking of Ruddell's and Martin's Stations by Capt. Bird with, an army of 500 Canadians and Indians in June of 1780. The invaders had cannon, the defenders none. Resistance was futile, so the garrisons surrendered -upon the condition that their lives should be spared, Capt. Bird could not fully control his savage allies, however, and many of the settlers were killed. Three hundred prisoners were taken at Ruddell's Station, 50 more at Martin's and all were turned over to the Indians who hurried them off to Detroit.

It was here, then, that George was "masacred" and his children, including Michael and Elizabeth, were taken into captivity, as related in letter 1. It may be added that Henry is not heard of again in the records, and the letter does not mention him. Presumably he was killed or died early. The other four sons came safely through the ordeal, however; those who had been carried away as captives returned and all outlived the Indian warfare in Kentucky.

A few years later, we find them signing petitions to the Legislature (15).

"The petition of sundry inhabitants of the County of Bourbon humbly sheweth, That a Number of your Petitioners are settled in that part of the said County of Bourbon which is commonly known by the name of limestone Settlement . . ." The petition requests that this part of Bourbon be set off "into a distinct County." It is dated Oct. 26, 1786, and among the signers were David Goodnight, John Goodnight, Michael Goodnight and Peter Goodnight. These are the sons of George Goodnight as named in letter 1.

Similarly, another petition, reproduced in the same volume (16), requesting that "a new Village called Washington in the settlement of Limestone" be established as a town, and dated August 22, 1786, is signed by David, John, Michael and Peter Goodnight,

And finally, a petition (17) that the Supreme Court should "sit at Lexington, in the County of Fayette" and "at Baird's Town [now Bardstown] in the County of Nelson," which bears no date, but contains in supporting documents "An Acct. of Witnesses attendance for 1789," numbers among its 800 signers Michael and Peter Goodnight. A facsimile page of signatures in Robertson's book, subsequently reproduced in Edna Kenton's biography of Simon Kenton, shows Michael Goodnight's signature from one of these petitions.

Michael Goodnight seems to have served in military expeditions under Col. George Rogers Clark or Col. Benjamin Logan in 1788. The evidence is contained in a list of military certificates now recorded in Vol. 32 of the Kentucky Register, page 229. One passage reads

"Goodnight, Michael, Oct. 31, 1791, for his services in the Militia of this State, under Capt. Helinz from Mason Co. 0-12-8."

Then, too, we find in an old book, *Military Certificates No. 1*, that on Sept. 6, 1803, Michael Goodnight was paid £1 4 p "for service on the Frontiers," on a certificate issued Sept. 11, 1788 (18).

David Goodnight preempted 400 acres of land at the state price "lying on Johnson's Creek about 3 miles from the Mouth thereof upon the northeast side of Licking Creek & six miles below the blue lick by making an Actual Settlement Apr. 1779 (19). Fayette County records (20) shows a purchase by David of 100 acres of land on the waters of the Elkhorn in Bourbon County in 1815, and the statement of letter 1 that "David lived and died a bachelor," receives confirmation in his will, (21) probated in August, 1819, in which, "being without children," he bequeaths all his property to the children of his brother John,

John Goodnight took 400 acres "lying an Hingston's Fork about 5 miles from the mouth thereof and about 4 miles from Ruddle's Station by making an actual settlement in April 1779 (22)." John's daughter "Kitty" married William Hall on Oct. 29, 1810 the marriage bond is in Harrison County records, and "Katharine Hall" is named by David Goodnight in his will as a daughter of his brother John and one of the beneficiaries of the will.

Peter Goodnight took 300 acres, in Bourbon Comity in 1788, and Michael took 400 acres on Horse Branch, in Nelson County, in 1788, Peter Goodnight is one of the witnesses with David Boone and Robert McGill to the will of William Frye, Fayette Co., Ky., written. March 28, 1796, probated May 1796 (23). And, finally, on February 5, 1798, Governor James Garrard commissions Peter Goodnight a captain for the 10th (Fayette County) regiment (24).

The writer of letter 1, S. W. Goodnight, an own son of George's youngest son Michael, unquestionably knew from his father the story of the family. His account corresponds so accurately with the data presented in the above records that there call be no reasonable doubt, it would seem, of its correctness. His story of Ancestor Michael's family is almost as complete and as accurate. The only confusing element in it is his allusion to Ancestor Michael as "J o h n," This evidently puzzled a later descendant. There is now preserved at Stanford a diary (25) of Thomas Mitchell Goodnight, who was a great grandson of Ancestor Michael through the latter's son Jacob. But the first entry in his diary reads:

"George and John Goodknight.

"Jacob Goodknight, my grandfather, was a son of John Goodknight. George was grandfather of S. W. Goodknight,

"Charles Goodnight, of Muhlenberg County, son of Peter, removed to Illinois."  
(26)

Later he writes:

"On first page of this Book it is stated on the authority of S. W. Goodknight that John and George Goodknight were brothers and that my Great Grandfather was John and his Grandfather was George," etc.

If we simply read "John Michael" for "J o h n" in. the diary quotations, we have a correct statement, but probably Thomas Mitchell, who has long since been gathered to his fathers, never knew the explanation.

## THE MICHAEL GOODNIGHT FAMILY

As noted above the migration to Kentucky of Michael Goodnight with his wife and the children of his last marriage may have occurred in the summer of 1777 or of 1778. Happily, an interesting old document gives us the date of his first settlement on Kentucky land for the purpose of preemption.

The document is in *The Certificate Book of the Virginia Land Commission of 1779-80*.<sup>(27)</sup> From this entry we learn that: "Michael Goodnight this clay claimed a preempt of 400 acres of land at the State price in the District of Kentucky on Acc't of making an Actual settlement in Feb 'y 1779 lying at the mouth of Doctors fork of Chaplins fork of Salt River on both sides of the s'd Creek

Satisfactory proof being 'made to the Court they are of Opinion that the said Goodnight has a right to a preempt of 400 Acres of Land to include the above Location & that Certificate issue accordingly."

This land, which the writer visited in the summer of 1934, lies several miles to the south of Harrodsburg, in the present county of Boyle. In his "Stations and Early Settlements in Kentucky," (28) Collins locates Harlan's Station as "on Salt River, in Mercer (now Boyle) County, 7 miles s. e. from Harrodsburg and A miles a w. of Danville; built by Major Silas Harlan, in 1778." It is clear that the Goodnight family, living on the land as described, must have "forted", as the pioneers expressed it, at Harlan's rather than at Harrod's.

There is not the slightest doubt that Michael Goodnight's preempt of the 400 acres was honored, for, if further evidence were necessary, it would be supplied by the deeds on record in the Mercer County Court House. On the 25th of March, 1794, thirteen years alter Michael's death, Christian Goodnight, a son of Michael by his first wife and who had remained in the east—see letters 39 and 22 above—and Caterinah his wife, of Mecklenburg Co., No, Carolina, deed to Jacob Goodnight for the sum of 5 shillings "one certain tract of Land containing one hundred and sixty seven acres lying & being in the County of Mercer on Chaplins fork part of a survey made for Michael Goodnight," etc. This is obviously a clearance of title, a guarantee that the half brother in North Carolina will not at some future time lay claim to the land as an inheritance.

Two similar instruments, both dated Sept. 23, 1794, deed 147 acres of Michael's 400 from Christian to Henry Goodnight, "adjoining Jacob Goodnight on the lower side and Abraham Goodnight on the upper side"; and 105 acres on Chaplin's Fork "to a stake in the line of Michael's survey" to Abraham.

There is, further, a deed whereby Jacob Goodnight and Elizabeth, his wife, transfer ownership of the 1.67 acres described in the first mentioned deed to Charles Hart and his heirs on June 24, 1707. Two years later, Abraham, and Mary, his wife, convey 07 acres of Michael's original 400 to Islam Pruitt and wife, and, still later, Abraham sells his remaining seven

and one-half acres to John Goodnight for £20. John, Jacob, Henry and Abraham were the four elder sons of Michael and Mary Goodnight.

It appears a bit strange that Michael's land should have been divided among Jacob (167 acres), Henry (147 acres), and Abraham (105 acres), with, no reference to John, the eldest son, or to Isaac, the youngest. It is quite conceivable, however, that John had received his inheritance in money upon the sale of Michael's effects—see below—and that Isaac, who was only six years old when the estate was settled, was to be provided for by his mother.

The deeds described above are preserved in Mercer County archives, Originally, however, that part of the state was included in Lincoln County, and, the very earliest "state papers" concerning that section are preserved at Stanford. Here we find some very interesting documents, bearing on the subject of our study, and which solve, to the satisfaction of the present Writer, at least, the vexed question of the year in which the killing and scalping of Michael and the wounding of his son John by the Indians took place.

