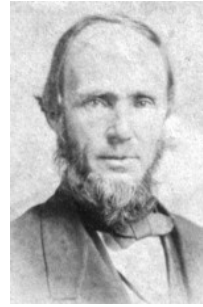


The Louisville, Kentucky branch of the Courtenay Family



[John Henry Courtenay picture]



[Robert Graham Courtenay picture]

The following 1959 memoir by William Howard Courtenay (1890-1960) is an historical account of the nineteenth and early twentieth century American descendants of John Henry Courtenay. William Howard Courtenay was the great grandson of John Henry Courtenay. John Henry Courtenay was the son of John Courtenay (1733-1798) and Jane Rhames (m. 1764, d. 1814), both of Newry, Ireland.

John Henry Courtenay (d. 1823) had a first son, John (b. circa 1801), from a first marriage to Esther Rhames of Dublin, Ireland (m. April 7, 1795). His second marriage was to Anna Maria Graham, formerly of Liverpool, England.

John and Anna Maria had three children: a first daughter (name unknown), a son named Robert Graham (b. 1813 Dublin, d. 1864), and a second daughter, Emma (d. 1872 - Mrs. James B. Wilder). John Henry Courtenay emigrated from Newry, Ireland to the United States circa 1818. John Henry Courtenay came to America aboard the ship "Achilles" sailing from Bristol, England and arrived Boston, MA and soon thereafter settled in Illinois. The family story is that he was a toll collector in Newry, Ireland [source: Patricia M. Rankin, West Palm Beach, FL].

Two prominent American Courtenay lines have descended from sons John Courtenay (son, first marriage) and Robert Graham Courtenay (son, second marriage).

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A Memoir by William Howard Courtenay, 1959



[William Howard Courtenay picture]

As I have been requested to assemble what we have learned of our Courtenay ancestors, this simple putting together of fragments from the past will cover only the period since my great-grandfather came to America. Writing only for family perusal, I shall write in the first person using the family names of persons mentioned.

The following list of names used might help to give more definite identification:

- **Aunt Isabel — Isabel Clark C. — wife of William Howard Courtenay**
- **Grandpa Courtenay — Robert Graham — son of John Henry and Anna Marie C.**
- **My father — Thomas Anderson — son of Robert Graham and Annie C. Howard C.**
- **Grandma — Annie Christian — wife of Robert Graham Courtenay**
- **Emma — daughter of Anna Maria Graham and John Henry Courtenay**
- **Tom — Dr. Thomas A. — son of Wm. H. Courtenay, II and Mary Tisdale Anderson**
- **Aunt Emma — daughter of Robert Graham and Annie Christian Courtenay**

Aunt Isabel, who was the only one of the family who had real ability in writing genealogy, has given to posterity a splendid record of the Courtenay and some of the allied families in charts, and also printed articles in books which will be listed later. We owe a real debt of gratitude to her. Aunt Emma was the only other member of the family who was interested in keeping records pertaining to the family, and she has handed down to us some very interesting and revealing bits of information in note books.

John Henry Courtenay of "Courtenay Hill," Newry, Ireland which is in County Down, North Ireland came to America bringing with him his second

wife who was Anna Maria Graham, a member of a shipbuilding family in Liverpool, England, a son John by his first wife, a daughter, name unknown, a (5 year old?) son named Robert Graham, and an infant daughter Emma. (It seems probable that she was born after reaching Illinois in 1818 as she was said to be 12 years old in 1830 when she was sent to England to be educated). John Courtenay said his father had been in the United States for 5 years when he died in 1823.

Our grandfather, Robert Graham Courtenay did not like his much older half brother John and it appears to have been mutual. John dropped out of the family entirely, starting a numerous one of his own which has had no contact with our branch except on one or two occasions which I may mention later.

Neither Grandpa Courtenay nor his sister Emma knew just how old they were, hence the various dates given in former accounts of the family. Circa 1813 has been accepted by both Aunt Isabel and Aunt Emma as the date of birth of Robert G. Courtenay who stated in his application for naturalization papers filed in 1844 that he was brought to this country by his father when he was less than 8 years old.

