I was reminded of a name that I had not heard in many years while on a recent trip to Louisville, Kentucky during the Derby Season.

Do to the decline of the horse in everyday life in this country and the corresponding decline of interest in horse-racing does anyone remembers Man of War? Many claim that he was the most famous racehorse in history. He was born on March 29, 1917 in Lexington, Kentucky and was owned by Colonel August Belmont II.

The Belmont Stakes and Belmont Park in Elmont, New York are named for his father August Belmont I. While serving in France during World War I Colonel Belmont ordered the sale of all 21 colts foaled that year at his Kentucky Nursery Stud Farm. Colonel Belmont’s wife was fond of a new foal and named him My Man of War in honor of her husband.

On August 17, 1918 Samuel Riddle purchased Man O’ War at the Saratoga (Saratoga Springs, New York) yearling sale for $5,000.
Riddle felt that if the big chestnut yearling did not succeed as a racehorse he could be trained as a show jumper or a fox hunting horse.

He had Man O’ War shipped to his farm at Glen Riddle in Delaware County about two miles from Media, Pennsylvania. There, Riddle’s trainer Louis Feustel broke him to saddle and soon the horse earned the nickname Big Red as he was 16 hands high.

Feustel then moved Big Red to another Riddle farm located in Worcester County, Maryland for intense training. This farm was located about three miles west of Ocean City, Maryland and was also called Glen Riddle by some sports writers. It was soon clear that the big long-limbed red horse was something special. During workouts at Pimlico and Havre de Grace racetrack he would never allow another horse to pass.

Man O’ War’s first official race was on June 6, 1919 at Belmont, which he won by six lengths. In five more starts, he won five times. On August 13, 1919 at the Sanford Memorial Stakes at Saratoga, Man O’ War broke prematurely five times for false starts.

As jockey Johnny Loftus lined him up for the sixth time, the starter dropped the tape while Man O’ War was facing sideways and the horse had to be turned around to get under way. In spite of the ten-length delay in getting started, Man O’ War was within a half-length of the winner when a horse named Upset won. His sixth race would become the only loss of his career. He would later race Upset six more times and win every one. In 1919, he won nine out of ten races.

Riddle would not enter Big Red in the 1920 Kentucky Derby partly because he was not convinced that 1.25 miles was right for the beginning of the horse’s three-year-old season. He also may have felt that the big money in horse-racing was at the eastern tracks and the Kentucky Derby was too far west. In 1920, Man O’ War won eleven of eleven races including the Preakness at Pimlico in Maryland and the Belmont in New York.

Man O’ War’s last race was on October 12, 1920 at Kenilworth Park in Windsor, Ontario. It was a match race against the celebrated Canadian horse Sir Barton, who had in 1919 become the first winner of the Triple Crown. The Triple Crown of horse-racing consists of winning all three of the classic races for three-year-olds, the Kentucky Derby, Preakness Stakes and Belmont Stakes. Man O’ War beat Sir Barton by seven lengths and broke the 1.25 mile track record by six seconds.
Riddle was concerned about the excessive weights being assigned to his horse. He asked Walter Vosburgh, a Jockey Club handicapper how much weight Man O’ War would be assigned as a four year old. Riddle was told that the handicap would be 145-150 pounds. Riddle later said, “When he told me that I knew that it was time for Red to stop racing.” Riddle feared the extra weight would break down the legs of his horse and also felt that Man O’ War had a lot to contribute as a stud.

During his racing career Man O’ War’s lifetime record was 21 starts, 20 wins, and 1 second place. He set 5 world speed records as a three-year-old and at that time earned more money than any other horse in racing history. As he was returning Man O’ War to Glen Riddle, they stopped at various tracks as a kind of farewell tour where thousands of fans gathered to see the racing icon.