First in order is an "Inventory and Appraisement" of all the effects of Michael Goodnight, deceased, "in obedience to an Order of the Worshipful Court," dated May 21, 1783, which shows the old fellow to have possessed 14 horses, 22 Lead of cattle, 9 "hoggs and piggs" and quite an array of house-hold effects,

Thee follows an "Order of Court" of June, 1787, requiring "that John Irwin, John. Rodgers, John Cowan, and Gabriel Madison or any three of them, "settle all accounts of the estate of Michael Goodnight deceased, and report to the Court."

Next comes an itemization of the "sale of Michael Goodnight's estate," dated March 28, 1788, attested by John Cowan and signed:

Her  
"Mary X Flannagan"  
Mark

Again we have, under the same date, a list of "Sundry Articles Belonging to the Estate of Michael Goodnight which was not sold, which, Mary Goodnight Widow of sd Michael kept at the appraisement," also witnessed by John Cowan and John Rodgers and signed by Mary Flannagan. Then we find the final "Statement of an Acct the Adm of Michael Goodnight Dec'd," dated April 15, 1788, signed by John Rodgers and John Cowan showing the estate to have totalled £230, 1s, 9p The last item of the list: " B y cash paid £5," with which the administratrix is credited, is explained by one more small but very significant rap of yellow paper in the old files. It is a "Deposition of Doran for £5 to the Doctor," which reads thus:

"Mercer Ct.  
Patrick Doran made Oath before me a Justice for sd County that Mary Flannagan paid Mary Airs five pounds for curing John Goodnight of wound he received of the Indians 1781 out of the Estate with which she is now charged.

John Cowan  
Mar. 27th 1788."

Unquestionably, then, the wounding of John and the killing and scalping of Michael occurred in 1781. The circumstances of the attack were probably such as are set forth, in letter 1.

A characterization of Michael Goodnight handed down by the wife of a great grandson, she having heard it from her husband's uncles, depicts him as energetic, industrious, economical and prosperous, with the greatest contempt for a shiftless person."

He was buried in the forest where he fell, within a half day's journey of the fort at Harlan's Station.

Although we have no record of actual enlistment in military service on the part of Michael Goodnight, he is now accepted by the D. A. R. as an ancestor, descent from whom qualifies for membership in that organization. Not only did he serve in public office in North Carolina in Revolutionary days, as noted above, but his grant of land in Kentucky in 1779 was made by commissioners who exacted an oath of allegiance of each grantee and refused lands to the disloyal. Also, Michael Goodnight met death at the hands of the enemy during the Revolution. The same holds true for George Goodnight, except that the writer has found no evidence of land grants to him.

The reader may, perchance, be curious to know who the Mary Flannagan of the foregoing documents might have been. She was none other than Mary Landers Goodnight Flannagan, the widow of Michael Goodnight and the mother of John. As the administratrix of Michael's estate, she signs herself:

Her  
"Mary X Flannagan."  
Mark

Despite her 19 years of married life with Michael and her nine or ten children borne to him, she evidently remarried at some time prior to 1787.

The Kentucky pioneers of that, early day coveted wives as homemakers, but relatively few women had had the hardihood to venture so far beyond the confines of civilization. A census of Harrodsburg shows 85 men and only 21 women there in 1777 (29). Furthermore, a woman without a man to "fend" for her was helpless in the wilderness. For these reasons, widows remarried with a celerity almost equal to that of Hollywood divorcees of the present day. A striking instance is recorded in a journal or diary kept by Col. George Rogers Mark in Harrodsburg during 1777. Two entries are:

"March 18. A small party of Indians killed and scalped Hugh, Wilson about one mile from the Fort near night and escaped."

"April 10. James Barry named the widow Wilson."

An example of frequent remarriage was Ann Poague, a capable woman of Fort Harrodsburg who had four husbands during her life there and of whom it is reported that "as soon as the funeral was over, the men stood in line to propose to her."

The heroine of Elizabeth Madox Robert's novel, *Tito Great Meadow*, also remarries at the fort soon after her husband is believed killed by the Indians, thus affording a basis for the Enoch Arden motif of the well-written narrative.

It is not so strange, then, that great great grandmother Mary remarried. She had retained, as the "appraisements" of Michael's effects show, an amount of personal property, valued at £77, and including horses, cattle, hogs and house-hold effects, which must have been considerable in those wilderness days, while the balance was sold "at Publick Vendue." She was administratrix of the entire estate, totaling £230, and, as there seems to have been no will involved, she doubtless kept her widow's portion of the proceeds of the sale as well.

Of the five sons, the eldest, John, remained for the rest of his life upon a farm which embraced a portion of Michael's original preempt, lying on Chaplin's Fork between Harrodsburg and the present Perryville. John bought seven and a half acres of Abraham's portion in 1794, 200 acres from guardians of George Silvertooth's orphans in 1796, one hundred nineteen acres from David Hart in 1798, and forty-four acres "adjoining former holdings" from Philip Board in 1806. He married Ruth Davis in Mercer County on Dec. 25, 1786. His name appears in all early tax lists in that county. His old home is still shown on the bank of the creek, and nearby is the family cemetery in which he lies buried.

(For a sketch of the life of Jacob, the second son, see sketch under subhead "Jacob Goodnight" in latter part of this article.)

Of Henry, the third son, little seems to be known. He received 147 acres of Michael's land, as evidenced by the above-mentioned clearance of title by Christian in 1794; mention is made in the instrument of "Elizabeth, his wife"; and he is listed as a taxpayer in Mercer County in 1794, '95, and '96, but not thereafter. Letter 17 in Asbury's collection says of him: "Henry lived in Tennessee on Duck River."

The fourth son, Abraham, married Mary Hanna on January 23, 1794. The bond is in the Lincoln County records at Stamford. He bought a homestead near Simpsonville, in Shelby County, on February 10, 1806, where he remained. He was one of the trustees of the town of Simpsonville, title to which was vested in him and others "by order of the Court at the October term, 1816" when it was established. His descendants are listed in an article in the *Kentucky Register* for September, 1908.

Isaac, the posthumous son, is listed as "1 male over 16 and under 21" in a tax list for Lincoln County in 1799, and his marriage to Elizabeth McMurry in 1805 is recorded in Mercer County, but he migrated soon thereafter to Allen County, in southern Kentucky, where he spent the remainder of his life. He was married four times, fifteen children were born to him, and many descendants of his still reside in the vicinity of Smith's Grove. He died in 1869.

Several of the biographical sketches of Michael Goodnight name correctly the five sons of his last marriage, but none attempt to name the daughters. The same is true of the letters. It is said there were five of them. A diligent search in Lincoln and Mercer County records enables us to name four, but if there were five, one has apparently left no record by which she might be identified.

On, June 24, 1782, Henry Pope bound himself to marry Margaret Goodnight in Lincoln County. The bond states that the prospective bride and groom are "both of this Parish." This was three years before Mercer County was formed from Lincoln, and the Goodnight homestead was still in the latter. Charles Ferguson was bonded with Henry Pope to guarantee observance of the contract, and the document was witnessed by William May.

Another marriage bond in Lincoln County shows Patrick Doran to have married Elizabeth Goodnight on Jan. 29, 1783. Patrick Doran's deposition in behalf of Mary Flannagan—see above—appears, therefore, to have been the aid of a dutiful son-in-law in a legal matter. Patrick Doran was a Revolutionary soldier; he enlisted on April 6, 1778, in Capt. Jos. Bowman's company under command of Col. Geo. Rogers Clark (30).

Since the dates of the marriages of these two daughters were only 20 and 21 years, respectively, after the date commonly assigned as marking the marriage of Michael and Mary Landers, Feb. 19, 1762, these two daughters were probably their oldest children. John is said to have been born in 1765; Jacob, Henry and Abraham probably followed in the order named, although this is merely inference from the amount of land each received from Michael's estate, and from the dates of their marriages: John, 1786; Jacob, 1792; Henry, -----; and Abraham, 1794.

Almost ten years after Elizabeth's marriage, we find Mary Flannagan certifying the age of another daughter for wedlock. This record in Mercer County, the separation of Mercer from Lincoln having occurred in 1785:

"I do hereby certify that my daughter Rachel Goodnight is twenty-one years of age and I am willing for Jacob Young to wed with him (sic).

Eleventh day of December 1792.

Mary Flannagan (Seal)

Joseph Ayres

Abraham Goodnight"

The last of the affidavits was made by Abraham for his sister Sarah who was marrying Peter Boucher. From the facts that Mary does not sign this certificate, and that her name disappears from the Mercer County tax lists from 1795 on, we may perhaps conclude that she died in that year.

"May the 26th 1795.

I hereby certify that the within feme is above the age of twenty-one years.

Teste Abraham Goodnight.

Will Chapline."

It would appear that Rachel and Sarah, who married so many years later than their sisters, were probably the youngest of the flock, except Isaac, who was born at Harlan's Station some months after his father's death.

