

Drayton Family

THE HISTORY OF
AN OLD PHILADELPHIA
LAND TITLE

208 SOUTH FOURTH STREET

BY
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PHILADELPHIA
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usually successful. She made her returns promptly and honestly and was able in her later years to support herself almost to the day of her death, which occurred 15 February 1865. She lived to about 67, when her former quick and active step became enfeebled, her bright eyes lost their fire, and her black hair became gray and silvered.

WILLIAM HEYWARD DRAYTON

From Hubbell the title passes to William Heyward Drayton by virtue of a deed dated 20 October 1851. Ten days later, Drayton and his wife conveyed the property to Thomas Williamson, who immediately reconveyed it to Harriet Coleman, Robert Kelton and Drayton himself, as trustees for Drayton's wife, Harriet C. Drayton under the terms of a marriage settlement made 28 October 1850.

He married Harriet Coleman, 31 October 1850. She was the daughter of James Coleman by his wife Harriet Dawson and was born, 4 June 1830, and died, 18 November 1901.

Drayton was born at Charleston, South Carolina, 27 December 1817, the son of Colonel William Drayton, one time member of Congress from that State, and later president of the United States Bank.

He was educated primarily at Charleston, then went to St. Mary's College, Baltimore, from which he graduated about 1836.

He worked as civil engineer for two or three years. When the effects of the panic of 1837 stopped railroad building, he severed himself from railroad and other ties, came to Philadelphia and began the study of law with Thomas I. Wharton.

He was admitted to practice 22 October 1842 and devoted his energies to the law in which he attained a high standing.

He was a member of Common Council 1877-78, and Select Council 1879-1882, and School Director in the old Locust Ward where he lived at 208 South 4th Street.

At the Battle of Gettysburg he served as a sergeant with the Grey Reserves.



William Heyward Drayton

He was part owner of the *Legal Intelligencer*; a member of the Board of City Trusts, serving from 1872 continuously until his death, and acting as President of the Board from 1884 to 1892, after the death of the Hon. William Welsh.

He was interested in agriculture, which he practised on his country place at Penllyn, but with such want of success, characteristic of lawyers who think that money can be made to grow, that he was elected a member of the old Farmer's Club. Lawyers who farm usually do so for ten years with enthusiasm and the next ten with resignation. They find, as the late John B. Thayer said, that "Farming is like digging a hole in the ground, deeper and deeper each year, and then dropping in gold dollars with the hope that they might at least be heard to touch bottom."

Drayton was President of the old "Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture;" a vestryman of St. James' Episcopal Church of Philadelphia; and later of St. Thomas', Whitemarsh, where he was at one time accounting warden.

One of the first cases the writer ever had at the Bar he tried against Drayton, in the Court of Common Pleas, No. 2, before Judge Hare, who was Drayton's close personal friend, but who, with characteristic honesty, leaned so far backwards, that he decided everything against Drayton and nothing in his favor. Hence the writer obtained a verdict with costs. The Supreme Court affirmed the judgment—Judge Hare was too good a lawyer to make any mistakes, always allowing the jury that province exclusively.

Drayton was a man of the highest possible character. He had a considerable practice, largely advisory, rather than one taking him into the trial courts.

Following his decease, at a meeting of the Law Association, 12 October 1892, Richard C. McMurtrie presiding, a minute of its high regard and respect was presented by John Cadwalader, seconded by George W. Biddle, Judge Craig Biddle, and Morton P. Henry, and unanimously adopted.

"Mr. Drayton was a man of a very rare type, and unfortunately there are today very few that follow in the path

which he had marked out in life. The kind of integrity that he possessed, the purity of his motives, as well as of his actions, the dignity and courtesy of his manners, his fidelity in the performance of every duty, public and private, commanded the esteem and confidence of the whole community."

Mr. Drayton died 9 October 1892 and is buried in the Protestant Episcopal Churchyard at Whitmarsh. (Old Philadelphia Families by Frank Willing Leach, *North American*, 15 December 1912.)

THE DRAYTON FAMILY

The Drayton family, of which William Heyward Drayton was so conspicuous a member, is of more than passing interest.

Thomas Drayton, a descendant of the Draytons of Northamptonshire, England, from whom the South Carolina and Pennsylvania stock descends, was one of the "adventurers" who settled at the Island of Barbadoes in 1671. Little is known of him, except that he seems to have prospered, and afterwards died there in 1702.

