

The following is an early draft to the proposed second chapter of *Setting the Record Straight: A Truer Account of the Cooleys of Stokes County, North Carolina and Sundry Other Families*. It is intended for peer review, not for general circulation. Although genealogical facts are not copyrightable, text is. The Fair Use clause of the Copyright Act of 1976 prevails, but quotes from this work must be properly attributed to the author.

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The Cooleys, Cooleys, and Coles

(Three genetically unrelated groups)

Stokes County NC Cooleys (Eleven Cooleys tested with near matches.)		Fayette County PA Cooleys (Two Cooleys tested with exact matches to 37 markers.)		New York Dutch Coles*		
				(Eight near-matching Cool/Cole testers.) *Cool is pronounced "Cole" by the Dutch.		
				Barent Cool (1610-1684+) ¹ m Marrtje de Graeuw		
				Leendert Cool (1647-1735) m Marretje Della Cornelis		
		Leendert Cool (bapt 1675-) m Annetje Decker	Johannes Cool (bapt 1679-) m Neeltje Roosa	Willem L. Cool (1689-) ² m Catrinjen du Bois		
		Leendert Cool (bapt 1700-) m Sara Van Garden	Cornelis Cool (bapt 1715-) ³ m ¹ Sara Westval m ² Claesje Jongbloet	Johannes Cool (1714-) m Pierternella van Auken		
John Cooley (c1740-1811) ⁴ <i>Said by Pat Walker to have been Johannes Cool-1.</i>	William Coolley (-1817) ⁵ <i>"of Irish extraction." married Elizabeth Firmin</i>		Johannes Cool-1 (bapt 1741-) ⁶ <i>By 1982, Pat Walker decided that this, the son of the above couple, was John, who he said married Elizabeth Firmin.</i>	Only known child by Sara Westval: Johannes Cool-2 (bapt 1740-) ⁷ <i>This is the man Lura Hamil said married first Annetje Decker and married second Elizabeth Firmin (who really married William Cooley, three columns to the left) and was the progenitor of the Fayette county PA Cooleys. Pat Walker bought the Cooley/Firmin marriage and by 1980 made Johannes Cool (as John Cooley, first column) the founder of the Stokes county NC Cooleys (which is decidedly not true). DNA test results, not to mention the total lack of supporting genealogical documentation, disprove these relationships.</i>	Two sons by Cornelis's marriage to Claesje: Jacob Cole (c1748-) ⁸ Cornelis Westbroeck Cole (c1750-) ⁹	William Cole (1756-) m Sara Wells
Edward Cooley (1763-1822)	John Andrew Coolley Sr (1767-1847) <i>Said by Hamil to have been son of Johannes Cool-2.</i>	Frederick Cooley (1781-1845)				Thomas J. Cole (1790-1866)
John Cooley (1789-1866)	Samuel Means Coolley (1800-1847)	John Cooley (1822-1899)				Benjamin H. Cole (1816-1898)
David Cooley (1815-1865)	Thomas Jefferson Cooley (1831-c1897)	Arthur H. Cooley (1849-1909)				George N. Cole (1851-1933)
Greenbury Cooley (1844-1899)	William Franklin Cooley (1868-1897)	Frank L. Cooley (1875-1920)				Electus S. Cole (1878-)
Joseph William Cooley (1867-1947)	Franklin Arthur Cooley (1893-1963)	Frank Hudson Cooley (1915-1975)				Kenneth H. Cole (1904-1981)
McCabe Cooley (1899-1958) <i>The author's grandfather FTDNA kit #57597</i>	Franklin Arthur Cooley (1926-2007) <i>Father of tester FTDNA kit #173367</i>	Frank Cooley <i>living FTDNA kit #167462</i>				Stewart H. Cole, <i>Bromme Cole's grandfather Y-Search NA29T</i>

¹For details of descent, see Richard H. Benson, *The Barent Jacobsen Cool Family* (Boston: Newbury Street Press, 2001).

²Descent from Willem L. Cool to Stewart H. Cole taken from "Du Bois, Louis - Descendant Chart," *The Order of the Crown of Charlemagne in the United States of America*, <http://www.charlemagne.org/ui115.htm>.