That Isaac was the first male white child born on Kentucky soil is a myth that has long been cherished in the family tradition. It is a pretty story, and it is too bad to spoil it, but it simply will not stand up under the evidence of the "state papers." Michael was not killed until 1781 and Isaac was a posthumous child, born January 1, 1782 (31).

But the pioneers of Harrodsburg had been raising families there since 1775. For example, John Cowan, whose name is already familiar to us from the fore-going "state papers," one of the original party that, came with Capt. James Harrod on 1775, kept a diary which has been preserved and in which is recorded a census of the population of Harrodsburg in 1777:

Men in service .....	81
Men not in service.....	4
Women .....	24
Children over 10 yrs.....	12
Children under 10 yrs.....	58
Slaves over 10 yrs.....	12
Negro children under 10	<u>7</u>
Total	198

If there were that many men and women in the colony in 1777, and new immigrants were arriving each summer, it would be simply absurd to assume that no male white child was born there prior to 1782.

Incidentally, history bestows the first-male-white-child honor upon Harrod Wilson, named for Captain Harrod, a son of the. Hugh Wilson mentioned in George Rogers Clark's diary entry cited above. Harrod Wilson's grave is shown in, the old Harrodsburg cemetery, marked however, "the first white child *buried* in Kentucky," Collins says (32): "The first white children born in Mercer County—so far as it is possible at this late day to ascertain—were : 1st Harrod Wilson (33); 2d Wm. Hinton \_\_\_\_ ; 3d Wm. Logan \_\_\_\_; 4th Anna Poague \_\_\_\_." Only one exact birthdate is cited, that of Wm. Logan, December 8, 1776.

Two other well-beloved statements in the family tradition which the writer believes to be myths, make Michael Goodnight ninety-one years of age at the time of his death and the father of twenty-four children, fourteen by the first wife and ten by the last.

A very able American historian (34) wrote, after perusing a first draft of this paper: "The pioneers were apt to exaggerate the age of old persons and I very much doubt that Michael was 91 at his death. Even if he came to Kentucky in 1777, as seems probable from your dates, men of 87 did not migrate into regions of such great danger. It seems to me that the birth year was more probably 1708, so often mentioned in the sketches." The present writer is quite in accord with the reasonableness of this conclusion,

No reliable information appears to be available as to the number of children born to Michael Goodnight. As we have seen, nine were born to him and Mary Landers, whom we can identify, and there may have been a tenth. But we have almost no information regarding the fourteen children

alleged to have been born of his earlier marriage or marriages. Certainly the North Carolina Christian was one—and therefore the Philadelphia Christian and, his brother, Christopher, who served in the Revolution can not have been own sons of Michael (35)—and letter 17 in Asbury's collection, from an own son of Isaac says: "The older set of children I can't tell much about. Katy Landers was one of the oldest. I have seen her several times when I was small. She could speak German." (36)

The present writer has been unable to identify with certainty any of the others, and doubts that there were fourteen. This, however, is merely guesswork, not proof.

It would see unnecessary to attempt to bolster up the history of the Goodnight family in America, with the exaggerated claims found in the old tales, The true story is a thoroughly creditable one. Michael and George Goodnight, brothers—and this does not preclude the possibility that Christian, who came in 1749, may also have been a brother—came to America before the French and Indian War. They pioneered into the Kentucky wilderness among the earliest of those who went there; the blood of both brothers, spilled in Indian warfare, helped make it "the dark and bloody ground," Their families stuck to their posts, preempted lands, and did their full share in winning that rich wilderness for America and for civilization in that bloody last quarter of the eighteenth century. Their descendants have, in part, remained in the East, remained in Kentucky, and helped conquer the West. Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Texas and the great Northwest are conquests in which they have had a share. The record is everywhere an honorable one; they have been farmers, stockmen, lawyers, business men, statesmen, teachers and preachers; no descendant need hang his head in shame over treason or major crime of any sort on the part of an ancestor, so far as an exhaustive search in many archives has been able to discover. In every quarter the family and the name are of good report and are in no need whatever of having the family history embellished by fiction. If we of the present generation can successfully live up to the high pattern of courage, industry and integrity set by our ancestors we shall do them far more credit than by inventing fables for them.

To the present-day reader of the early history of Kentucky, the constant marvel is the celerity with which our pioneer forebears introduced into the wilderness the machinery of civilized government. The first white settlement was made at Harrodsburg in 1775. In the preceding winter, Lord Dunmore had had all pioneers recalled to Virginia and there was presumably not a white family resident in Kentucky. In 1777, there were less than 200 men, women, and children, white and black, in Harrodsburg. There was constant Indian warfare during the first ten years of the existence of the new colony. Michael Goodnight was killed in 1781, just six years after the first settlement in the wilderness. But in Lincoln County courthouse there are today the originals of the above described "state papers," fully written out, attested and properly recorded in correct legal form by clerks and justices of the peace, as though the community had been established for half a century.

The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society records (37), "the first court in Lincoln County, Virginia (now Kentucky), was at Harrodsburg, January 16, 1781."

Collins records in his *Annals*:

"Sept. 1777, first court of quarter sessions at Harrodsburg."

"March 1783,--Kentucky is formed into one district and a District Court opened at Harrodsburg, March, 2."

And, "The first County Court met in Harrodsburg on Tuesday, August —, 1785 —, justices of the Peace present: John Cowan, Hugh McGary, -----."

In was in these first district and county courts established in Kentucky that the above described documents concerning the death of Michael Goodnight and the disposition of his property were prepared,

### **JACOB GOODNIGHT**

If, as we have been informed, Michael Goodnight married Mary Landers in February of 1762, and if, as we may reasonably assume, the daughters Margaret and Elizabeth were their oldest children, it follows that the four sons, John, Jacob, Henry and Abraham, were born in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, for Michael Goodnight bought his farm there in 1784. Asbury ascertained from John's family Bible that John was born May 2, 1765; the second son, Jacob appears as "over 21" in a Lincoln County tax list in 1780. Probably, then, Jacob was born about 1767. This is merely inferential guessing, however; the exact date of his birth seems to be unknown.

If 1787 is, perchance, the correct date, then Jacob was a little chap of about eight when the Revolution broke out; he was perhaps ten or eleven years old when the family migrated to Kentucky; and he was probably not over fourteen when his father was killed in 1781.

There is no record of military service as an enlisted man on the part of Jacob Goodnight, so far as we know. The years of his young manhood fell between our two wars with England. He was presumably about sixteen when the treaty of Paris was signed, ending the Revolutionary War, and he was forty-five at least at the outbreak of the War of 1812, in which his eldest son, John, served as a private. In all probability, however, Jacob Goodnight saw his share of the Indian fighting which engrossed all pioneer Kentuckians intermittently up to the time of Wayne's successful campaign and his treaty with the western Indians in 1795.

We have little actual knowledge, however, of Jacob Goodnight's boyhood and of the years of his youth. Presumably, he remained with his mother and brothers on the family homestead, near the present Perryville, until he broke the home ties and set out for himself. The home was originally in Lincoln County, but in 1785, Mercer County was formed from Lincoln, and the Goodnight farm was included in the new county. Mary Flannagan (Michael Goodnight's widow and Jacob's mother), John Goodnight, Henry Goodnight and Abraham Goodnight are all listed on the tax rolls of Mercer County in its early years. Jacob, however, seems to have struck out for himself and to have made his headquarters near Stanford at an early date. His name does not appear in the Mercer County tax lists at all, but it, appears consistently in the Lincoln County lists from May 30, 1789, on. At this time he was presumably about twenty-two, and he is designated as a "single male, over 21" and owing one horse. Each year, his tax is recorded as a small amount until 1786, when it is considerably increased. In that year he is taxed on "100 acres originally surveyed for James Craig."

In his family Bible (2) we find the statement that he married Elizabeth Hoover on March 15, 1792. Unhappily, no trace of the marriage bond has been found, and we know neither the place of the marriage nor the home or family of the bride.

On March 25, 1794, Christian Goodnight and Caterinah, his wife, of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, gave Jacob a clearance of title to 187 acres of land in Mercer County, evidently his inheritance from the estate of Michael.

*Goodnight to Goodnight.*

This Indenture made this 25th day of March in the year of our herd one thousand seven hundred and ninety four between Christian Goodnight of Maclingburg North Carolina and Jacob Goodnight of the County of Mercer the other part.

Witniseth that the said Christian Goodnight and Caterinah his wife for & in Consideration of the sum of five shillings to them in hand paid current money by the said Jacob Goodnight the receipt when of the said Christian Goodnight & Caterinah his wife do hereby Acknowledge: Have Granted bargained and sold and by these presents do sell allow & confirm unto the said Jacob Goodnight and his heirs forever, one certain tract of Land containing one hundred and sixty seven acres lying & being in the. County of Mercer on Chaplin's fork and hounded as follows. Towit (long description omitted) — a part of a survey made for Michael Goodnight. with its appurtenances to have & to hold forever to his the said Jacob Goodnight and his heirs proper use & the said Christian Goodnight & his wife for themselves & their heirs the said tract of land with its appurtenances to the said Jacob Goodnight & his heirs will warrant & forever defend against the claim of him the said Christian Goodnight & Caterinah his wire & his heirs forever and against the claim of no other person. In Witness whereof the said Christian Goodnight & Caterinah his wife by John Goodnight their attorney in fact have hereunto set their hands & seals the day & year written.