In January 1921, Man O’ War arrived by train in Lexington, Kentucky where he spent his first year in stud at Hinata Stock Farm. Here he sired thirteen foals. He was then transported to Riddle’s Faraway Farm a few miles away where he spent the remainder of his life. Although Riddle would not allow Man O’ War to breed many mares other than his own he became history’s leading sire in terms of his offspring’s winnings. Among the most important was 1937 Triple Crown winner War Admiral and Battleship who won the English Grand National Steeplechase. During Man O’ War’s stud career, he sired 379 foals that won 1,286 races.

On November 1, 1947, history’s most famous racehorse died from a heart attack at age 30 years and 6 months. Riddle had him embalmed and he lay in state for two days. His burial service was broadcast on national radio and covered by the worldwide press where nine speakers eulogized him.

About 2,000 people attended his funeral at Riddle’s Faraway Farm where he was buried. Riddle commissioned Herbert Hazeltine to sculpt a memorial statue of Man O’ War while the great horse was still living and this statue was placed on his grave. In 1977, Man O’ War and his statue was moved to the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington. Here at the end of the entrance drive, he continues to greet horse fans from all over the world.
Sam Riddle

(G.T. Ridlon’s book, History of the Ancient Ryedales..., pages 154-161 was used as a reference for genealogical information on Samuel Doyle Riddle.)

Samuel Riddle was born in 1800 at Parkmount near Belfast, Ireland. He attended a private academy but quit school at an early age and began working at a cotton factory in Belfast where he spent the next nine years acquiring a practical knowledge of cotton manufacturing. In May 1823, he sailed for the United States to seek his fortune.

After being shipwrecked on Sable Island, he arrived in Philadelphia with only five Spanish dollars and a sea chest that he carried on his back. He found employment at a cotton mill in Manayunk, Pennsylvania but soon moved to Pleasant Mills in New Jersey and where he was worked approximately three years.

During this time, he accumulated enough money to begin his own business. He rented a mill at Springdale, Delaware County, Pennsylvania in 1827 and created a cotton yarn spinning operation, which employed ten workers. Three years later, he moved his operation to a larger building on Chester Creek where it prospered for the next twelve years. In 1842, he purchased property at Pennsgrove, in Delaware County about fifteen miles from Philadelphia.

Mr. Riddle named this property Glen Riddle in honor of his ancestral family the Riddells of Glen Riddells, Scotland. During the next thirty years, Sam Riddle expanded Glen Riddle to include a 6,000-acre estate, five large mills, more than two hundred dwellings, a town with post office, and 5,000 employees. In addition to his operation at Glen Riddle, Samuel Riddle along with other members of his family operated several businesses in Philadelphia as Samuel Riddle, Son & Company.

Samuel Doyle Riddle was born on July 1, 1861 at Glen Riddle, Delaware County, Pennsylvania. He was the eldest son of Samuel Riddle and his second wife Lydia C. Doyle of Chester, Pennsylvania. He followed his older half brother Henry into his father’s many enterprises. It is unknown when Samuel became interested in horse-racing, but by the time he purchased Man O’ War in 1918 he was considered a dapper country squire.

Here is a little additional history concerning this Riddle line. As previously mentioned, Samuel Doyle Riddle’s father Samuel Riddle came to the U.S. from Belfast in Northern Ireland. Samuel’s father was the son of Leander Riddle and Mary Brooks. Leander was born in 1766 and served in the British Naval
Service for four years and later worked in the cotton manufacturing industry. In 1827, he followed his sons to the U.S. and settled near them in Delaware County, Pennsylvania where he died in 1851.

Leander was the son of James Riddell III and Elizabeth Cowden. James III was born in 1746 near Belfast, Ireland. His father James Riddell II was born about 1680 in the County of Armagh, North Ireland and inherited his father James Riddell's estate. James Riddell II was a man of wealth, position, and great physical strength.

James Riddell I was born in the Scottish lowlands and later became a commissioned officer in the army of William III during the wars with the Catholic-Irish. His reward for this service was three town lands in the County of Armagh, in the North of Ireland.

