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## BELLE STARR'S FAMILY

### Belle's Parents:

John Shirley born ca. 1796 Virginia  
died ca. 1876 Texas

Elizabeth Shirley, born ca. 1816 Virginia

### Belle's brothers and sisters:

Preston Shirley born about 1826,  
Floyds Co., Indiana. Married Mary  
Arbella Chelson May 26, 1847,  
Jasper County, Mo., by Mark Robert-  
son, a Methodist Minister. They  
were the parents of: Christian T.  
Shirley, born ca. 1848 in Mo. and  
John F. Shirley, born ca. 1849,  
also in Mo.

Charlotte Amanda Shirley born ca.  
1828 in Iowa. Married Jesse B.  
Thompson January 13, 1847 in Jasper  
Co., Mo. by Joseph Thompson, Jus-  
tice of the Peace.

Allison Shirley born ca. 1842 in Mo.

Myra Belle Shirley born February 5,  
1848, in Jasper Co. How many times  
she married and to whom is not  
clear. She had two children,  
Pearl Younger and Ed Read (Reed).

Edwin Shirley born ca. January  
1850 in Mo., died ca. 1863, Mo.

Mansfield Shirley born ca. 1852,  
in Missouri.

Cravens Shirley born ca. 1858 in  
Missouri.

What branch of the Shirleys that Belle's  
father, John, descends from has been a  
mystery.

I found a clue in my own local library.  
A small booklet called "Patrons of  
Atlas 1876" for Jasper County, Mo. had  
on page 83 the fact that Preston Shirley  
was living in Georgia City. Preston  
listed his place of birth as Floyd Co.,  
Indiana. He came to Jasper County in  
1839.

I looked up the Indiana Census and found  
the following:

#### 1810 Harrison County Indiana

John Shirley 16-25 years

Christian Shirley 26-45 years

#### 1820 Floyds County Indiana

John Shirley 16-25 years

Christian Shirley over 45 years

#### 1830 Floyds County Indiana

John Shirley

Christian Shirley

#### 1840 Floyds County Indiana

Christian Shirley

#### 1850 Floyds County Indiana

Christian S. born ca 1770, Md

Roseanna born ca 1773, Maryland

Malinda (Russell) Shirley, b. ca  
1811, Kentucky

(wife of Henry Shirley. He has  
probably died)

son-Telford H. Shirley, ca 1833

dau-Mary C., born ca 1846, Ind.

Anderson , born ca. 1813, Ind.

Nancy b. ca 1818 Ind.

dau-Elizabeth C. b. ca 1840, Ind.

dau-Parmelia Ann, ca. 1850, Ind.

Denton Shirley born ca. 1814, Ind.

Rebecca born ca 1823 Ind.

dau. Lulia Ann, b ca. 1847, Ind.

It appears to me that Christian Shirley  
is John's father. Preston named his  
son Christian.

Checking further back in the census, I found Christian living in Madison Co, KY in 1800. Also in that county is Peter, whose name is spelled Shurley.

A gentlemen did some work for me in the Penn. Archives and in a book called Rangers on the Frontiers. Christian Shirley was in the George Obermiers Company.

#### Floyds County Indiana

John Shirley had a tavern on Floyds Knob in the earlier part of 1800. Land records show John S. Aug. 19, 1824, 160 acres in Lafayette Township; Jan 1, 1831 240 A in New Albany Township, Oct. 6, 1813 with 152 acres in Georgetown for Christian Shirley.

#### Jasper County Mo.

The records show on June 30, 1848, entry was made of the US Govt.'s patent to John Shirley's land grant of 800 A located about 10 miles NW of Carthage. John became a stock raising land owner. March 16, 1850 John sold 160 A for \$700.

June 18, 1851 he purchased 2 quarter acre lots in the township of Carthage. May 16, 1852, a school tax of \$400 was levied against John, and he had to mortgage 160 A to pay the tax. In 1856, he sold his farm. He now owned a whole city block on the north side of town square in Carthage. By 1860, he owned a hotel and had prospered considerably with real estate listings of \$4,000 and personal property of \$6,000.

John's hotel sign read:

CARTHAGE HOTEL  
NORTHSIDE PUBLIC SQUARE  
JOHN SHIRLEY, PROP.  
HORSES AND HACKS FOR HIRE  
A GOOD STABLE ATTACHED

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Gold seekers who came up the Mo. River by boat as far as Independence passed through Carthage on their way to Ft. Smith, Ark. where they equipped themselves for overland travel on the Marcy route which was shorter than the old Santa Fe or Oregon Trails. People coming from SW Mo. had to pass through Carthage before taking the southern trail. Carthage was a great location for a wayside inn or hotel. They were also called taverns.