Sealed in presence of  
And Delivered Ws

John Goodnight (Seal),  
Christian Goodnight &  
Caterinah his wife (Seal).

Three years later, however, on January 24, 1797, Jacob and Elizabeth, his wife, deeded the 167 acres on Chaplin's Fork to Charles Hart and his heirs (4). They had evidently made their permanent abode in Lincoln County.

They appear to have added from time to time to their Lincoln County land, consisting, at first, it would seem, of the above-mentioned "100 acres originally surveyed for James Craig," on which they began to pay taxes in 1796.

On January 6, 1801, Jacob bought 8 acres on the Hanging Fork of Dick's River from Hugh Leeper and Martha, his wife, for £21 (5).

On August 11, 1802, he acquired 94 acres, also on Hanging Fork, from William Nash for £100 (6).

And on July 30, 1823, he purchased six and three quarter acres on Hanging Fork from James Hardin, for \$49 (7). His farm thus included something over 200 acres.

On this farm, located about 3 miles west of Stanford, Jacob and Elizabeth Goodnight lived and died. All their children were born and reared there. The latter scattered, however, the sons migrating westward, for the most part, and the daughters following their husbands, So far as the writer has been able to ascertain, the widow and foster-son of Thomas M. Goodnight, a grandson of Jacob through his son Isaac, are the only members of the family remaining in the vicinity, and they are not descendants of Jacob.

An abstract of a will of James Isom, of record in Boyle County, adjacent to Lincoln, written September 9, 1842, and probated in January, 1843, shows Jacob Goodnight named as executor (8).

Jacob Goodnight died on February 19, 1848. If our assumption regarding the date of this birth is approximately correct, he was about seventy-six at the time of his death. His wife had preceded him in death by twenty-three years. His will, which is on file in the Lincoln County Court House, runs thus:

#### WILL OF JACOB GOODNIGHT

I Jacob Goodnight of Lincoln County Kentucky make and ordain this my last will and testament hereby revoking all others.

Item 1st. It is my Will and desire that all my just debts must be paid out of my Estate.

Item Second. It is my will and desire that my son John Goodnight receive the sum of Two hundred Dollars out of my Estate and that my Executor pay my said Son John Goodnight the said sum of Two hundred dollars In convenient time after my decease.

Item Third. It is my will and desire that my daughter Polly McMurry receive the Sum of One Dollar from my Estate, and that my daughter Sally Harney receive the Sum of One Dollar from my Estate, and that my Son Isaac Goodnight receive the Sum of One Dollar from my Estate, and that my daughter Peggy P(orch) receive the Sum of One Dollar from my Estate, and that my Grand(son) James P. Goodnight and that my Grand daughter Mary Goodnight, children of my deceased Son Henry Goodnight, it is my will and desire that my aforesaid Grand children receive the Sum of One Dollar each from my Estate and that my Grandson Thomas Henry Billingsley Son of my deceased daughter Elizabeth Billingsley. It is my will and desire that my Said Grandson receive the Sum of One Dollar from my Estate, the above mentioned sums of money being the full and entire amount that I Want My Children and Grandchildren before named to receive from my Estate.

Item 4th. It is my Will and desire that my son Thomas Goodnight receive all the remaining part of my estate after the payment of my just debts and the sums of money previously directed to be paid my children mentioned and set forth at large in. the previous part of this Will.

Item 5th, I do hereby ordain and appoint my son Thomas Goodnight Executor of my Last will and Testament Signed and delivered this 23 day of November,

Jacob Goodnight.

Attest :

J, M. Smith

T. Kenley

John P. Steels

State of Kentucky

Lincoln County

At a County Court holden for the County of Lincoln at the Court house in the town of Stanford an Monday the first day of April 1843 the Last Will and Testament of Jacob Goodnight dead was executed into court and was proven by the oaths at John D. Steel and Jeremiah Smith two of the subscribing witnesses thereto and ordered to be recorded.

And on the motion of Thomas Goodnight who made oath as the Law directs and executed bond in the penalty of Five Thousand Dollars unto Hugh Logan Hays his security with a proper condition. Ordered that a certificate be granted him for obtaining a probate of Said Will and in due form of Law In Testimony Whereof I Thomas Helm, Clerk of the Lincoln County Court have hereinto subscribed my name, the day and year aforesaid.

Thomas Helm, Clerk  
Lincoln County Court.

It is a peculiar will; all heirs except John and Thomas are cut off with one dollar. John, the eldest son (grandfather of the present writer) had married and removed to the vicinity of Bloomington, Indiana, in 1827, sixteen years before the execution of the will. Thomas was the youngest son, and from the fact that he is named executor as well as heir to all the property, he had doubtless remained on the home farm and taken care of his father in his old age. Henry is referred to in the will, as deceased, but one wonders why Isaac shared the late of his sisters and the grandchildren and received only one dollar.

It all happened nearly a century ago, and probably no one now living can answer our questions. Presumably the provisions of the will were carried out, and we find no record of any attempt to set it aside.

We are fortunate in having the family Bible of Jacob Goodnight preserved. It was carried to Missouri by Thomas Goodnight, when he pioneered into the West nearly a century ago, and is still in the possession of his descendants. The following items are from photostatic copies of the family record contained in it:

### **MARRIAGES**

Jacob Goodnight and Elizabeth Hoover were married March 15th day 1792 --.

James McMurry & Polly Goodnight was married Dec. 1810.  
John Goodnight & Rhode Brown was married Oct. 19th, 1820.  
John Goodnight & Agnes Jones was married December 22nd 1825.  
Elizabeth Goodnight & John Billinsley was married Feb. 13th 1831.  
Henry Goodnight & Louisa Jane Billingsley was married December 2nd, 1830.  
Margaret Goodnight & John Henry Porch eves married March 11th 1834.  
Thomas Goodnight and Martha Dawson was married the 23rd July 1885.  
Elijah W. Dawson & Martha Bosley was married December the 16th 1840.

### **BIRTHS**

Polly Goodnight was born December 30th 1702.  
John Goodnight was born May 4th 1794.  
Elizabeth Goodnight was born Nov. 15th. 1795.  
Sarah Goodnight was born August 25<sup>h</sup> 1797.  
Henry Goodnight was born Feb. 16 -- 1800.  
Isaac Goodnight was born March 20th 1802.  
Thomas Goodnight was born Oct. 25th 1805.  
Margaret Goodnight was born Jan, 22nd 1808.

### **DEATHS**

Elizabeth Goodnight departed this Life April 1st 1820.  
Rhode Goodnight departed this life Sept. 11th 1823.  
Jacob Goodnight departed this life Feb. 19 1843.  
Thomas Goodnight departed this life Oct. 13th 1851.

### **JOHN GOODNIGHT**

Like his father, he was a pioneer farmer. He was the second child and the eldest son born to Jacob and Elizabeth Hoover Goodnight, May 4, 1794, on their farm three miles west of Stanford in Lincoln County, Kentucky. We know nothing of his childhood, 'but it was presumably the life of toil and adventure that was the lot of frontiersmen's sons in that early day. Probably the most colorful part of his career was his service as a soldier under General Jackson in the War of 1812. He fought as a youth of 20 at the battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815, among the Kentucky riflemen who served so well on that occasion. His service record, supplied by the Adjutant General's Office at Washington under date of April 6, 1923, reads in part:

"The records of this office show that John Goodnight served in the War of 1812 as a private in Captain Jonathan Owsley's Company, 15th Regiment (Slaughter's) Kentucky Militia. His service commenced November 10, 1814, and ended May 10, 1815. His name appears on a muster roll, dated Camp Jackson, December 31, 1814 and on a company master roll dated Camp Jackson, Louisiana., February 28, 1815."

His six-month period of service ended, then, within a week after he passed his 21st birthday.

The battle of New Orleans was a remarkable one in two respects: First, because it was fought after peace had been signed in Europe, ending the struggle, but the contestants had not yet received the news; and, second, because of the frightful slaughter of the English with a mere handful of casualties on the American side.

"In that brief space of time (about one hour) one of the best equipped, and best disciplined armies England ever sent forth was defeated and shattered beyond hope by one half its number of American soldiers, mostly militia."(1)

Slaughter's regiment of Kentucky militia, in which John Goodnight was serving as a private, appears to have been in the thickest of the fighting, as the following extracts from Smith's history show.