³*Baptismal and Marriage Registers of the Old Dutch Church of Kingston, Ulster County, New York, 1660-1809*. Cornelis Cool was baptized 31 July 1715. Parents: Johannes Cool, Neeltjen Roos; Witnesses: Cornelis Cool, Alida Naks.

⁴John last appears in the public record in 1811. That same year, three sons moved to Missouri, one son to Indiana, and another son (by 1812) to Tennessee.

⁵John M. Gresham, editor, *Biographical and Portrait Cyclopaedia of Fayette County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: John M. Gresham & Co., 1889), 421. A copy of the sketch, transcribed by Marta Burns, is online at <http://ancestraldata.com/ahmentafel/256/elizabethfirmin.html>. Names wife Elizabeth Firmin. The 1810 census of Fayette County, PA enumerates William and wife. The family bible of Jonathan Coolley provides death dates for William, Elizabeth, and Jonathan's daughter, Elizabeth Firmin Coolley.

⁶"Church Register of the Walpeck Congregation," *Minisink Valley Reformed Dutch Church Records*, ed. Royden Woodward Vosburgh, Collections of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society 5 (New York: Printed for the Society, 1913), 1. Johannes Cool was baptized on 31 May 1741. Parents: Leonard Cool and Sara van Garden; Witnesses Johannes Rosenkrantz, Catherine Rosenkrantz.

⁷*Records of Baptisms of the Reformed Church at Machackemeck (Deerpark), Orange County New York, 1716-1742*. Johannes Cool was baptized on 17 June 1740. Parents: Cornelis Cool, Sara Westval; Witnesses: Johannes Westval and Sara Cool.

⁸*Records of Baptisms of the Reformed Church at Machackemeck (Deerpark), Orange County New York, 1747-1749*. Jacob Cole was baptized 27 Nov 1748. Parents: Cornelis Cole, Claesje Jongbloet; Witnesses: Jacob Van Etten and wife, Antje Westbroeck.

⁹*Records of Baptisms of the Reformed Church at Machackemeck (Deerpark), Orange County New York, 1749-1750*. Cornelis Westbroeck Cole was baptized 4 Mar 1750. Parents: Cornelis Cole, Claesje Jongbloet; Witnesses: Cornelis Westbroeck, Antje Rosa, his wife.

Lura Cooley Hamil's Bogus Cooley Lineages

(None of this is right!!)

PDF	Pages	Hamil's #	Dates, spellings, marriages, etc. are Hamil's
	1	79 11211	Leendert Cool (1675-) m1 Marretje Della m2 Rebecca
	2	86 112111	(Willem) Cornelis Cool (bapt 1694) m Sara Westvaal
	3	87 1121111	Leendert Cool (1700-1747) m Sara Van Gordon
	4	87 11211112	Johannes Cool (bapt 31 May 1740)
	5	87 1121112	Wilhelmus / William "Francis" Cool (1718-1782) m1 Elizabeth Vredenburg1st m2 Rebecca Kastner
	6	87 11211123	Petrus / Peter Cool (bapt 1739) m Nancy Perry
	7	87 11211124	(William) Francis Cooley m Eleanor Vandervort
	8	87 1121113	Josias Cool m1 Maria Kimble m2 Margaret Mullen
	9	87 112111261	William Cooley (bapt 1747-) m Sarah Perry
	10	86-88 1121116	Johannes m1 Annetje Decker m2 Elizabeth Firmin m3 Rebecca Kastner, w/bro Wm
	11	88 11211162	John Andrew Cooley (1767-1847)
	12	81, 120 11212	Robert Coles (1695-1775) m Mercy Wright
	13	81, 120 112122	John Coles (c1715-) m1 Sarah Morris m2 Pieternella Auken
	14	81, 121 1121223	John Cooley (1749-1813) m Abigail Lippencott
	15	81, 120 112123	James Cooley (-1789)
	16	127 112124	Joseph Cooley (c1720-1802 or 1804) m1 Margaret Miller m2 Sarah Trepalier m3 Margaret Baldwin
	17	128 1121241	John Cooley (1755-) m1 Sarah Gilbert m2 Rachel McHenry
	18	128 11212411	John Cooley (1783-1844) m Elizabeth White
	19	127 1121242	Joseph Miller Cooley (1756-) m1 Margaret Jackson m2 ___ Casey
	20	127 11211423	James Cooley (1800-1828)
	21	127 11211424	Jackson Cooley
	22	127 1121243	Daniel Cooley (1758-) m Elizabeth Cooley
	23	128 11212431	John Cooley (1789-1857) m Mahala Cooley
	24	128, 130 11212432	Joseph [T.] Cooley (1793 VA) m Maud Woods
	25	128, 132 11212433	James Cooley (1795-1835) m Frances
	26	87, 127 1121244	James Cooley (1760-1840+)
	27	120 112128	Robert Cooley (-1821)