It is surprising how Aunt Emma's terse notes are corroborated by contemporary English travelers to Illinois. Two English farmers, Morris Birkbeck and Richard Flower bought the Boltenhouse prairie in Southern Illinois and established what has become known as the English Prairie Settlement. Aunt Emma writes, "The Courtenay and Graham families and others were persuaded by a man named Flower to come to Illinois where they could have large estates, I think about 1817 or 1818." George Flower (son of Richard) wrote a history of the settlement in which he says, "Our call had received a response from the farmers of England, the miners of Cornwall, the Grovers of Wales, the mechanics of Scotland, the West Indian planter, the inhabitants of the Channel Isles, and the Gentlemen of no particular business of the Emerald Isle." Later on he says, "Early in March 1818 the ship Achilles sailed from Bristol with the first party of emigrants destined for our settlement in Illinois." ... "For a moment let us glance at the situation of these settlers, a thousand miles inland at the heels of the retreating Indians, a forest from the Atlantic shore behind them, but thinly settled with small villages far apart from each other. To the west, one vast uninhabited wilderness of prairie interspersed with timber extending two thousand miles to the Pacific Ocean...One or two small American settlements were forming a few miles east of the Mississippi as we were planting ourselves a few miles west of the Wabash."



[Emma Courtenay (Mrs. James B. Wilder) picture]

Aunt Emma says, "The hardships of pioneer life were too much for them. A daughter died from the bite of a snake or a spider." William Faux, a well-to-do English farmer made a rather extensive tour of the United States east of the Mississippi and wrote a book in which he tells of sitting in his hotel in Washington, DC, reading his newspaper on August 30, 1819. "By the papers today, I see that Miss Courteney, the daughter of an emigrant in Mr. Birkbeck's settlement was killed in a few hours by the bite of a huge spider such as I saw in Carolina, scattering thousands of eggs in my path. It seized the unfortunate lady on her forehead; no cure could be had of the Indian or other doctors. Her head swelled to an enormous size, and after her death was livid all over. The herb called the Plantago is said to be a remedy if applied in time."

Strangely enough, we have no account from the family respecting the death of Anna Maria Graham, wife of John Henry Courtenay; and she is our great-grandmother who helped even gave her life - to establish our branch of the family in America.

But another Englishman, John Woods spent two years on the English Prairie and wrote a book in which he tells of that part of his trip from Shawneetown on the Ohio River, "The next day we intended to commence our journey...towards the prairies although the news just received from thence was unfavorable, that of three deaths, the wife of an Irish Gentlemen and two Englishmen." (From entry in his Journal dated September 21, 1819), the baby, Emma Courtenay, was turned over to her mother's sister, Mrs. Emma Sorgenfrey, for whom she evidently was named.

Flower in his history says, "Mr. Robert Grayham (formerly an English merchant), a gentleman who spoke the French language fluently...was at the time living with his brother-in-law, Mr. Sorgenfrey in a prairie west of the Little Wabash. Their former habits not suiting them to prairie life, Mr. Sorgenfrey went to Carmi."

I think the Courtenays, Sorgenfreys and Grahams were all there together at a place called Belgrade which might be the name of a prairie - they had names. The only Belgrade, Illinois I have been able to find is Netropolis, Illinois - formerly called Belgrade (Audobon's Sketches). One glance at the map will show that the Belgrade of the Courtenays is in an entirely different location.

It was sometime during 1822 that Mr. George Flower employed Robert Grayham (Flower spells it Grayham, just as Grandma and all her children always pronounced it) to go to Haiti to investigate the feasibility of sending freed slaves and other free negroes there to live. Mr. Graham returned in October 1822. It is not known whether John Henry Courtenay and his two sons went to Carmi with the Sorgenfreys or not. Carmi is on the Little Wabash River and Belgrade evidently was also, but it was this river that John Henry Courtenay plunged into one March day in 1823 to rescue a boy who had gone under. A few days later he died of pneumonia, according to family tradition. Before he died he told his little son, Robert, now 10 years old, to go to Frankfort, Kentucky, to live with his Uncle and Aunt Mary Graham. Robert Graham had returned from New Orleans with a stock of merchandise with which to start in business when he was ready to quit the prairies.

The same Little Wabash River took our grandfather away from Illinois. Aunt Emma shows this entry in her book as coming from R. G. Courtenay's Memorandum Book: "Left Belgrade July 1823 for R. G.'s. Arrived in Frankfort, Sept. 1823."