"With Colonel Slaughter's regiment of seven hundred men and Major Reuben Harrison's battalion, three hundred and five men (the Kentuckians under arms), Adair took position just in the rear of Carroll's Tennesseans, occupying the center of the breastwork line." (2)

"As soon in the morning as word came that the British were in motion for an advance, General Adair formed his Kentuckians in two lines in close order and marched them to within fifty paces of the breastwork in the rear of Carroll's command. The day dawned and the fog slowly lifted. There was no longer doubt of the point of main assault, as the enemy's heaviest columns moved forward in Carroll's front. The lines of the Kentucky troops were at once moved up in order of close column to the Tennesseans, deepening the ranks to five or six men for several hundred yards. Batteries 6, 7 and 8 opened upon the enemy when within four or five hundred yards, killing and wounding many, but causing no disorder in his ranks nor check to his advance. As he approached in range, the terrible fire of rifles and musketry opened upon him from the Tennessee and Kentucky infantry, each line firing and falling back to reload, giving place to the next line to advance and fire."(3)

"On our left, in front of the Tennesseans and Kentuckians, the greatest execution had been done. The slaughter here was appalling. Within a space three hundred yards wide, and extending out two hundred yards from our breastwork on the battlefield, an area, of about ten acres, the ground was literally covered with the dead and desperately wounded ... There lay before him [viz., an English officer who surveyed the field during the truce] in this small compass not less than one thousand men, dead or disabled, all in the uniform of the British soldier; not one American among the number."(4)

In an appendix to Smith's volume, there is a roster of each company of the American army participating in the battle. John Goodnight's name appears on page 190 as a private in Captain Jonathan Oswley's Company of the regiment commanded by Colonel Gabriel Slaughter.

After his discharge from the army, John Goodnight appears to have returned to Kentucky, and he presumably spent the next few years as a dutiful eldest son should, aiding his father in tilling the paternal acreage. We find no further record of him until October 18, 1820, when he was married to Rhoda Brown.

After her death in 1823, he again married. This second marriage, to Agnes Jones, is recorded in Lincoln County archives, the bondsman being Joseph Whorton., and the date being December 21, 1825.

Two years later, responding, perhaps, to the pioneering urge he had inherited from his fathers, he turned his back upon Kentucky and set his face northward.

In those days, veterans received recognition of their war service in the form of a grant of land, instead of cash or a pension. The quarter Section of land thus awarded to John Goodnight lies near the present city of Bloomington, Indiana. Its description is

Part of Section	Section	Township	Range
E ½ S. W.	8	8N	1 W 80 acres
W ½ S. W.	8	8N	1 W 80 acres

In 1827, the farm was probably from two to three miles from the village, and not far from the present site of Clear Creek. Today, the city has gone out to meet the farm and the latter is now in its very outskirts. The Dixie Highway passes directly by it.

To this farm John Goodnight and his second wife Agnes came in the year of 1827, bringing Margaret, the sole surviving child of the first marriage, and Elizabeth A., their own first born. They remained there twenty-five years, and it was there that the remaining children were born, Mary Jane, Martha Ellen Amanda F., Thomas Henry and Frances M.

Again, however, the wanderlust cast its spell upon the old pioneer, and in 1852, then 58 years of age, John Goodnight sold his farm, loaded his family and belongings into a great wagon and migrated farther north and west in search of cheaper land. Nine years before, his father, Jacob Goodnight, had passed away in Kentucky, and John's store of earthly goods had doubtless been augmented by the bequest of \$200 stipulated in his father's will. John appears, however, never to have accumulated much wealth.

The writer has often heard his father, Thomas Henry, who was a lad of 12 at the time of the migration, tell of the hardships of the overland trek into western Illinois in 1852, of the prolonged delay at Terre Haute, waiting for the high waters of the Wabash to subside, so they might cross in safety, and of the settlement on the new home land, in Henderson County, Illinois. The farm was a tract of 160 acres lying one mile east of Old Bedford Church. When asked why John hadn't taken a farm in the rich prairie land nearby, instead of a timbered piece broken by runs and gullies, Thomas used to reply that his father John thought the prairie land worthless, except for pasturage; that the heavy sod could never be successfully broken,

The land records also show that on Jan. 27, 1860, John Goodnight bought the N. W. quarter of the N. W. quarter of Section. 5, Town 7 N., Range 4 W. (Blandinsville Township), of George H. Payne for \$750. On June 12, 1868, he sold four acres of this forty to the Trustees of the Christian Church at Old Bedford for \$90, and on the same day, eight and one half acres to Hugh W. Hodgen for \$240. John Goodnight had come from the Bedford limestone region. His Indiana farm is within a mile of immense present day quarries of Bedford stone. He sold to the Trustees of the Church the

land for the edifice, and, apparently, at a reduced price—probably his contribution to the undertaking. One wonders whether he may have suggested the name which the church has borne ever since.

The family had resided nine years in the new home in Illinois when the Civil War broke out. Thomas Henry, born in 1840, was just 21. John, however, was 67, and his children, with the sole exception of Thomas Henry, were all girls. The only son was undoubtedly needed on the farm and his father was insistent that he remain. Whether John's war experience in youth had given him pacifistic leanings, whether his Kentucky rearing and his strong Democratic convictions had made him less loyal to the cause of the North than his neighbors, or whether the exigencies of the family farm situation in 1861 were alone responsible, the writer cannot say, but John was determined that his son should not go to war. Thomas Henry yielded to the importunities of his father, and remained at home, although, he himself had been strongly inclined to volunteer. John paid \$500 for his son's exemption from the draft.

As old age drew on him, John became more and more dependent upon Thomas Henry. In response to his insistence, the latter gave up missionary work in Kansas in 1875 and returned to Blandinsville in order to be with his aging parent who had moved into town, although the unmarried daughters, Amanda and Ellen, were keeping house for him in exemplary fashion. Thomas Henry remained in Blandinsville until after his father's death. The present writer remembers his grandfather John who used to take him walking, aged 4 years, up and down the main street of the small town, passing banter with all and sundry.

John was buried in the Old Bedford cemetery and his wife Agnes, who had preceded him in death by five years, sleeps beside him. Their epitaphs read:

"John Goodnight  
Died  
June 28, 1879  
Aged  
85 yrs. 1 m . 24d."

---

"Agnes Good Goodnight  
Departed  
December 15, 1874  
Aged  
74 years."

The dates in these inscriptions differ by a few days from those contained in the following biographical sketch from a county history (5). Although the differences are unimportant, the dates on the stones are doubtless correct. Eighty-five years, one month and twenty-four days from May 4, 1794, brings us to June 28, 1879, and not June 25th. In general, however, the sketch is accurate as to factual data, and, as the book is now rare, the page is here reproduced.

John Goodnight (deceased) was born in Stanford, Lincoln county, Kentucky, on May 4, 1704. He was a soldier under Gen. Jackson at New Orleans during the years 1814-5. He was married to Rhoda Brown October 18, 1820. She died in 1823, and he was married a second time to Agnes Jones. December 22, 1825. She died December 13, 1874, leaving him once more alone. Monroe County lived the greater part of his time for twenty-five years. Under the eldership of Michael Combs he embraced the doctrine of the Christian church in 1833. He removed to Adams county in the fall of 1852, and early in the spring of 1853 removed to a farm one mile east of Bedford church in Henderson county, and from there to Blandinsville in the spring of 1876, where he died at the age of eighty-five years, one month and twenty-four days, he was an exemplary Christian, and as a man he was honest in all his dealings, ever ready to denounce evil on its first appearance; the poor never left his door uncared for; the hungry were bountifully supplied from his table, and the naked were clothed by his generous hand. He died June 25, 1879. By his first marriage with Miss Rhoda Brown he had two children: Isaac, born July 3, 1821; Sarah M., August 19, 1822. Isaac died in infancy, and Sarah married Samuel A. Moore February 12, 1846. Agnes Jones, his second wife, was born in 1800. They were married December 22, 1825. The following children were born to them; Elizabeth A. born October 16, 1826; Mary J., April 14, 1831; Martha E. February 26, 1834; Amanda F., April 24, 1836; Thomas H., December 8, 1840; Francis M., January 12, 1845.

### **SUPPLEMENT TO "THE GOOD(K)NIGHT (GUTKNECHT) FAMILY IN AMERICA."**

The publication of this article was brought about—through the gracious interest of Miss Myrtle D. Starrette, Deputy Recorder of Deeds of Mecklenburg County, No. Car.—the discovery of the hitherto missing final pages of the Michael Goodnight deed, of record in that county. The missing pages had been wrongly bound, but Miss Starrette searched patiently, found them and has provided the present writer with photo static copies.