Sam Riddle died in January 1951 at age 89, four years after Man O’ War. Sam loved Glen Riddle and the surrounding Delaware County. He often dined in Media, just two miles north of his estate, riding into the county seat in a horse and carriage during the gas-rationing days of World War II. In his will he stipulated that the residue of his estate be used to provide a hospital for the community that he loved.

His will was bitterly contested by family members distressed that he had left the bulk of it, including the stud fees for War Admiral, to establish a hospital. In 1961, ten years after his death the Riddle Memorial Hospital opened. Today, it has grown to a 252-bed hospital with over 1,300 employees and a medical staff of over 600. To this day, the Riddle Memorial Hospital continues to grow.

Sadly, little remains today that remind one of Glen Riddle, Samuel Doyle Riddle, or the horse farms that Sam once owned. Housing developments, golf courses, and urban sprawl have almost removed all traces of this once famous horseman from his property in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Kentucky. Only the Riddle Memorial Hospital in Media,
Pennsylvania remains as a reminder of the man. The Man O’ War grave-site in Lexington, Kentucky remains as a remembrance of the horse. Circumstantial evidence indicates that there might be a connection between the Samuel Riddle line and our William Riddle family in Scotland.

**Sir John Riddle Our Ancestor?**

**Part II**

Richard Riddle

This is the second installment of the Sir John Riddle article that appeared in the December 1999 issue, which explored the possibility, raised by Dr. Walter Wayne Smith, of Moscow, Idaho, that our ancestor John W. Riddle was descended from Sir John Riddell, the first Baronet of Riddell of Riddell, Roxburghshire, Scotland.

In July 1999, I had the pleasure of meeting David and Maryann Presnell while they were visiting the Burnsville and Pensacola, North Carolina area. David and Maryann live near Houston, Texas in The Woodlands. David was featured in a previous *Riddle Newsletter* article, June 1999 titled Unknown Cousins By The Dozens. It was the story of David’s search for his ancestors.

At that time, I met another cousin, Lowell T. Presnell of Burnsville, North Carolina who recently published a book titled Mines, Miners and Minerals. Lowell’s book deals with the mines and mineworkers in Yancey County. David and Lowell are descendants of two Presnell brothers, Harrison and Amos who married the Riddle sisters, Lillia and Althea. They were daughters of Lewis Riddle son of John W. Riddle, Jr. born 1799.

During our visit, I discovered that Maryann and David had researched the early Riddle line that originated in Normandy, France then moved to Scotland and finally to North America.

In early January, I received information from David and Maryann that tends to support a portion of the information in the December 1999 article about connecting our Riddle line to Sir John Riddell of Roxburghshire, Scotland.

The information contained copies of International Genealogical Index (IGI) records from the Church of Jesus Christ Latter-Day Saints (LDS) Salt Lake City website. One of the charts traces our Riddle line back to the birth of Roricon, Count of Maine in the year of 790 in Maine, France.

He is the father of Wulgrim De Angouleme, 835-886. On page 45 of G.T. Ridlon’s History of the Ancient Ryedales and Their Descendants in Normandy, Great Britain, Ireland, and America he is referred to as Wulgrim or Walgrinus Ridel. Ridlon identifies Walgrinus as the first generation of the
Riddells of Normandy and the Ardnamurchan family line. He states that Walgrinus became the Earl of Angouleme and married Rosaliuda daughter of Bernard, Duke of Aquitaine.

Most of David and Maryann's information generally agree with Ridlon's book. There are some minor differences in the spelling of names and places plus dates but this is consistent with this type of research.

Glen and Verda Grover of Layton, Utah is the source of much of this information and are probably professional genealogical researchers. In addition, some Family Group Records and Pedigree Charts were provided of the lineage from 790 up to 1600. This information adds considerable detailed records to that provided by Dr. Smith.

A few inconsistencies still exist. There appears to be a conflict concerning when and where William, born 1603, the 2nd son of Sir John, married and the number children he sired. One record indicates that William married Windelina Van Bucham, born about 1607 in Holland. They were married in 1633 in Desborough, Holland and they had two children, a daughter Anna Catherine born about 1634 and a son Richard born circa 1636.