My father loved to tell us the story his father told him so many times: Little Robert, 10 years old, tied two logs together with wild grapevines thus making a small raft. Taking his bulldog named Vixen and his rifle, he tied up his few belongings and went aboard, floating down the Little Wabash to the great Wabash River. Somewhere on this two month trip he saw a wild cat in a tree. He shot the cat, wounding it. The cat then sprang at him, landing at his feet. Immediately the dog grabbed the cat but the wildcat killed the dog just as Robert shot the cat and killed it. He cut the claws off and saved them for souvenirs. More than a century and a quarter later they are still saved.



[Robert Graham, Uncle of R.G. Courtenay picture]

Little is known of Grandpa's life in Frankfort, Kentucky. His Aunt Mary Graham taught him the 3 R's and was good to him in other ways. He was grateful to her and showed his gratitude was real by seeing to it that she was cared for in her later years. After Grandpa's death Grandma supplied a regular sum of money to Aunt Mary Graham until her death at Newport, Kentucky, where she had lived for years. No such affection seems to have existed between Grandpa and his Uncle Robert, for whom he was named. I hope to include a portion of a letter Grandpa wrote to Robert Graham in 1849 which tells about all that is known of the 6 years spent in Frankfort - but it belongs to the Louisville portion of this saga.

Aunt Emma gives another entry from Grandpa's Memorandum Book: "Left Frankfort for Louisville Sept. 7, 1829." He came to work for the wholesale auction house of Thomas Anderson & Co., at \$50 per year and his board and lodging. Aunt Emma says that he took his meals with the Anderson family and slept over the store. Louisville was the gateway for merchandise sold in the South in those days. Eastern merchants would ship to Anderson & Co., who would sell at auction to buyers from the South who came in large numbers to the advertised sales. From here goods went down the Ohio River to all points south. My father was told by a man who had worked for Anderson & Co. after Grandpa had become a member of the firm, that Mr. Courtenay would have the bill for a long list of goods ready to hand the bidder as soon as the last bid was closed, that no one could equal him on figures. An item in Aunt Emma's note book indicates that while Grandpa was employed at \$50 per year, he actually was paid \$100.

Mr. Anderson liked him well enough to later make him a partner in the firm.

And Grandpa liked Mr. Anderson so much that he named a son for him. But all this did not come overnight. He worked hard, studied hard, saved hard. I have heard nothing of his playing.

The next item from R. G. C.'s Memorandum Book is:

"Journed to Carmi Jany 1830-\$25." Then, "Emma Courtenay left Carmi for England March 1830."

The baby sister he had left in Illinois had become 12 years old (so I've always been told) and was to go to her Aunt Mary Georgina Graham who lived at No. 18 St. Paul's Terrace, Camden Town, London, to be educated. Then a boy about 17 years old, Grandpa rode horseback in January to Carmi, Illinois to tell Emma good-bye. I have a little leather-bound pocket memo book whose pages had been erased to be used over again, in which the expenses paid out on this trip were carefully put down. In the pocket of the little book is a paper carefully enfolding two little rings of tightly plaited hair - one light, the other dark. Written on the outside in the handwriting of Robert G. Courtenay is: "A token of Remembrance - 12 Jany 1830 - Emma Courtenay."

Little did they know that in 3 years he would be financially able to send for her, but she returned to America in August 1833. They boarded several places, but as a matter of record, in December 1836 they were boarding with Grandma Courtenay's relatives - the C. E. Beynroths, where Robert Graham Courtenay met Miss Annie Christian Howard.

There was for many years a very prominent girls school at Steubenville, Ohio.

To this school, Robert G. C. sent his sister Emma. I do not know for how long, but I have a memorandum which I believe I copied from the Hast Scrapbook in the Filson Club recording the marriage of James Bennet Wilder and Emma Courtenay on the 12th of March 1840 in Jefferson County, Ohio. Steubenville is in that county.

Robert G. Courtenay and Annie Christian Howard were married two years later.

The two couples lived side by side in a double house on Green Street (now Liberty) south side between Second and Third Streets which was then a good residential neighborhood, later each moving to larger and more pretentious quarters as they prospered and their respective families grew in size.