Belle Starr attended a private school in Carthage, conducted by William Cravens. Her brother, Ed, was a bush-wacker. He ran with Quantrills and his gang. He was killed in 1863 by the Federal militia. After Ed's death, John and his family moved to Texas. He had salvaged money from his hotel and livery stable investments and from the sale of most of his horses to the regular Confederate Calvary units. His son Preston was living in McKinney County, TX, and John had a brother who had a farm about 10 miles east of Dallas. John died in Texas in 1876. He was about 80 years old.

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#### Early Shirley Families Living In Virginia

Thomas Shirley b. ca 1660, probably father of

John b. ca 1700, d. 1764

(lived in Spotsylvania County and Caroline County, VA)

son: John b. ca 1733, m. Elizabeth children:

Dorothy b. ca 1758 m. Henry Dodd

John b. ca 1760 m Frances Yates

d. March 1840, Adair County, KY

(he lived in Spotsylvania Co, VA,

Mercer, and Adair Counties, KY

Thomas b. Mar. 21, 1761, m Molly

Yates, d. April 17, 1820 in

Adair County; also lived in

Culpepper Cnty VA and Adair, KY

James Shirley b 1739, Orange County, VA died 1815 Oldham County, KY married Judith Garriott

children:

Mary b. ca 1755 m. Tobias Wilhoite d 1834 Mercer County, KY

Thomas b ca 1757

Nancy b ca 1759, m James Yowell

Zachariah b ca 1761

Joshua b ca 1763

Elizabeth b ca 1765 m Wm. Wilhoite

Jane b ca 1766 m James McGehee

Delilah b ca 1768 m Benjamin

Fleshman

William b ca 1772 m Elizabeth Clore

Bathsheba b ca 1774 m Asa McGhee

WILLIAM SHIRLEY  
Governor of Massachusetts  
1741 - 1756

William was born December 2, 1694, at Preston in Sussex, England. His parents were William Shirley, a London merchant, and Elizabeth Godman. Wm.'s brother, John, and sister, Catherine, died in infancy. William was 7 years old when his father died, leaving him with aristocratic tastes and connections. From the Merchant Taylors' School, London, he was admitted pensioner at Pembroke College, Cambridge, and rec'd the degree of A.B. in 1714/15. On July 3, 1720, he was called to the bar. Meanwhile, he had married Frances, daughter of Francis Baker of London. Their children were:

William, baptized October 3, 1721.

Secretary to Major General Braddock. William & Gen. Braddock and many other officers were killed in a battle with the French and Indians on the Ohio River in Pennsylvania in 1755.

John, born November 8, 1725. Captain in the army. Died of camp fever at Oswego on his march to New York in 1755.

Thomas, born December 30, 1727, d Feb. 18, 1880. Entered the Army at age 16 with a captain's commission. Married Ann Maria Western June 4, 1768. In 1781, he was appointed governor of Leeward Islands. In 1798, he was advanced to rank of general in the army having been created a baronet June 27, 1786.

His children:

Thomas Western, eldest son, born at the Bahama Isles 1770, captain in the navy and died October 6, 1794. He never married.

Sir William Warden, second son of Thomas, was born August 4, 1772 in the Bahama Isles. He was also in the navy, and succeeded his father in 1800 as the second baronet of Ote Hall in Sussex, England.

Ralph died in infancy.

Elizabeth, born ? died 1790. Married Eliakim Hutchinson, Esq., Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in the province of Massachusetts Bay.

Frances born 1720, married William Bollan Esq. She died March 12, 1744 at the birth of her first child, Frances Shirley Bollan. She is buried in Boston, Mass.

Judith, born June 1, 1723, died Nov. 27, 1754 in America, unmarried.

Harriet, born May 24, 1724, died 1802 in Ireland, married Robert Temple.

Maria Catherine, born March 4, 1729, died 1816; married John Erving, Esq. of Boston.

For eleven years, William Shirley practiced law in London and gained a substantial reputation, influential friends, but not much money. A crisis in his financial affairs led him to decide to emigrate to America. He landed with his family in Boston October 27, 1731, bearing a letter from his kinsman and life long patron, Thomas Pelham-Holles, Duke of Newcastle, to Governor Jonathon Belcher.

William Shirley was by nature a "prerogative man" and his earliest case in Boston of a controversial sort aligned him with that party. While Belcher yielded more and more to the colonial view of business matters, Shirley upheld the imperial. He was appointed judge of admiralty in 1733, a post he soon exchanged for that of advocate-general.

Unsympathetic toward Belcher's policy of permitting the exploitation of the Kings Woods by colonial businessmen, Shirley sent to England by the hand of his wife a report that tended to weaken the confidence of the government in Belcher's administration. Frances S. also plead her husband's cause. He had asked for several offices without success. She now pressed the Duke of Newcastle for a salary for the Advocate-General or for her husband's appointment as collector of customs or as a naval officer at Boston, and finally for his appointment as governor. He was commissioned governor of Mass. May 25, 1741.