Both children were born in Holland and no other children are listed. This record seems to agree with page 70, of Ridlon's book. Ridlon states that this William became the Governor of Desborough, Holland. Ridlon gives the identical name for William’s daughter but claims they had other children but mentions no names.

Another document explains that a William Riddle married Windelina Van Bucham approximately 1685 in Maryland and gives her date of birth as roughly 1664. Is it possible this could be the William Riddle born about 1663? It also claims that they had a son named Walter born about 1686 in Maryland. This is all very confusing, too many Williams and Walters.

Let's play the what if game and consider this. Let’s theorize that William, born in 1603 the 2nd son of Sir John, was the father of a son born between 1633 and 1640. His name could have been Richard, William, or Walter. The generation time rule is the average time from the birth of the father until the birth of 1st son. Based on the research of my Riddle family, I have found that the generation time rule is an average of 25-30 years. Applying this rule to a father born between 1633 and 1640, his son would have been born between 1658 and 1665 or between 1663 and 1670.

Could this be the link or the William for which we are searching? Did this William have a brother named Walter? If we presume, this William had sons named Walter and William and that these two returned from Holland and settled in New Jersey then Dr. Smith’s theory looks more promising.

It then becomes plausible that this William could have acquired land in Maryland and fathered sons James, Walter, and William.
There is also an IGI record of a William who had a son Walter born in Maryland about 1686. Other records show that a Walter had sons Basil Riddell born in 1720 in Maryland, Julus Riddell born 1725 in Maryland and Zacheriah Riddle born 1735 in Loudon County, Virginia.

Another record suggests that Basil Riddle had a son Samuel born approximately 1763, in Accomack County, North Carolina. This contains a few errors. The first error is the date of birth and the second is the place of birth. On page 350 of Ridlon’s book, we find the Riddles of Accomack County, Virginia. Basil Riddle is the first generation and he settled in Accomack County, Virginia.

He has one child listed named Samuel whom he says was probably born in North Carolina. Ridlon also claims that Samuel had sons George and Randolph. It is known from the wife and children listed by Ridlon for this Randolph that he was born somewhere around 1762 and is the brother of our John W. Riddle, Sr. born about 1764. For more information on this Randolph Riddle, see the article Randolph Riddle Book in this issue, which refers to Ed Riddle’s book about the Randolph Riddle family.

Dr. Smith reports Basil Riddle, born circa 1720 moved to Accomack County, Virginia and had a son Samuel born about 1740. Samuel Riddle had sons George, Randolph, John, and Tyre. John and Tyre were added because of additional information.

Although David can trace his lineage back to 790 the following only goes back to John Riddle born 1576.

The research conducted by David and Maryann is very much appreciated and as mentioned tends to support the information collected by Dr. Walter Wayne Smith. Following my meeting with David and Maryann in July 1999, they visited England and Scotland in September where they were told that the Riddells of Roxburgh, Scotland wore the Roxburgh tartan because the Riddles were baronets.

The tartan is a beautiful combination of soft colored red, green, blue, and white squares and is still made with vegetable dyes that give it a softer shade than those made with chemical dyes. David and Maryann had a tie and scarf made from this tartan and I hope they where them the next time we meet.

The Riddells of Glen-Riddell, Scotland

Richard Riddle

Samuel Riddle, of Ireland (see the article Sam Riddle And Man O’ War) immigrated to the United States in 1842 where he eventually purchased property at Pennsgrove, in Delaware County, Pennsylvania about 15 miles from Philadelphia. This property he named Glen Riddle in honor of his ancestral line from the Riddells of Glen Riddells, Scotland.

Within the next 30 years, Samuel Riddle expanded Glen Riddle to include a 6,000-acre estate, five large mills, more than two hundred dwellings, a town with post office, and 5,000 employees. The following article is about the ancestors of Samuel Riddle.
Walter Riddell, the first baronet of Glen-Riddell, was the son of William Riddell of Friarshaw and the grandson of Sir Walter, the second Baronet of the Riddell of Riddell. (See Riddell of Roxburghshire mentioned in the article Sir John Riddle Our Ancestor? Part II in this issue.) He purchased an estate called Gilmerston before 1704 and renamed it Glen-Riddell.