This leaves only the half brother John to account for. He had a recorded birth date, was born June 25, 1801. Of him Aunt Emma says, "Robert G. Courtenay had an older half brother named John who married a plain woman, had a large family who went down." She also says he had 14 children and he died Sept. 16, 1864, and that he married against his father's wishes. In a letter to Grandpa written in 1863 John mentions among other things that his son Edward had moved to Iowa.

One day at noon I returned to my hotel room in Nashville, Tenn., and found a note on my dresser from a Mrs. Marshall, housekeeper at the hotel, saying that she was a Courtenay - her father was Joseph Heep Courtenay, and that she would like to meet me. I got in touch with her and we had a nice talk. She knew nothing of her ancestor John, but said her father had visited the Wilders in Louisville and Mrs. Wilder after talking with him told him he was spelling his name the wrong way. So, ever since, her own family had spelled it the way we do. She told of Joseph Heep Courtenay living in Ottumwa, Iowa when she was a girl, that he was one of a large family of children who had been scattered when young so that they did not know each other. Later in life as many as eight brothers and sisters had found each other, but neither her father nor any others knew whether that completed the list. I like to think (and I believe) that Mrs. Marshall was a granddaughter of the Edward who moved to Iowa.

My father told us of a boy, descendant of John Courtenay, who visited them when he, Father, was a boy. He was rough looking and very poorly dressed. Father did not remember much about him except that Grandma gave the boy one of his shirts to replace the dirty one the boy was wearing. This could have been Joseph Heep Courtenay.

Many years later someone made a demand on my illustrious uncle, William Howard Courtenay, whose name I proudly bear, claiming the fortune of "Sir John Courtenay," saying that he was a descendant of the eldest son who should have inherited the fortune. He was promptly set straight in no uncertain terms and nothing more was heard of it.

This about completes the story of the "Prairie Years" except to mention that both Grandpa and half brother John died the same year, 1864, just before the close of the Civil War. Much has been written about the English Settlement in Edwards County, Illinois. Morris Birkbeck and the Flower family became estranged in the very early days of the Settlement. They divided the property and each formed a separate settlement near each other. Birkbeck called his Wanborough - and Flower called his Albion, the ancient name for England. There is nothing left of Wanborough except Birkbeck's well, sitting by itself in a field. Albion became a pretty little city or town located 25 miles south of Olney, Illinois and is the home of the Edwards County Historical Society which is just as proud of Morris Birkbeck as it is of George Flower who was the guiding spirit in building up the permanent settlement. The Courtenays and Grahams stuck with the Flowers who had induced them to come to America, although no land records of Edwards County show an entry in the Courtenay name.

Just as an echo from the dim, distant past into which we have been delving, my son Tom was in the wedding of Miss Elizabeth Flower of Winnetka, Illinois in 1957, nearly 140 years from that day in 1818 when the Birkbeck and Flower

emigrants set sail for America. Mr. Wallace Flower, a direct descendant of Richard Flower, was surprised that Tom knew about and had been to Albion. Mrs. Flower, the genealogist in the family was delighted to hear about the Courtenay connection with the English Prairie.

Bibliography:

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- o **William Faux - Memorable Days in America**
- o **John Woods - Two Years Residence on the English Prairie**

When Robert Graham Courtenay married Annie Christian Howard on October 3, 1842, a family was started which has been favorably known in Louisville business and social circles for well over a century now. The two persons were very different in many ways including a disparity in age.

(Grandma always spoke of Grandpa as Mr. Courtenay) but two things they had in common were unhappy childhoods and very old English bloodlines going back to the Magna Charta and before. Of the 17 Barons of Runnymede who were known to have left issue, Grandpa could be traced back to 6 of them at least and Grandma to at least three.

John Howard, father of Annie Christian, came to Kentucky in 1800 from Montgomery County, Maryland and settled on a farm about five miles from Louisville on a lane or road leading off the present Taylorsville Road opposite Bowman Field Airport. The road is now called Bon Air Avenue.

Grandma was born in the large two-story log house on the farm. John Howard is buried in the family burying ground which was reserved for family use when the farm was sold. It is now perhaps less than half the quarter-acre original size and is situated at the junction of Bon Air and Goldsmith Lane almost directly behind the Speed farm, Farmington - the Howard's nearest neighbor. I have seen only one marked grave there, that of "Aminta, Relict of C. E. Beynroth." I last saw the house about the middle 1930's. It had been vacant for years and in a state of dilapidation. The farm is covered with modern houses now and surrounded by subdivisions.