Of the material contained in the pages, little is of consequence to the investigation except the date and signature at the end. These show:

a. That the present writer's reading of the date at the beginning of the deed (1) was wrong--the date is 1774, not 1776. However, the conclusion drawn, viz., that Michael Goodnight resided in Mecklenburg County approximately 12 years, is not invalidated, for he bought the land in 1764, was, as is pointed out in a succeeding paragraph on the same page, appointed constable there in 1775, and he may not have removed to Kentucky before 1777 or 1778.

b. Further, that Michael and George were not only brothers, but neighbors in North Carolina, for George Goodnight's name appears as a witness to the deed.

c. That all three Goodnights make their mark in lieu of signatures, as two of them had done in the immigration lists of 1752 and 1754. This would seem to indicate that, although they had resided in the Colonies 20 years or more, they probably still retained the German language in their respective families and had not acquired the art of writing English script, even though they may have been able to use German script. There is no doubt that the family continued to speak German for many years afterward, too, for James Lincoln Goodnight, a great grandson of Michael and Mary, wrote to Cloyd Goodnight on Jan. 28, 1914:

" My Grandfather and Grandmother (Jacob and Elizabeth Hoover Good-night) both spoke German--in fact they could speak very poor English. My father (Isaac Goodnight), when a boy, could speak German, but gave it up, and when I knew him, he spoke only English."

d. One of the family traditions which does not appear to be justified by substantial evidence makes Michael a signer of the Mecklenburg declaration of independence (2). It appears, however, that John Pfifer, to whom Michael Goodnight sold his land, as evidenced by the following deed, was chronicled as a signer of the document, and his name appears upon the monument in Charlotte which was erected to the memory of the signers. Possibly, then one of the Goodnight family myths came about through transference—someone recounted that the man to whom Michael Goodnight sold his land was a signer; a later narrator abbreviated the tale and passed it on with Michael in the role of signer! This is only a surmise, but it is not an improbable one.

A professor of law well versed in property and conveyancing has examined carefully the following deed and he tells me that it is an excellent example of the English method of conveyancing as adopted for Colonial use in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, Miss Starrette states that the original copy in the old deed book is ragged from much handling. It has therefore occurred to the writer that publication of the entire document might have a slight historical interest as well being of service to future searchers.

S. H. Goodnight  
Madison, Wisconsin, February, 1936.

### **THE DEED**

This Indenture made the 20th day of May in the year of our Lord 1774 Between Michel Goodnight & Mary Goodnight his wife of the County of Mecklenburg & Province of north Carolina of the one part & John Pfifer of the County and province aforesaid of the other part Witnesseth that for & in Consideration of the sum of one hundred and five pounds piece Money of North Carolina to the said Michel Goodnight & Mary Goodnight his wife in hand paid the said John. Pfifer at or before the sealing & Delivery of these Presents the receipt whereof we do hereby acknowledge & therefore Doth Release acquit & Discharge the said John Pfifer his heirs Executors and Administrators by these presents that they the said Michel Goodnight and Mary Goodnight his wife

hath granted Bargained sold & Confirmed and by these presents doth grant bargain sell & confirm unto the said John Pfifer & his heirs or assigns forever all that track or parcel of land situate lying & being in the County & province aforesaid Containing by survey 190 acres and beginning at a Red Oak in Joseph Rogers line running thence S 22 E 208 poles to a stake thence N 59 E 109 poles to a Red Oak thence N 38 E 63 poles to a Hickory thence N 15 W 67 poles to a White Oak thence N 47 W 103 poles to Joseph Rogers Corner tree a Red Oak and thence Along said line to the first station which land lye on and near the three Mile Branch Being the waters of Rocky River it being a Certain piece of Land Conveyed to the said Michel Goodnight by deed of Conveyance from James McClean bearing date the first Day of May 1764 & the same had been Conveyed by Deed of Conveyance to James McClean by His Excellency Arthur Dobbs Esq bearing date the 24 Day of June 1762 & the said Michel Goodnight and Mary his wife Doth grant & Convey the said track of land to him the said John Pfifer in as full & ample a manner as the same was Conveyed & Confirmed to him the said Michel Goodnight by the before Recited Deeds of Conveyances (as by) Reference thereunto had may more fully appear. And all houses Buildings Orchards ways waters Water Courses profits Commodities Hereditaments & appurtenances whatsoever ever to the said promisees hereby Granted or any part thereof Belonging or in any wise appurtenant & the Reversion & Reversions Remainder & Remainders Rents Issues and Profits thereof & also all the Estate Right title Interest Use trust property Claim & Demand whatsoever of them the said Michel Goodnight & Mary Goodnight his wife of in or to the said Premises & all Deeds Evidences and Writings touching or in any wise Concerning the same to have & to hold the lands hereby Conveyed & all & Singular Other the Premises hereby Bargained & sold & Every part & parcel thereof With their & Every of their appurtenances unto the said John Pfifer his heirs & Assigns forever to the only proper use & behoof of him the said John Pfifer & of his Heirs & Assigns for Ever & the said Michel Goodnight & Mary his wife for themselves their heirs Executors & Administrators Doth Covenant promise & Grant to & with the said John Pfifer his heirs Assigns by these presents that the said Michel Goodnight & Mary his wife now at the time of sealing & Delivering of these presents is seized of a good sure perfect & undefiable Estate of Inheritance of fee simple of & in the premises hereby Bargained & sold & that they have good power & Lawfull & appropriate authority to grant & Convey the same to the said John Pfifer in manner & form aforesaid & that the said premises now are & forever shall Remain & be free and clear of & from all Other Gifts Grants Bargains Sales Dower Right & title of Dower Judgments Executions Titles Troubles Charges & Encumbrances whatsoever made done committed or suffered by the said Michel Goodnight & Mary his wife or any other person or persons whatsoever the Quits hereafter to grow due and payable to our Sovereign Lord the King his heirs & successors for and in Respect of the premises Only Excepted & forprized & that said Michel Goodnight & Mary his wife & their heirs all & singularly the premises hereby Bargained and sold With the appurtenances unto the said John Pfifer his heirs and assigns against them the said Michel Goodnight & Mary his wife & their heirs and. all & Every Other person & persons whatsoever shall warrant & for Ever Defend by these presents & Lastly that they the said Michel Goodnight & Mary his wife & their heirs & all and Every Other person. & persons & (oft) them & their heirs anything Claiming in the Premises hereinbefore mentioned Intended to be hereby bargained & sold shall and will from time to time & at all times hereafter at the Reasonable Request & at the proper Cost & Charges in the Law of John Pfifer the said. Michel Goodnight & Mary his wife their heirs or assigns make do & Execute or Cause or procure to be made done or Executed all & Every such further & Other Lawfull & Reasonable act & Acts thing & things Conveyances & assurances for the further better and more perfect Conveying and assuring the

said premisses with their and Every of their appurtenances unto the said John Pfifer his heirs & assigns as by the said Michel Goodnight and Mary his wife or their heirs or assigns or their Counsel learned in the law shall be Reasonably Desired advised or Required In Witness whereof the said Michel Goodnight & Mary his wife have hereunto set their hands and seals the Day & Year first above written

Goodnight	Michel	his
Sealed and Delivered		M
In. the Presence of		mark
Goodnight	Mary	her
		M
Samuel Patan		mark
his		
George G Goodnight		
mark		

Meclenburg County  
Octr Six 1774 the within Deed was Proved in, Open Court by the Oath of Samuel Pattan a  
subscribing Witness thereto in Order to be Registered

Test.

Sam Martin

### **Consolidated Footnotes Goodnight Family.**

#### **THE GOOD(K)NIGHT (GUTKNECHT) FAMILY**

(1) The Abridged Compendium of American Genealogy, Vol. II, under Goodnight, Clifton Shealy.

(2) Lamb's Biographical Dictionary of the US under Goodnight, James Lincoln.

(3) A biographical sketch of Isaac Goodnight in the Louisville Courier-Journal.

(4) Faust, A.B., The German Element in the United States, Vol. I, pp 78 and 235.

(5) If it were originally French, "the Good Knight," bestowed for valor in battle, as has been suggested, it would have been "le bon chevalier" and that, translated into German, would have been

“der gute Ritter” and not “der gute Knecht.” If we give due weight to etymology, we shall have to content ourselves with plebeian rather than aristocratic origin, for Knecht in German means servant, or, in medieval days when knighthood was on the wane, it meant a foot soldier as contrasted with the mounted knight.

(6) By Strassberger and Hinka. Norristown. 1934.

(7) Both this letter and the foregoing one date the coming to North Carolina, was "after the Revolutionary War." As will be shown later, however, Michael bought his farm in Mecklenburg Co., North Carolina in 1711. Cabarrus County was later formed from a Part of Mecklenburg County in 1792.