Glen-Riddell was located near the river Cairne, in the parish of Glencairne, Dumfrieshire, Scotland. He and his wife, Catherine married in 1694 and made Glen-Riddell their residence. They had at least three sons, Robert, John, and Walter or possibly William.

**Second Generation**

Robert Riddell, eldest son of Walter, succeeded his father to Glen-Riddell. He married Jane, daughter of Alexander Ferguson, and they had a numerous family of sons and daughters. One authority says three sons and seven daughters. Little is known about the sons of Robert. Some researchers believe that they migrated to America by the way of Ireland.

Jane, Robert’s wife, had a grandmother named Annie. She was the daughter of Sir Robert Laurie, Baronet of Maxwelton and Jeane Riddell. Annie is believed to be Annie Laurie the subject of the celebrated Scottish song. (See the article The Story of Annie Laurie in this issue.)

**Third Generation**

Annie Riddell, the eldest daughter of Robert Riddell of Glen-Riddell, married Walter Riddell of Newhouse. This Walter is believed to have been a cousin and a descendant of the Riddels of Roxburghshire. Glen-Riddell passed to her and Walter.

**Forth Generation**

Robert Riddell, eldest son of Walter and Annie Riddell of Glen-Riddell and Newhouse, succeeded to his mother’s property. Mr. Riddell distinguished himself as an author of ancient history.

He published several articles and books such as A Dissertation on Ancient Modes of Fortifications in Scotland and The Petrified Fortifications of Scotland. He was a member of the Philosophical Society of Manchester, and a Fellow of the Antiquarian Societies of Edinburgh and London.

He was also patron of Robert Burns, the poet, and is frequently mentioned by him in his poems. As an example, Burns mentions Mr. Riddell in his poem called the “Whistle.”

“Three joyous good fellows, with hearts clear of flaw
Craingdorroch, so famous for wit, worth, and law,
And trusty Glen-Riddell, so skilled in old coins,
And gallant Sir Robert, deep read in old wines.”
The “Whistle” is about a Dane, who challenges the “Three joyous good fellows”, Robert Riddell, Furguson of Craingdorroch, and Sir Robert Laurie, to a wine drinking contest.

If any one could out drink the Dane and blow on his little ebony whistle, he could keep the whistle. The whistle changed hands in the following contests and ended up in the hands of the descendants of Furguson.

Mr. Riddell died April 21, 1794 and had no children. His property passed on to other relatives and now is no longer in the Riddell family.

Jean Riddell was the eldest daughter of Walter of Minto, Scotland, descendant of the Riddells of Newhouse and Roxburghshire. She married Sir Robert Laurie, first Baronet of Maxwelton.

They had three sons and four daughters. One of Jean Riddell and Robert’s daughters was named Annie Laurie. She was famed for her beauty and captivated a Mr. Douglas, of Fingland. He composed in her honor the well-known verses, which are still so popular in the Scottish song “Annie Laurie.”

These verses are written in 1700 English/Scottish language without editorial spelling corrections.

Maxwelton braes are bonnie
Where early fa’s the dew,
And it’s there that Annie Laurie
Gie’d me her promise true--
Gie’d me her promise true,
Which ne’er forgot will be;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I’ll lay me downe and dee.
Her brow is like the snaw-drift;
Her throat is like the swan;
Her face it is the fairest
That e’er the sun shone on--
That e’er the sun shone on--

And dark blue is her ee;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I’ll lay me downe and dee
Like dew on the gowan lying
Is the fa’ o’ fairy feet;
And like the winds in summer sighing,
Her voice is low and sweet--
Her voice is low and sweet--
And she’s a’ the world to me;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I’ll lay me downe and dee.