His son, Luther Howard, is quoted as saying that John Howard came to Kentucky with \$1,200, a new wagon, four horses and three slaves. Also that he was a serious man who talked very little with his children. Twenty-five years later his tax assessment covered a farm of 209 acres of first rate Jefferson County Beargrass land, nine horses and 33 negroes with a total assessment value of \$17,327.00. He came with his bride, Mary Latimer, whom he married October 15, 1799 in Maryland. She died in 1810 leaving five children who left many descendants through the Howards, the Millers, the

Mardys and the Beynroths.

On February 4, 1819 John Howard married Annie Christian Bullitt, the daughter of his neighbor Alexander Scott Bullitt of Oxmoor. This second marriage from which we originate produced five children, three of whom lived to maturity. They were William Bullitt, Helen and Annie Christian Howard. Our grandmother was the youngest of John Howard's children, having a 25 year old half brother when she was born on February 1, 1825. Three years later her mother died. Her most intimate childhood companion was her sister Helen who was about two years older than she, but she was always fond of her brother William who was four years her senior. He moved to Missouri when he grew up but kept in touch with Grandma through correspondence and visits the rest of his life.

When Helen, to whom Grandma was so devoted, died she was crushed with grief and loneliness. In less than a year she married while she was seventeen years old. Her half sister Aminta had always been good to her, teaching her to read and write. Grandma would write "poetry" and notes to Aminta and she would write back with criticism and corrections for Grandma to read. I have not heard of any formal education for Grandma.

In spite of loneliness in a large family much older than herself, with a father for whom she seemed to hold no affection, Grandma had robust health and a wonderful sense of humor throughout her 87 years. She dropped the Howard from her name and became Annie Christian Courtenay for the rest of her life when she married Robert Graham Courtenay, born on the Irish Sea in 1813 - therefore some dozen years older than his bride. He was naturally serious, innately kind, scrupulously honest and a hard worker who came up the hard way. Both were brought up in the Episcopal Church. He remained a member of Christ Church Cathedral while she continued in the old St. Paul's Episcopal Church where she had sat with her Aunt Key. Grandpa was considered more deeply religious than Grandma by their daughter, Aunt Emma. They became the much beloved parents of the six of their eight children who lived past infancy, all calling them Ma and Pa pronounced Mow and Pow (to rhyme with cow). Two little boys Robert and Henry, are buried in the Oxmoor Cemetery. I was about grown before I found out that Oxmoor was not Grandma's childhood home. She talked of Oxmoor all her life. I did not hear her mention the Howard home. She seemed to consider Oxmoor home because she had spent so much of her life there in such congenial surroundings with the Bullitt kin. Even after she was the mother of several children it was to Oxmoor that she went when ill enough to be cared for by others.

About 1850 the Courtenays moved into a much larger house on the south

side of Chestnut Street between Seventh and Eighth Streets. This was the place called home by all the Courtenay children. Most of them were born in the Chestnut Street house which they occupied until 1872 when Grandma built the house on the hill she bought on Brownsboro Road. Chestnut was a new and fashionable street in the 1850s. Louisville put in a water works about this time and Grandpa was one of the first to have running water put into the house. Four servants, two women, a man and a boy did the household chores before the Civil War. The two women, Phillis and Caroline, were inherited by Grandma - they being children of John Howard's slaves.

Grandpa, like most Englishmen, abhorred slavery but as he wrote to someone of like sentiments, it was the only way one could have servants in a slaveholding State. Aunt Phillis was a much revered and beloved member of the household. She lived until 1887 when Aunt Emma made an entry in her memo book recording her death which occurred while the family was living on the Brownsboro Road. Phillis was called "Aunt Phillis" by the Courtenay children as a mark of respect shown to elder slaves. Caroline and the boy whose name I have not heard both ran away during the war. She was called Caroline by the children. After the war she came to see Grandma dressed up and wearing long yellow gloves to her elbows. When Grandma asked her why she ran away she replied, "Well, Miss Annie, I just wanted to be free."

Aunt Emma said the children all sided with the slaves on that question.

