

## Papers of Merlin James ('M. J.') Kelley (1903-1989)

By Jerry Long, Owensboro, Ky.

On 27 November 1989 and 9 August 1990 Mrs. M. J. (Mary) Kelley gave me the genealogical papers of her late husband. She stated that some of his papers had been previously given to another family member by Mr. Kelley; she did not know who it was. The papers I received consisted of pages on the Burks, Cabell, Crow, Davis, Flanagan, Floyd, Howard, Kelly, Kelley, Tinsley and Westerfield families. I made copies of the loose papers and organized them into a three-volume set of hardbound books for the shelves of the Kentucky Room at the Daviess County Public Library in Owensboro, Ky.

Merlin James Kelley was born 18 December 1903 Ky. and died 28 January 1989 in Owensboro, Ky. He was the son of Winwright Quentin Kelley (1873-1913) & Ada Howard (1877-1944), grandson of Philander Roach Kelley (1835-1899) & Mary Frances Burks (1840-1895) and William Francis Howard (1854-1924) & Juanna Florence Burks (1859-1990).

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Kelley Cemetery, Ohio County, KY

Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Monday, 30 January 1989, Page: 2C:

Merlin J. Kelley, 85, of Owensboro, died Saturday, Jan. 28, 1989, at his home. He was born in Deaneffield, was a retired pharmacist, and was a graduate of the University of Kentucky.

Survivors include his wife, Mary Minginourch Kelley; a son, Stuart J. Kelley of Cincinnati, Ohio; and two sisters, Francis Casparis of Nashville, Tenn., and Emma Lee Boweronan of Memphis, Tenn.

Arrangements are private. Burial will be in Englewood, N.J. There is no visitation. Haley-McGinnis Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

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27 November 1995

Richard D. Kelley  
10619 N. City Line Dr. #9  
Whitewater, WI 53190

Dear Mr. Kelley:

I compiled three volumes from the papers of the late M. J. Kelley. The originals had been given to me by his widow. I still have the originals and the three volumes of copies are on the shelf here at the Owensboro Library.

Volume I consists of papers on the families of Kelley, Burks & Davis; Volume II has Flanagan & Floyd, and Volume III has the families of Howard, Preston, Roach, Tinsley & Westerfield. The Kelley section in Volume I has 92 pages. None of these include any older Kelley family records that you inquired about the only pre 1900 records in the Kelley papers are a few pages pertaining to the service of Benjamin H. Kelley, of Washborn, MO, in the War of 1812.

Mrs. M. J. Kelley when she gave me her husband's papers in 1989 said that most of his papers on the Kelley family had been previously given to a family member. I believe this family member was his son, Stuart J. Kelley, of Cincinnati, Ohio.

We maintain family vertical files in our collection. Thus if you have any copies that you would be willing to donate we would very much like to have them. Good luck in your search.

Yours truly,  
Jerry Long

Kentucky Room  
Daviess County Public Library  
450 Griffith Ave.  
Owensboro, KY 42301

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10619 N. City Line Dr. #9  
Whitewater WI 53190

February 13, 1996

Jerry Long  
Kentucky Room  
Owensboro Public Library  
450 Griffin St.  
Owensboro KY 42301

Dear Mr, Long,

Thank you for your letter of November 5.

It turns out that Stuart J. Kelley doesn't have many of the papers that M. J. is believed to have had. I'll keep looking, and if you have any other suggestions, I'd appreciate receiving them.

In my last letter, I mistakenly said that Philander Kelley had said he had Kelley family papers; it was Carter J. Kelley who said that Philander had them.

Enclosed are copies of the letters from the Draper Manuscripts written in the 1850s and 1860s about Rev. Benjamin Kelley. Some of the copies are not very good, and if you wish to you can try for better copies from the microfilms which the State Historical Society of Wisconsin Library on the University of Wisconsin campus will loan. I'm sure, however, that libraries in Kentucky have copies of the microfilms since so many of the manuscripts relate to Kentucky.

This is all of the material in the Draper manuscript index under the name Kelley, but the index is largely restricted to names of authors of documents, and does not include names of people discussed in the documents. Moreover, one compiler of the index has told me that it is probably incomplete There is more material about Benjamin in the manuscripts. I've found a few references to Benjamin in documents written by others, and a paragraph about him written by Draper. (It struck me as odd, considering the misunderstanding of Benjamin's age among historians that Draper didn't use the information Ben H. sent to set the record straight.) The additional material I've come across in the manuscripts adds nothing to what Kelley letters include. If I find other things that may be of interest, I'll send them.

Sincerely,  
Richard D. Kelley

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1996

669 Washington Parkway  
Williams Bay WI 53191

Jerry Long  
Kentucky Room  
Owensboro Public Library 4  
50 Griffin Ave.  
Owensboro KY 42301

Dear Mr. Long,

I'm enclosing a review of some material I've gathered in my search for the ancestors of Benjamin Kelley who lived in Ohio County in the 1800s. I hope that you will include it in the files you keep on the family. My hope is that some Kelley family historian who stops to see the files might find it useful, or might know something I don't know.

I've tried to follow the work that I know of by M. J. Kelley to connect our Bedford County Kelleys to the Kelly/eyes of the Eastern Shore who he thought were our ancestors. I've learned a lot about the Eastern Shore Kelly/eyes, but haven't been able to link them to us. I think it likely that M. J. Kelley must have been looking at the right family in Accomack (that of John Kelly who died in 1724) since much of his information corresponds to records that he apparently hadn't come across during his research, and because the name Edmund has continued in our family, and is attributed to an early ancestor. I'd appreciate any additional help that you might be able to offer in tracking down his papers on the Kelley and Roach families.

I hope that if any family historian submits anything to you about these Eastern Shore Kelly/eyes, or anything else that might shed some light on Benjamin's ancestors, you'll let me know. Please note my new address. And if you wish to send a copy of the review to anyone who might find it useful, please do so.

Sincerely,  
Richard D. Kelley