

### 3. The Boltons and the Hatfields

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Houseofnames.com traces the Bolton name to the Lancashire and Yorkshire area of England, where it exists as a place name. I know considerably less about the original home of the Bolton side of our family than I do of the Arbuckles.

Bill Bolton once told me that three Bolton brothers came west from Pennsylvania and followed the coal fields, eventually ending up in Western Kentucky. My own genealogical research takes the family back to the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Maryland, when James J. Bolton came to Bullitt County, Kentucky (near Louisville). He had 6 sons, among them William, James J., Jr. and George Washington Bolton. William was Heaverin Earl (Papaw) Bolton's grandfather. He married Elizabeth **Flake** on February 6, 1846 in Bullitt County, and Elizabeth Flake is listed as the mother of Sarah Ann Bolton in the Kentucky Birth Records for 1848. His sons included Felix Bolton, Papaw's father, and Perry M. Bolton. Elizabeth is listed as William Bolton's wife in the 1860 US Census record, but there are puzzling tick marks for both adults in the column indicating they were "Married within the year." Two other brothers of William Bolton are listed on the same page. James J. Bolton, Jr. is found there with wife Catharine **Flick**, whom he married on December 20, 1836, and George Washington Bolton with his wife Elizabeth Brooks, whom he married August 23, 1838. Thus, all 3 of these brothers were living close together in the Bells District of Ohio County, Kentucky in 1860, each with wives named Elizabeth or Catharine.

On the 1923 death certificate of Felix Bolton's younger brother, Perry M. Bolton, Perry's son Orlando gave his mother's maiden name as Elizabeth **Hatfield**. When Heaverin (Papaw) Bolton's father, Felix, died in 1930, Papaw indicated on his death certificate that Felix's mother was Kate **Hatfield**. There are several possibilities for the discrepancies given by the cousins Orlando and Heaverin Bolton for their grandmother's first names. One is that the full name of William Bolton's wife was Elizabeth Catharine (or Catharine Elizabeth) Flick (or Flake). Another is that Heaverin and/or his cousin Orlando simply mixed up the names of William's and James J. Bolton, Jr.'s wives. Yet another possibility is that the original Elizabeth, wife of William, died before 1860, and William Bolton did indeed marry a second woman with first name Elizabeth Hatfield shortly before the 1860 census was taken. [Incidentally, I never found a record of the marriage of William to Elizabeth/Catharine Hatfield or to America Moore, another presumed wife after Elizabeth.]

Some in the Bolton family line have long believed that we are related to the Hatfields of the famous Kentucky Hatfield/McCoy feud, but that link is doubtful. Did the belief in the Hatfield connection come from the respective wives of William and James J., Jr., who had similar last names (Flake and Flick), but were referred to as Hatfields by Heaverin and Orlando Bolton? The Flick and Flake names possibly do hold the key to a true Hatfield connection. Catharine Flick is often listed as Catharine Hatfield in family records on Ancestry.com. Many of the family trees have Catharine Flick identified with Catharine "Kitty" Hatfield, daughter of Elias Hatfield, Sr. In the same household is a male, William Flick Hatfield, who is alternately listed as James Wilson Flick "Wax" Hatfield and sometimes as Wilson Flake. While there are official records with different combinations of his name, the fact that he shares the surname

Flick or Flake with the wives of William and James Bolton provides a link to the Hatfields. The Flick/Flake (and even Fleck) family name is mixed up with Elizabeth Hatfield in many genealogical records. An Elizabeth Flick is listed as head of a family with 3 white males 45 years of age or older in the 1820 census for Shepherdsville, Bullitt County, KY. This information is on the same page as the entry for James Bolton that shows 4 white males ages 45 or older. If I have the information right, then some of the Boltons moved from Bullitt County to Ohio County during the next few decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Supporting the Hatfield connection is my original DNA test on Ancestry.com that showed a 70% chance of a close relationship with a James Wilson Flick Hatfield. It also revealed a strong link to Elias Hatfield, Catharine and James (Flick) Hatfield's presumed father. A more recent search for my DNA matches on Ancestry.com retrieved 20 people with the Hatfield surname.