Aunt Emma also told of how her father would start out for market with Uncle Fortune walking behind him carrying a basket in which to bring home the groceries from the market houses which were then located in the center of Market Street. Uncle Fortune was the driver of the carriage and did the yard work. He and the horse were both commandeered during the war when the Federal forces in Louisville built the dozen defenses against General Bragg who was expected to lead the Confederate Army against Louisville.

When my father was a baby, Uncle Fortune made a cute little shuck bot-tomed chair for him which was kept in the kitchen by Aunt Phillis and has been called "Aunt Phillis's chair" to this day. It is now the property of the original owner's grandson and namesake, Thomas Anderson Courtenay, III.

It was in the Chestnut Street house that Grandpa spent a good deal of his spare time on Sunday afternoons working mathematical problems on the dining room table just for his amusement after he became Engineer of Louisville's first Gas Company, becoming President in 1853 following the death of its first president, L. L. Shreve. From this time until his death he held the two titles of President and Engineer. I have a printed monograph on the subject of illuminating gas which was written by him. Louisville was one of the

very earliest cities to adopt gas light - I think about the same time as Philadelphia.

Grandpa had great faith in the future of railroads which were comparatively new in his day. He was a director of two of them. Perhaps a very lucrative source of income in addition to his Gas. Co. office was the administration of private estates, notably those of Martin, Tenbroeck and Wentzel. Being a successful business man in whom implicit confidence would be placed he performed many of the duties that Trust Companies take care of today. He did not relinquish his partnership in the firm of Thomas Anderson & Co. until January 1, 1857 after spending 27 years with the firm.

Before he had become so well established in Louisville, Grandpa had received requests for help from his Graham relatives. His Uncle Robert and Aunt Mary Graham and the Sorgenfreys wanted to move to California in 1849 - not to hunt gold, but to raise chickens. His advice was sought with a view to obtaining the necessary financial help, no doubt. Grandpa advised against the trip but did not become disagreeable about it until he received his Uncle Robert's reply, extract from which I quote: "That I never received from you even a letter of thanks for taking you a poor orphan boy in Illinois, taking you with me to Frankfort there educating and teaching you your present business, and when I left Kentucky soliciting and obtaining for you a situation in the house in which you have gained independence." This was too much for Grandpa to swallow. The excerpt from his reply to Uncle Robert Graham which I shall quote tells about all that is known of his six years spent in Frankfort. "The education spoken of, you never gave me. Your friends might ask why you never sent me to school. Why you never spent one cent on the orphan boy's education and I might plead that I served you faithfully from the day you took me in charge, that my services more than compensated you for all this vaunted liberality of yours. The same duty I rendered you, you would have had to pay a stranger double all I cost you.

Yet I never considered this debt of gratitude fully settled, and this prompted me to offer yourself and wife a comfortable maintenance during the remainder of your days, and truly I own I always felt that to my aunt I owed more than to you, she was always kind to me.

I suppose you will state that you gave me a business education and this you must have meant when you spoke to your friends of education.

Then as to business qualities you endowed me with you at least must have valued them lightly for when Mr. Wm. G. Bakewell procured me the situation at the house of T. A. & Co. you told Mr. Thomas Anderson that I had everything to learn, and engaged my services to him for the trifling sum of

\$50 per annum with board and lodging. A perfectly green boy would have received this pay if wanted at all.

I always knew that I had to depend on my own efforts to obtain a living both while under your charge and after I left you. I also knew that I would remain extremely ignorant unless I obtained an education by my own perseverance and industry, and all my leisure hours in Louisville were spent in trying to obtain a smattering of education.

All my relations agree with me that you ought not go to California. This matter of opinion expressed to you in the most friendly manner seems to be the unpardonable offence that I have committed against you, an opinion too, expressly solicited by you."

The War between the States might have affected Grandpa more than was realized at the time. His private letter book indicated that he felt very keenly the damage the war was doing. The largest estate he was administering, that of John L. Martin, was largely located in the Mississippi delta. Grandma's brother, William Bullitt Howard, came with his family to refugee in Louisville, having been practically wiped out financially by the Jayhawkers and soldiers in Missouri and Kansas. At any rate, Grandpa's health failed and he died from a serious intestinal trouble October 1, 1864. Although only 51 years old he left his family comfortably provided for.

Aunt Emma has left this interesting memo:

"Pa died when I was ten years old. We were dressed in mourning two years from head to foot, even black hair ribbons. In summer the nuns made our dresses which were white with black spots."