(8) Not to be confused With immigrant Christian 'who Derided in Philadelphia In 1749, or with a Philadelphia Christian who enlisted in the American army at Germantown during the Revolution and was later replaced by his brother Christopher; the census of 1730 lists the one Christian to Penn., the other in North Carolina. It is not unlikely that the German immigrant, Christian of 1749 (remained in Philadelphia and was the father of thee two Revolutionary soldiers for a Christian Gutknecht is listed as a taxpayer in Philadelphia County in 1760, 1774, 1779 and 1782--see the Archives of Pennsylvania, vol. XIV. He was probably the ancestor of the Gutknecht still living in Philadelphia—see Page above. It would not require any great stretch of imagination to surmise that all three immigrants, Christian, Hans Michael and George ("Gerick"), were brothers, but of this we have no proof.

(9) "Chalkley's Abstracts from the Records of Augusta County, Virginia," Vol. II, p. 417.

(10) Some accounts say the name was Landreths, others Landis, and a majority Landers. Landreths is quite un-German and may safely be discarded; but Chalkley's Annals, Vol. II. Pp. 17-18, record a land transfer in Greenbriar in 1771 involving Christopher Landers, and a deposition witnessing that Christian (Christopher) Landers lived in Greenbriar in 1753-4. P. 341 also records a marriage bond of Daniel Landers in 1800.

The immigration lists in German Pioneers of Pennsylvania record the landing at Philadelphia of Rudolf Landes in 1727; Johannis Landis in 1732; Christian Landes in 1736; Samuel Landes in 1743; Heinrich and Rutdolf Landes in 1749; Friederik Lander in 1751; Peter Landis in 1753; and Jacob Landes and Johannes Landes in 1764. Unless some one is fortunate enough to uncover an actual record of the marriage—which the writer has searched for in vain—we shall probably never know what the name really was. For the purposes of this paper the form Landers will be used.

(11) The North Carolina Professor of History, J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton, Wrote to the Rev. Cloyd Goodnight from Chapel Hill, Jan, 20, 1914 :

"Almost all historical investigators reject utterly the authenticity of the so-called Mecklenburg Declaration of May 20, 1776. . . There is no contemporary mention of the declaration and no document has been preserved. The declaration and the names of its supposed signers were written from memory by John McKnitt Alexander some 26 years later. The name of Michael Goodnight

was not among them." Professor Hamilton's Statement is fully corroborated by many documents in the Draper collection.

(12) The record at these appointments as copied from the record of the Mecklenburg county Court for July 1778, now appears in the D. A. R. magazine for July, 1927, pages 547-549,

(13) Draper Collections. State Historical Library of Wisconsin. MSS. 17J10.

(14) Draper Collection. State Historical Library of Wisconsin. MSS. 12CC335.

(15) Falcon Club Publications, 27. "Petitions of Early Inhabitants of Kentucky," Robertson, Page 89. No. 32,

(16) Page 91, No. 24.

(17) Page 124, No. 60.

(18) The Certificate Book is the property of the Kentucky State. Historical Society, Frankfort, and the information is kindly furnished by the Secretary, Mrs. Jouett Taylor Cannon.

(19) See Kentucky Register, Vol. 21, page 132

(20) Deed Book page 384.

(21) Fayette County records, Will Book E.

(22) Kentucky Register, Vol. 21, page 132.

(23) Will Book A, P. 222, Fayette Co., Ky., records. P. 34, Kentucky Court and other Records, by Mrs. W.B. Ardery, publ. at Lexington, 1926.

(24) See the Register of the Kentucky Historical Society, Vol. 20, p. 335.

(25) In possession of his foster-son David.

(26) This Charles Goodnight 'was *the* father at Col. Charles Goodnight, the famous cattle king of the Texas Panhandle, whose marriage at the age of 91 (1a 1927) and death at 93 had such wide publicity.

(27) See the Register of the Kentucky State Historical Society for 1923, Vol. 21, p. 246.

(28) Collins' History of Kentucky, Vol. II, p. 190,

(29) See the extract from the diary of John Cowan, quoted below.

(30) Draper Collections, MSS, 17J10. State Historical Library of Wisconsin.

(31) In an article In the Louisville Courier-Journal entitled "Isaac Goodnight," written 'by Ed. O. Leigh, and dated Bowling Green, March 17, 1917, the statement is made: "George W, Mottley ... has in his possession the family Bible of Michael Goodnight, the father of Isaac, containing the record of the birth of the subject of this sketch. This shows that he was born at Harlan Springs near Harrodsburg on Jan. 1, 1182." Incidentally the present writer visited Allen Co. in the summer of 1934, talked with an own daughter of Geo. W. Mottley, deceased, and with others, but found no trace of Michael's family Bible. The members of the family protested they had never heard of it, Probably Journalist Leigh, also deceased, meant Isaac's family Bible—merely a trifling journalist inaccuracy.

(32) History of Kentucky, Vol. 11, page 64.

(33) Collin's statement may have been based in part Upon a document in the Draper mss.CC5, p. 85), written by Mrs. Eliza Thomas, born 1764 who was taken by her tattler, William Payne, to Harrodsburg in 1775. She writes: "The Cabbins built by Col. Harrod in 1774 were then standing and some of them occupied one by a Mr. Hugh Wilson, whose wile had a son a month or two old which she called Harrod Wilson which was the first white child born in the place."

(34) Dr. Louise Phelpe Kellogg, of the state Historical Library of Wisconsin.

(35) See footnote 8 above.

(36) From Thomas Me. Goodnight, dated Gainesville, Allen Co., Ky., Mar. 1, 1884.

(37) Vol. XX, p. 170.

### **JACOB GOODNIGHT**

(1) These lists are now preserved in the Kentucky State Historical Library at Frankfort.

(2) Now in possession of Gilbert Goodnight, Knob Noster, Mo.

(3) Recorded in Deed Book 2 page 153, Mercer County,

(4) Deed Book 3 page 224, Mercer County.

(5) Deed Book E, page 49, Lincoln County.

(6) Deed Book E, page 51, Lincoln County.

(7) Deed Book L, page 97, Lincoln County.

(8) McAdams: Kentucky Pioneer and Court Records, page 15.

## JOHN GOODNIGHT

- (1) The Battle of New Orleans, by Z. T. Smith. The Eilson Club Publications, No.19, 1904.
- (2) Ibid., page 74.
- (3) Ibid., page 77.
- (4) Ibid., page 88.
- (5) Extract from *History of Mercer and Henderson Counties*. (H.H. Hill & Co. Chicago. 1882), pp. 1124-25

### SUPPLEMENT TO "THE GOOD(K)NIGHT (GUTKNECHT) FAMILY IN AMERICA."

- (1) Page 334 in the Register of the Kentucky State Historical Society, Vol. 32 No. 105. Oct. 1935.
- (2) See the Article in the Register, p. 234.
- (3) For p. 334 see p. 356, this volume (need to look at original text for the paged this was scanned from). The deed referred to starts "This Indenture, made the 20<sup>th</sup> Day of May...."

## Genealogy Report

### *Descendants of Gutknecht*

#### *Generation No. 1*

#### 1. GUTKNECHT<sup>1</sup>

Children of GUTKNECHT are:

2.
  - i. HANS MICHAEL<sup>2</sup> GOODNIGHT, b. Germany; d. 1781, Killed by Indians near Harlin's Station, KY.
  - ii. CHRISTIAN GOODNIGHT, b. Germany.

Notes for CHRISTIAN GOODNIGHT:

"imported in the ship Christian, Captain Thomas Brady, from Rotterdam but last from Cowes, England," and took the oath on Wed 13 Sep 1749

More About CHRISTIAN GOODNIGHT:  
Immigration: 13 Sep 1749, Oaths to the Government

iii. GERICK GOODNIGHT, b. Germany.

Notes for GERICK GOODNIGHT:  
"Ship Recovery, Amos Jones, Master, from Rotterdam and Cowes," brought "Gerrick Goodnight" who took the oaths on Oct 23, 1754

More About GERICK GOODNIGHT:  
Immigration: 23 Oct 1754, Oaths to the Government

### *Generation No. 2*

2. HANS MICHAEL<sup>2</sup> GOODNIGHT (*GUTKNECHT*<sup>1</sup>) was born in Germany, and died 1781 in Killed by Indians near Harlin's Station, KY. He married MARY LANDERS 19 Feb 1762.

Notes for HANS MICHAEL GOODNIGHT:  
Immigration record is that Hans came "in the ship Neptune, Captain John Mason, from Rotterdam and last from Coes England," and took the "Oaths to the Government" on October 4, 1752

More About HANS MICHAEL GOODNIGHT:  
Immigration: 04 Oct 1752, Philadelphia, PA

More About HANS GOODNIGHT and MARY LANDERS:  
Marriage: 19 Feb 1762

Children of HANS GOODNIGHT and MARY LANDERS are:

i. MARGARET<sup>3</sup> GOODNIGHT, b. Lincoln Co, KY; m. HENRY POPE, 24 Jun 1782, Lincoln Co, KY.

More About HENRY POPE and MARGARET GOODNIGHT:  
Marriage: 24 Jun 1782, Lincoln Co, KY

ii. ELIZABETH GOODNIGHT, b. Lincoln Co, KY; m. PATRICK DORAN, 29 Jan 1783, Lincoln Co, KY.