Papaw Bolton's father, Felix, married Tabitha Curtis in Ohio County, KY on October 11, 1875. In 1880 they were living in Centertown, Ohio County, KY. By 1920 the US Census shows they were in Small House, Ohio County, KY, the same place where my mother, Nell, was born that year. Sometime after her oldest sister, Aunt Marg, was born in Ohio County in March 1922, Papaw and Mamaw (Corrine Dennis) Bolton moved to Central City, KY and lived in the house near Grandad George Dennis's farm where the rest of their children were born.



Heaverin Bolton Working at a Furniture Factory (in Louisville?)

The Boltons stayed in Central City or around that area of Muhlenberg County for quite a few years, certainly until the end of World War II. Papaw ran a river ferry on Green River part of that time. What brought the Boltons to the Louisville, KY area after the war was undoubtedly jobs.

I think they lived for a while in Louisville before moving to a dingy apartment in Charlestown, IN. The apartment was called Bohnenberger's Apartments, and it was on the second floor above an auto supply store close to where Highway 3 intersects Highway 62. Next, they lived on Tunnel Mill Road on land owned by the McKinneys, and finally in 1950 they purchased the nearly 7 acres of land to the north of Charlestown that remained in our family until we sold it around 2003.

Earlier I alluded to some trouble that Bill Bolton had gotten himself into. He and some boys "borrowed" a car in Central City and drove it across the Ohio River into Indiana, where they were caught and locked up, I believe in Rockport. Crossing the state line with stolen property was a big deal, even in the early 1940s, so Bill faced a potentially stiff sentence. L E traveled to Indiana to help him out, apparently with some success, since the sentence was eventually suspended. However, the stipulation was that Bill had to enter the service. For whatever reason, he was rejected by the Muhlenberg County Board No. 127 as physically unfit. When the matter reached the US District Court in Indianapolis in August 1944, the Honorable Robert C. Baltzell ruled ". . . since the boy was sentenced, and the sentence suspended to pave the way for his induction, and has now been rejected, that the case is closed. This is partly based on the fact that the boy did all he could to follow the orders of the court." The probation officer concluded the letter with the hope that ". . . he has learned his lesson and that his future behavior will be such that he will never run afoul of the law." Unfortunately, that was not to be the case.

Although no genealogical links to Devil Anse Hatfield's clan were ever found, some of the Boltons do seem to have shared Devil Anse's meanness and terrible temper, even some of those who married into the Bolton family. Felix's wife, Tabitha Curtis Bolton, was said to have been so mean that she would take Felix's Sunday go-to-meeting suit and dip it in the flour barrel to keep him from going to church. She would also take the stove tops off the cook stove and sit on them to keep Felix from fixing himself some food. Mom's sister, Alberta Bolton Kelley, was sometimes compared to Tab.

Papaw's brother, Herman, and his wife Bertha, who lived in Small House, KY in 1920, also moved to Central City. Uncle Herman was 19 years older than Papaw, and he had some of the temper tantrums that were evident in other Bolton offspring. Mom told me that when Aunt Berthy was pregnant with one of their children, Uncle Herman would grab a shotgun, hold the barrel to her stomach, and shout, "I'll blow that bastard out of there!" During the time I knew them, however, such madness was never exhibited, and I remember him only as a soft-spoken old man who liked to tell tall tales. Aunt Berthy was a sweet old fat woman, and it was hard to imagine that she might have committed any offense that fed Uncle Herman's suspicions he had been cuckolded. The last time I saw them around 1958, they were living in poverty in a little shack at the top of the hill that was up the road from Grandad Dennis's farm and near Sue Brasher's place that bordered the land where L E and Seabay made their home.

Some of the names in our family may imply unknown connections to other families. Bill Bolton's full name was William *Paxton* Bolton. A Paxton family was in Muhlenberg Co., KY in the 19<sup>th</sup> c., but I found no link to them. A Heaverin family was also in this part of Kentucky, but what led Felix and Tabitha to name my grandfather *Heaverin* Earl Bolton, no one knows. As a final note, a Bolton family member shared one of the many names that Aunt Seabay bore. She is Felix Bolton's grandmother, Sabatha Hill Curtis, who is sometimes listed as Seba. Some people in our family spell Seabay's name that way today.

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