Grandpa's death left a heavy burden of responsibility on his forty year old wife with six children to bring up, but Grandma made a splendid success of the undertaking. My mother said Grandma had more good old hard common sense than anyone she knew. That is high praise from a daughter-in-law. The adjustments in family life had to be made at the same time the country was adjusting to changed conditions resulting from the close of the Civil War which occurred a few months later. However, life in the Chestnut Street house seemed to be the happiest that the Courtenay children remembered in looking back over a life span. The house on Brownsboro Road had been more house than home. In the winter months they came into town and either rented or boarded. In June 1887 Grandma bought and moved into the Fourth Street house which became "Grandma's" to some thirty grand and great grand children. That part of Fourth Street was fashionable at the time and for long after.

On Sunday afternoons (in my own recollection) there was a steady stream of family and company coming and going all afternoon. The Fourth Street car line was the busiest one in town. In summer it carried the immense crowds to what we then called Jacobs Park, now Iroquois, as well as the baseball crowds to old Eclipse Park. The cars stopped in front of Grandma's for the fans to walk through the alley alongside her house. This is still called Baseball Alley and is so marked with street signs. Sunday was a great day for social calls before the advent of the automobile. This gave us grandchildren the opportunity to meet many of the older generation of Louisville society, but the streetcars were much more interesting to us.

Grandma was fortunate in having her two maiden daughters to keep house for her. In my day they presided over the house and servants. It was said that Grandma had never cooked a meal in her life. Even her daughters after her had never been without the benefit of servants throughout their entire lives. Aunt Emma and Aunt Nellie also took in some of the grandchildren when there was contagious disease among their brothers or sisters. Aunt Nellie was the beauty of the family but could not resist teasing us children. Aunt Emma was the society loving member of the household and went out a great deal. She was a remarkable person in many ways and a great favorite with the children.

Grandma had two hobbies - growing roses in her greenhouse, which nearly covered the back yard, and making silk quilts. The men saved silk ties for her to use in the beautiful crazy-quilts she made until she became so blind in her later years that she had to give up both hobbies. These three persons made up Grandma's household when I was a boy, so I do not mention her other children in this connection. The whole family was a clannish one, loyal and courteous to each other. I have not heard of meanness in any one of them.

One trait of the generation of Courtenays under discussion at present was their ability to handle money to advantage. They bought good quality when they bought and did not waste resources on things which they did not really want or need.

In 1891 Grandma contracted to sell to real estate developers who formed a corporation under the name of Courtenay Land Company the small acreage west of Louisville out the Dunkirk Road which she had inherited from her father. Grandpa had bought and added to it some adjoining acres and put a man on it as a tenant. This small farm then became a little more than self supporting. It was named Glen Annie in honor of Grandma. The contract price paid by Courtenay Land Co. was \$1,800 per acre. When John Howard's estate was distributed, the part of Glen Annie inherited by Grandma

was valued at only \$1,800. But this contract was some 50 years later. She realized ninety thousand dollars from the whole tract of about fifty acres. I have an old handbill advertising 100 first class building lots at auction by the Courtenay Land Co. "City lots at suburban prices." and "the Broadway, Chestnut, and Market & 18th St. cars direct to this property to be operated by electricity within six months." I also have an old survey map (N. B. Beale to John Howard) showing the boundaries of the land, part of which was inherited by Grandma. It was bounded on the north by Dundirk Road, west by Shippingport and Salt River Road, east by the Elizabethtown Turnpike Road. No name to the southern boundary.

Glen Annie could be located on a present day map as approximately Broadway to Garland Avenue, from 22nd Street to 26th Street. Through this area the streets running from east to west are Maple, Lewis (which formerly was Courtenay Street), and Howard. Just keep the record straight, Grandma had already sold a part of Glen Annie to Fred and Phill Stitzell - the 26th and Broadway end, leaving 48½ acres for Courtenay Land Co. The Stitzells paid either \$4,000 or \$6,000 for the corner they bought.

At this time (1892) Grandma sold the Brownsboro Road place, a large frame house on a hill of about 10 acres then occupied by her son Thomas A. Courtenay. The proceeds of the sale of these properties produced a sizeable capital to be invested. She bought residential property in a good residential area in the central part of Louisville. These houses were solid brick walls on stone foundations with metal roofs, commanding a good return in rent, most or all of them being three stories high.