Notes for PATRICK DORAN:  
A Revolution soldier

More About PATRICK DORAN and ELIZABETH GOODNIGHT:  
Marriage: 29 Jan 1783, Lincoln Co, KY

iii. JOHN GOODNIGHT, b. 01 May 1765, NC; m. RUTH DAVIS, 25 Dec 1786, Mercer Co., KY.

Notes for JOHN GOODNIGHT:  
Spent his life in Mercer Co. KY

More About JOHN GOODNIGHT and RUTH DAVIS:  
Marriage: 25 Dec 1786, Mercer Co., KY

3. iv. JACOB GOODNIGHT, b. NC; d. 19 Feb 1843, Stanford, KY.

v. HENRY GOODNIGHT, b. NC.

vi. ABRAHAM GOODNIGHT, b. NC.

vii. RACHEL GOODNIGHT, b. NC.

viii. SARAH GOODNIGHT, b. NC; d. 13 Feb 1841, Mercer Co, KY; m. PETER BOUCHER, 26 May 1795, Mercer Co, KY.

More About PETER BOUCHER and SARAH GOODNIGHT:  
Marriage: 26 May 1795, Mercer Co, KY

- ix. ISAAC GOODNIGHT, b. 01 Jan 1782, Harlan's Station, KY; d. 14 Oct 1869, Allen Co, KY; m. ELIZABETH MCMURRY, 1805, Lincoln Co, KY.

Notes for ELIZABETH MCMURRY:

Elizabeth was a sister of James McMurry who married Mary "Polly" Goodnight in 1810.

More About ISAAC GOODNIGHT and ELIZABETH MCMURRY:

Marriage: 1805, Lincoln Co, KY

### *Generation No. 3*

**3.** JACOB<sup>3</sup> GOODNIGHT (*HANS MICHAEL<sup>2</sup>, GUTKNECHT<sup>1</sup>*) was born in NC, and died 19 Feb 1843 in Stanford, KY. He married ELIZABETH HOOVER 15 Mar 1792. She died 01 Apr 1820 in Stanford, KY.

Notes for JACOB GOODNIGHT:

lived from 1789 on near Stanford, KY

More About JACOB GOODNIGHT and ELIZABETH HOOVER:

Marriage: 15 Mar 1792

Children of JACOB GOODNIGHT and ELIZABETH HOOVER are:

- i. MARY<sup>4</sup> GOODNIGHT, b. 30 Dec 1792, Stanford, KY; d. 27 Aug 1855, Montgomery Co, IN; m. JAMES MCMURRY, Dec 1810; d. 09 Sep 1838, Montgomery Co, IN.

More About JAMES MCMURRY and MARY GOODNIGHT:

Marriage: Dec 1810

4. ii. JOHN GOODNIGHT, b. 04 May 1794, Stanford, KY; d. 28 Jun 1879, Blandinsville, IL.  
5. iii. ELIZABETH GOODNIGHT, b. 15 Nov 1795, Stanford, KY.  
iv. SARAH GOODNIGHT, b. 25 Aug 1797, Stanford, KY; m. GILBERT T. NARNEY.  
v. HENRY GOODNIGHT, b. 16 Feb 1800, Stanford, KY; m. JANE BILLINGSLEY, 02 Dec 1830.

More About HENRY GOODNIGHT and JANE BILLINGSLEY:

Marriage: 02 Dec 1830

- vi. ISAAC GOODNIGHT, b. 20 Mar 1802, Stanford, KY; m. LUCINDA BILLINGSLEY.  
vii. THOMAS GOODNIGHT, b. 25 Oct 1805, Stanford, KY; d. 13 Oct 1851, Johnson Co, MO; m. MARTHA DAWSON, 23 Jul 1835.

More About THOMAS GOODNIGHT and MARTHA DAWSON:

Marriage: 23 Jul 1835

- viii. MARGARET GOODNIGHT, b. 22 Jan 1808, Stanford, KY; m. JOHN HENRY PORCH, 11 Mar 1830.

More About JOHN PORCH and MARGARET GOODNIGHT:

Marriage: 11 Mar 1830

### *Generation No. 4*

**4.** JOHN<sup>4</sup> GOODNIGHT (*JACOB<sup>3</sup>, HANS MICHAEL<sup>2</sup>, GUTKNECHT<sup>1</sup>*) was born 04 May 1794 in Stanford, KY, and died 28 Jun 1879 in Blandinsville, IL. He married (1) RHODA BROWN 18 Oct 1820. She died 11 Sep 1823. He married (2) AGNES JONES 22 Dec 1825.

Notes for JOHN GOODNIGHT:

Will probated 1840, in Lincoln Co. The data relating to Jacob's family are from the will and from his family Bible, now

in possession of Gilbert Goodnight, Know Noster, MO (Ca 1936)

More About JOHN GOODNIGHT:

Residence: Lived in KY, IN and IL

More About JOHN GOODNIGHT and RHODA BROWN:

Marriage: 18 Oct 1820

More About JOHN GOODNIGHT and AGNES JONES:

Marriage: 22 Dec 1825

Children of JOHN GOODNIGHT and RHODA BROWN are:

- i. ISAAC<sup>5</sup> GOODNIGHT, b. 03 Jul 1821; d. died in infancy.
- ii. SARAH MARGARET GOODNIGHT, b. 19 Aug 1822; m. SAM A MOORE, 12 Feb 1846.

More About SARAH MARGARET GOODNIGHT:

Residence: Lived in Brown Co., IL

More About SAM MOORE and SARAH GOODNIGHT:

Marriage: 12 Feb 1846

Children of JOHN GOODNIGHT and AGNES JONES are:

- iii. ELIZABETH A<sup>5</sup> GOODNIGHT, b. 16 Oct 1826, Stanford, KY; d. 26 Nov 1908, Henderson Co, IL; m. WILLIAM MELVIN, 14 Oct 1859.

More About WILLIAM MELVIN and ELIZABETH GOODNIGHT:

Marriage: 14 Oct 1859

- iv. MARY JANE GOODNIGHT, b. 14 Apr 1831, Monroe Co. IN; d. 06 Jan 1920, Winfield, KS; m. JOHN COOK, 19 Nov 1872.

More About MARY JANE GOODNIGHT:

Residence: Henderson Co, IL

More About JOHN COOK and MARY GOODNIGHT:

Marriage: 19 Nov 1872

- v. MARTHA ELLEN GOODNIGHT, b. 26 Jan 1834, Monroe Co. IN; d. 10 Oct 1913, Columbus, KS.

More About MARTHA ELLEN GOODNIGHT:

Residence: Lived in IN, IL, and KS

- vi. AMANDA F GOODNIGHT, b. 24 Apr 1836, Monroe Co. IN; d. 02 Apr 1926, Columbus, KS.

More About AMANDA F GOODNIGHT:

Residence: Lived in IN, IL, and KS

- vii. THOMAS HENRY GOODNIGHT, b. 09 Dec 1840, Monroe Co. IN; d. 27 Oct 1918, Madison, WI; m. SUSAN M PITMAN, 06 Feb 1874, St Joseph, MO; d. 06 Aug 1934.

More About THOMAS HENRY GOODNIGHT:

Residence: Lived in IN, IL, KS, IA, and WI

More About THOMAS GOODNIGHT and SUSAN PITMAN:

Marriage: 06 Feb 1874, St Joseph, MO

- viii. FRANCIS M GOODNIGHT, b. 12 Jan 1845, Monroe Co. IN; d. 16 Dec 1927, Columbus, KS; m. WILLIAM A. WALLER, 27 May 1871.

More About FRANCIS M GOODNIGHT:  
Residence: Lived in IN, IL, and KS

More About WILLIAM WALLER and FRANCIS GOODNIGHT:  
Marriage: 27 May 1871

5. ELIZABETH<sup>4</sup> GOODNIGHT (*JACOB<sup>3</sup>, HANS MICHAEL<sup>2</sup>, GUTKNECHT<sup>1</sup>*) was born 15 Nov 1795 in Stanford, KY. She married JOHN BILLINGSLEY 13 Feb 1831.

Notes for JOHN BILLINGSLEY:

More About JOHN BILLINGSLEY and ELIZABETH GOODNIGHT:  
Marriage: 13 Feb 1831

Children of ELIZABETH GOODNIGHT and JOHN BILLINGSLEY are:

- i. LUCINDA<sup>5</sup> BILLINGSLEY, m. ISAAC GOODNIGHT; b. 20 Mar 1802, Stanford, KY.
- ii. JANE BILLINGSLEY, m. HENRY GOODNIGHT, 02 Dec 1830; b. 16 Feb 1800, Stanford, KY.

More About HENRY GOODNIGHT and JANE BILLINGSLEY:  
Marriage: 02 Dec 1830