Annie Laurie was not won by Mr. Douglas’s poetry. She became the wife of Mr. Furguson, of Craigdoroch. Since Annie was one-half Riddell, I am sure Mr. Furguson made her a better offer.

The following verses have added editorial explanation of the ancient word intent and spelling variation.

Maxwelon braes[1] are bonnie [2]
[1] braes: the steep bank bounding a river valley; slop; hillside; bra brown
[2] bonnie: good looking; handsome; pretty
Where early fa’s [3] the dew,
[3] fa’s: falls
And it’s there that Annie Laurie
Gie’d [4] me her promise true--
[4] Gie’d: Scottish, to give
Gie’d me her promise true,
Which ne’er [5] forgot will be;
[5] ne’er: never
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I’ll lay me downe [6] and dee [7].
[7] dee: Scottish, die
Her brow is like the sna’ [8] drift;
[8] sna’: snow
Her throat is like the swan;
Her face it is the fairest
That e’er [9] the sun shone on--
[9] e’er: ever
That e’er the sun shone on--
And dark blue is her ee;[10]
[10] ee: Scottish, eye
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I’ll lay me downe and dee
Like dew on the gowan lying
[11] gowan: Scottish, white or yellow wild flowers
Is the fa’ o’ fairy [12] feet;
fa’: fay,a fairy
And like the winds in summer sighing,
Her voice is low and sweet--
Her voice is low and sweet--
And she’s a the world to me;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I’ll lay me downe and dee.

Robert Burns

James Riddle Hoffa Part II
Richard Riddle

In the June 1999 issue of the *Riddle Newsletter*, I published an article about the Riddle connection of James Riddle Hoffa. In that article, I reported on the information that I had received from Tammy Hoffa. Tammy Hoffa is the great-granddaughter of Viola Riddle, Jimmy Hoffa’s mother. Based on the information supplied by Tammy, Viola Riddle was born January 1, 1890 in Indiana.


Tammy Hoffa’s grandfather was William Henry Hoffa. Sources give the date of James Riddle Hoffa’s birth as 1913 in Brazil, Indiana. Most of you are familiar with the story of James Riddle Hoffa, former President of the Teamsters Union and his disappearance in 1975.
The purpose of this article is to correct some misinformation. Tammy had received information via e-mail that Viola “Ola” Riddle’s father was Thomas Roger Riddle, son of Isaac Roger Riddle, s/o Isaac William Riddle, s/o William “the Tory” Riddle. This was reported in the June 1999 article.

Current information indicates that Thomas Roger Riddle did indeed have a daughter named Viola born April 2, 1875. This Viola married James Oscar Walker on January 8, 1893 and they are reported to have had six children. This Viola died May 16, 1953. According to a great great granddaughter, she is buried in the Damascus Cemetery in Mt. Pleasant, Texas.

Other Riddle researchers have pointed out that the lineage of Thomas Roger Riddle to William “the Tory” Riddle as indicated above may be in error. That issue will be left to others for resolution.

Randolph Riddle Book

Richard Riddle

Ed Riddle of Georgetown, Texas has finished writing his book about his Randolph Riddle family line. Randolph Riddle (1762-1833) is a brother Tyre Riddle and John W. Riddle, Sr. (1764-1844).

About the time that John moved west from Stokes County to the current Yancey County, his brother Randolph had moved to Tennessee. From Tennessee this branch migrated and finally settled in Texas.

Ed and his wife Dot visited Burnsville and Pensacola in August 1995 and attended the Benjamin Ervin Riddle Reunion.

Ed and I have exchanged information about the Riddle family for years. Ed is a vigilant researcher and an excellent writer and I feel that many will want to obtain a copy of his book titled A Bicentennial Overview - One Riddle Family.”

His book will be roughly 350 pages, contain 60 photos, and will be 6” by 9” in size with hard covers. He estimates the cost to be less than $25.00 plus tax and shipping. Ed would like to know how many people might like a copy so he will know approximately how many books to have printed. There will be only one printing so contact Ed at the following address to be certain you obtain yours.

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