Grandma with Aunt Emma and Aunt Nellie did a good deal of traveling.

Having already toured Europe with her son William Howard Courtenay after he had finished college, the three ladies made many trips around this country - mostly to the various watering places while the "Springs" were still popular (and numerous). Later Florida was visited several times. The daughters kept on taking trips after their mother's death until Aunt Nellie fell and broke her hip. These sisters had a quaint way of talking that strangers they met away from home lingered around them to listen. Grandma had an old fashioned way of speaking, too. In fact, they were still old fashioned even though electric lights had been put into the gas fixtures and of course a telephone installed. Grandma would never use it herself. They still burned coal in the fireplaces in each room and the range in the kitchen. Aunt Emma, who lived to be 93 years old (in 1947) always spoke of automobiles as carriages. None of the three ever lived in a house with central heating. A furnace could not be installed in their house because the inside walls were solid brick.



[Annie Christian Howard Courtenay picture]

Their great-grandson, Frederic H. Courtenay, has asked me to tell what Robert G. and Annie Christian Courtenay were like. I have tried. But perhaps I have not done justice to Grandma's sense of humor. One story she loved to tell on herself, always with a hearty laugh, was about the time she had sharply reproved Uncle Willie when he was a very small boy. He went out into the yard to feel sorry for himself. His brother Lewis, only one year older, went out to cheer him up by saying, "Don't pay no 'tention to her. Her ain't nothing but a old squinch-eyed cat." When Aunt Emma and Aunt Nellie were taking care of my twin brother Lewis and myself because of contagious disease at home, Grandma encouraged us to be impudent to our aunts. Lewis responded with pleasure which gave Grandma a good many laughs at her shocked daughters efforts to correct us.

Most of what I have written has been gained from Aunt Emma's papers which she turned over to me. For genealogical data I would refer you to the following Bibliography:

- o **Colonial Families of the U.S.A., Vol. II - 1920**
- o **History of Kentucky - S. J. Clark, Pub. Vol. III - 1928**
- o **Louisville Past and Present - M. Moblin & Co. - 1875**

**Wm. H. Courtenay
October 6, 1959**

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Robert Graham COURTENAY

Robert Graham Courtenay of Louisville, Kentucky was President of the Louisville Gas Company from 1853 until 1864, source: "The Courtenay Family - Some Branches in America", privately printed, Library of Congress #64-16958, 1963.

The following biography is reprinted from: "The Biographical Encyclopedia of Kentucky" published by J.M. Armstrong & Company, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1878 [A copy was located at the Huntsville Public Library, Huntsville, AL in 1993].

"Courtenay, Robert B., Merchant, was born in 1813, in Dublin Ireland, and, at the age of five, was brought to America by his parents. Losing his parents when young, he was reared by his uncle, at Frankfort, Kentucky. At the age of fourteen, he went to Louisville, and became a clerk in the house of T. Anderson & Co., on a small salary. By his fine business capacity he was advanced rapidly, and by his economy was soon able to apply his earnings to his advantage in the city. His successful outset met fully his highest expectations, and his business habits and strict integrity gained for him not only an unlimited credit, but also the highest respect and confidence of the community. In 1853, he was elected to the Presidency of the Louisville Gas Company; and, shortly after, became administrator of the extensive estate of his deceased friend, John L. Martin. The duties of these trusts compelled him to abandon mercantile pursuits entirely in 1857. He continued at the head of the affairs of the Gas Company until his death, and carried its workings to a high source of perfection. He was not only well informed on general topics of interest, but was decidedly scholarly in his attainments, possessing a large store of information on almost every subject. He was a man of earnest, independent convictions; was strong in his friendships; had uncommonly fine administrative ability; was characterized for his deep sense of justice, for his openness, liberality, and high moral character; and was one of the most popular, upright, influential men who have figured in the business history of Louisville. He died October 1, 1864. Mr. Courtenay was married, in 1842, to Miss Annie Howard, of Jefferson County, Kentucky, who, with their children - Julia C., Thomas A., Helen M., Emma W., Louis R., and William C. Courtenay - survived him." [Note: William C. Courtenay is a typographical error - it should read: William H. Courtenay]