His son, of the same name, left Barbadoes, for some reason or other, upon the ship "Mary" in 1679, as one of a group of colonists who accompanied Sir John Yeamans to South Carolina. He settled on the banks of the Ashley River, where he had a picturesque plantation which he called "Magnolia" from its trees. He too had a son named Thomas, who also had a son, and a grandson, of the same name, till there were five or more "Thomases" in a direct line, to say nothing of others in the indirect, an arrangement which doubtless saved remarking the family plate.

John Drayton, who was born at "Magnolia" in 1713 and died in 1779, was the descendant of *three* of these direct line "Thomases," and became one of the wealthiest men in South Carolina. At his death his fortune aggregated £100,000 sterling, together with a number of rice and other plantations, including "Magnolia," and over five hundred slaves. He had bought "Magnolia" in 1774, from his nephew William Drayton who was then Chief Justice of East Florida.

John erected a mansion adjoining "Magnolia," which he named "Drayton Hall," and which is still standing,—the one important Colonial Mansion in that part of South Carolina to survive the ravages of the Civil War.

Lord Cornwallis occupied "Drayton Hall" in 1780–1781, during the Revolution, and doled out daily rations to those of the family and their dependents who remained at home.

John is interesting from a genealogical standpoint, because he married four times, and had issue by each successive marriage.

Chief Justice William Drayton, (1732–1790) the descendant of four of these direct line "Thomases," and the second eldest son of his parents, became the head of the elder branch of the family, and the progenitor of the Pennsylvania Draytons.

He studied law at the Inner Temple, London, as was the case with the best trained American lawyers of his time.

He returned to South Carolina in 1754, practising as a lawyer until 1763, when he became Chief Justice of East Florida. He sold "Magnolia," which he had inherited from his father and had added to, until it was over 700 acres in extent.

Chief Justice William Drayton was a remarkable man. When hostilities between Great Britain and her Colonies commenced, friction naturally developed between the Chief Justice and certain Crown Officials. The Chief Justice was suspended from office, reappointed, again suspended, and was obliged to leave the Province. He then moved his entire family to England and appealed to the Ministry for reinstatement, but without success. He thereupon returned to South Carolina and bore a conspicuous part in the struggle for American Independence.

After the War he became Judge of the Admiralty Court of South Carolina, then Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of that State, and, upon the organization of the Federal Government, was appointed by Washington to be first Judge

of the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina, an office, however, which he held but six months, dying in 1790.

He was twice married, and had issue with both marriages. His first wife was Mary Motte, daughter of Jacob Motte and his wife Elizabeth Martin. This Elizabeth is said to have been the original of "High Betty Martin, steptoe fine, couldn't find a husband to-suit her mind," but she did find Jacob in 1725 and had fourteen children by him—presumptive evidence that she was satisfied with her choice—at any rate it put upon her the burden of proof.

WILLIAM DRAYTON

Judge Drayton's ninth child (the Draytons always ran to large families), was William (1776–1846) who married (1) Ann Gadsden, and (2) Maria Miles Heyward, the daughter of William Heyward. He had four children by his first wife, and five by his second. His fifth child—his first by his second wife—was William Heyward Drayton, who married Harriet Coleman.

William Drayton (1776–1846) was born at St. Augustine, Florida. His mother died soon after his birth and he was brought up as the foster brother of Robert James Turnbull the champion of nullification. He was sent to school in England, but the death of his father recalled him to South Carolina. He studied law, was admitted to the Bar, had a distinguished career in the Army during the War of 1812, and is often called "Colonel." He was elected to Congress from South Carolina in 1824, serving four consecutive terms until 1833, when he withdrew to private life and subsequently located in Philadelphia.

He succeeded Nicholas Biddle as President of the Bank of the United States, and after endeavoring, without success, to resuscitate that remarkable institution, he placed its assets in the hands of assignees for the benefit of its creditors, and retired from office.



Midshipman Percival Drayton, by Thomas Sully

He was a member of the American Philosophical Society, and died in Philadelphia, 24 May 1846, and is buried at Laurel Hill.

CAPTAIN PERCIVAL DRAYTON

Colonel William Drayton was the father of Captain Percival Drayton, by his first wife, Ann Gadsden. Captain Drayton's distinguished career in the Civil War reached a climax when he commanded Farragut's flag-ship the "Hartford" in the Battle of Mobile Bay 5 August 1864.