In 1749, Gov. Shirley went to England on leave. While there, he was appointed a member of the commission sitting in Paris to determine the boundary line among French, North America, and New England. The negotiations were drawn out to interminable length, and it was not until 1753 that he returned to his post in Boston. His first wife died there in September 1746. While he was in Paris, he married a young Frenchwoman, Julie, daughter of his landlord.

William Shirley foresaw that war must soon begin again between England and France. In February 1755, he was appointed major-general and in April was one of 5 governors who attended a counsel of war with Gen. Edward Braddock at Alexandria, VA to bring about concerted action. Here, he argued the importance of controlling the Great Lakes, and when the council decided to move against Niagara, Crown Point, and the forks of the Ohio, William Shirley was given command of the Niagara expedition. After the death of Gen. Braddock in July, he was the acknowledged commander of all British forces on the continent.



After his governorship ended, he was given the rank of lieutenant-general. In 1761, he was made governor of the Bahama Islands. This post he relinquished to his only surviving son, Thomas, in 1767. Two years later he returned to Mass and took up residence in his mansion, Shirley Place, at Roxbury where he died in March 1771.

## Headrights

Headrights, or grants, in the amount of 50 acres of land were given to each person coming from England. If the passenger could not afford his passage, he entered into a contract in which another would pay the fee and the passenger signed over his headrights. The dates were often recorded years after the actual date they were transported. The following is a list of the early Shirleys who came to Virginia.

Daniel	February 16, 1623
Elizabeth	June 18, 1636
Agnes	June 16, 1637
Thomas	October 19, 1643
Jane	July 19, 1662
Sall or Samuel	November 28, 1662
Thomas	February 9, 1663
Nicholas	May 16, 1664
Robert	June 21, 1664

## Early Virginia Records

John Shirley, 1701 a. Princess Ann Co.  
John Shirley, Sr. 1718 will Princess A

Richard Shirley 1709 i. Middlesex Co.  
Thomas Shirley 1727 will Middlesex Cnty.

Richard Shirley 1728 i. Northumberland  
John Sherley 1738 will Northumberland  
John Shurley 1742 will Northumberland  
Daniel Shurley 1768 i. Northumberland

William Sherley 1747 eb. King George Cty  
William Sherley 1749 i. King George Cty

John Shirley 1719 i. Prince George Cnty

John Shirley 1764 a. Spotsylvania Cnty.

James Shirley 1791 i. Culpepper County

Walter Shirley 1756 i. Frederick County

Daniel Shirley b ?, d ca 1815  
married Mary Ann, lived in Princess  
Anne County, VA. Children:

1. David
2. Jeanna
3. Mary
4. Abby

Richard Shirley, b ca 1712, d between  
1769 and 1775, married Mary; lived in  
Craven County and Bentley County, SC  
children:

1. Robert b ca 1736, VA m Jane
2. John b Aug 27, 1738, Culpepper Co  
Virginia, died 1816 Laurens Co, SC
3. Thomas b ca 1740

Shirley Place is said to have been erected in 1743. The house was built with bricks from England that were afterwards covered, both inside and out, with boards. The elegant mansion was built about 25 rods from the main road, and stood in its ancient grandeur until about 1867.

After the death of Governor Shirley, the estate appears to have belonged to his son-in-law, Eliakim Hutchinson who, having left the country in the time of the Revolution, allowed the mansion to quarter soldiers while the British troops held possession of Boston. After the Revolution (about 1793/94), one Dubuque occupied it, a refugee from the French Revolution. He brought with him a cook named Julien who afterwards became celebrated in Boston as an eating-house keeper or restaurateur, at the corner of Congress and Milk Streets.

## Editor's Comments:

Governor Shirley's son William died when he was 34, and John died at age 30. I could find nothing to indicate whether or not they married or had families. Should you have information, please write to me.

Elizabeth must have been John's second wife, as she was born about 1816. Preston was born ca. 1826; Charlotte about 1828. Could John have had other children? There is a 14 year span between Charlotte and Allison. Your comments and any additional information would be appreciated!

John's other grandchildren's names are not known at this time.

Suggested reading--  
Belle Starr, "The Bandit Queen"  
by Burton Roscoe (check at your local library)

"Belle Starr and Her Pearl" by Edwin P. Hicks. (I purchased mine from Ft. Smith Nat'l Historic Site, PO Box 1406, Ft. Smith, Ark 72901 \$7 plus postage)

"The Bandit Belle" by Carl W. Breihan. I bought by phone from Superior Pub. Co., Seattle WA