The Bay was protected by two forts, "Morgan" at the eastern side of the entrance, and "Gaines" at the western, three miles apart, and between was a line of piles and a double line of torpedoes, leaving a narrow entrance near Fort Morgan for the use of the Confederate blockade runners. A red buoy marked the end of the torpedo line. Inside the Bay was the Confederate iron-clad Ram "Tennessee" and three wooden gunboats.

Farragut's efforts to enter the Bay began at half-past five in the morning, when the signal for the advance was given which at once provoked heavy firing from the forts. He had seven sloop-of-war, the "Brooklyn" leading, and the "Hartford" coming second.

Farragut mounted into the port main-rigging of the "Hartford," in order to see over the smoke, and as it increased he was compelled to mount higher. Captain Drayton in order to prevent Farragut from falling to the deck in the event of his being wounded, sent up a quartermaster with a piece of lead-line to lash Farragut to the shrouds.

Each sloop-of-war had a gunboat lashed alongside to take her through should her machinery be disabled.

Drayton, besides commanding the "Hartford," was Fleet Captain, and though explicit directions had been given by Farragut, as was his custom, for the movement of every vessel upon the happening of every contingency, one of the four Union ironclad Monitors, which formed a line to the starboard of the wooden ships, passed on the wrong side of the red buoy

in her eagerness to engage the Confederate Ram, and striking a torpedo sank immediately. Thereupon the "Brooklyn," which had been given the lead because she was equipped with four chase guns and a contrivance for picking up torpedoes, stopped, and the whole line seemed likely to be thrown into confusion. The firing was heavy and destructive upon both sides. "What is the trouble?" was shouted through a trumpet from the "Hartford." "Torpedoes" was the answer from the "Brooklyn." "Damn the torpedoes, four bells! Captain Drayton, go ahead," an order which was instantly obeyed, the "Hartford" passing ahead of the "Brooklyn," and leading the fleet into Mobile Bay.

In Farragut's report of the fight he said of Drayton:—"He is the fleet captain of my squadron, and one of more determined energy, untiring devotion to duty, and zeal for the service, tempered by great calmness, I do not think adorns any navy." (Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography.)

WILLIAM HEYWARD DRAYTON (Continued)

William Heyward Drayton and his wife and family lived in the Fourth Street House from 1851 to 1864. They had eight children, all of whom were born in the old homestead, except William, who was born at Newport, R. I.; and Harriet and Percival, both of whom were born after their parents had moved to Spruce Street. Percival was named after his uncle, the Captain who was a frequent visitor at the 4th Street house, and who died 4 August 1865 at Washington, while discharging his duties as Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, an office to which he had been appointed at the close of the War.

The occupancy of the Fourth Street house by William Heyward Drayton and his wife, was the last time it was used as a dwelling and their children, who were born in it, were the last young people to whose voices its old walls resounded. Their eldest son, William, went through the house with the writer, not long before William's death. He pointed out his father's and mother's rooms, and the ones occupied by himself and his brothers, and, as the house is in almost exactly the same condition as it was years ago, he recalled its details, and the

neighboring sheds over which the Drayton children played tag, and the old nursery, where they built a fire in the centre of the floor, around which to play "Indian," and nearly set fire to the building.

William Heyward Drayton and Harriet his wife, had issue as follows:

William
Henry Edward
Sarah Coleman
Maria Heyward
Robert Coleman
William Heyward
Harriet Dawson
Percival

William, born 22 July 1851, died 27 February 1920, married 15 April 1880 Edith Newbold Welsh, daughter of William Welsh by his wife Mary Ross Newbold. He was graduated from Trinity College, Hartford; admitted to the Philadelphia Bar 2 December 1874; was State Representative 1878; member of the Council of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania; member of the Rittenhouse Club; and Vestryman of St. Thomas', Whitemarsh.

Henry Edward, born 29 November 1853, married 8 June 1876 Anna Massey, daughter of Robert V. Massey of Philadelphia, by his wife Julia Pratt.

A concise genealogy of the Drayton family, was contributed by Mrs. Emily Heyward Drayton Taylor, daughter of Dr. Henry Edward Drayton, to the Publications of The Genealogical Society, Vol. VIII.

From William Heyward Drayton and his wife, the title to the Fourth Street house, passed to

JOHN MCCREA

one of the most remarkable citizens Philadelphia ever had; merchant, shipowner, builder and real estate operator. He took title by deed 12 March 1864.