NOTES

1. See Richard H. Benson's *The Barent Jacobsen Cool Family* for correct lineages.
2. Cornelis was grandson of Leendert (#1), not his son.
3. Leendert was a cousin of Cornelis (#2), not his son.
4. Baptismal date was actually 31 May 1741. Pat Walker believed this was John Cooley of Stokes County. Not only is that incorrect, but so is Johannes' lineage.
5. No note.
6. Peter was son of English immigrant John Cooley (1731-1801) of Portsmouth, Ohio.
7. Francis was of the Pennsylvania Cluster (CF04) and probably closely related, DNA tells us, to Robert (#27).
8. Josias was son of David Cool and Eleonora Westfall, and grandson of Willem L. Cool (1689-) and Catrinjen du Bois. See http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=DESC&db=cole_goodwin&id=I69.
9. Hamil's "Boone companion." In fact, the William Cooley who accompanied Boone into the Kentucky wilderness has not been identified.
10. No note.
11. John Andrew Cooley was Lura Hamil's great-grandfather. Primary and secondary documentation shows that his parents were William Cooley and Elizabeth Firmin (CF10).
12. Robert's family doesn't remotely resemble this. A well-documented family group sheet is found at <http://freepages.misc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~shopefamily/Tree/famf50.html>. See that for his true lineage and descendants. His father is represented as FTDNA kit #97024 in the Cole-Coles DNA Project.
13. John Coles parents were Willem L. Cool (1689-) and Catrinjen du Bois.
14. DNA test results for John are forthcoming.
- 15-16. No notes.
17. A descendant of Daniell Cooley of Maryland (CF04).
18. John is of the Stokes County Cooleys (CF01).
19. Joseph had no known middle name. His first wife's name is unknown. His second wife was Kaziah Casey. As is true with his "brothers," his birth year is wrong. Joseph was the father of John (#18).
- 20-21. No notes.
22. The Ray County, MO Daniel was born in 1765, m1 Mildred Ball m2 Elizabeth Grundy.
23. No notes.
24. Joseph Tucker Cooley of Bland Co VA was a son of Thadeus Cooley (CF02).
25. James Cooley's family and descendants were provided to Hamil and to Mortimer E. Cooley by Mildred Cooley Tallant, whose work is still highly regarded. James was her great-grandfather.
26. This is the James Cooley of Madison County, KY who married Patience Baker.
27. If this is the Robert of the 1790 Luzerne, PA census, as Hamil claimed, then he was of the Pennsylvania Cluster (CF04) and probably closely related to Francis (#7). Robert died in 1794.

LURA HAMIL'S COOLLEY GENEALOGY

"[I] do not think this is correct."

- Mildred Cooley Tallant (1932)

A good genealogist is by necessity an imaginative genealogist. Carefully considered analysis of the data at hand—and a degree of luck—is needed to hurdle the inevitable brick walls. Such a genealogist explores the possibilities by laying out road maps and arranging the various avenues into degrees of likelihood—for no genealogist can explore all options at once. Thus, theories of descent, sometimes multiple theories of descent, are developed. And because genealogy is, almost by definition, a collaborative effort, it's in everyone's best interest to share and discuss ideas, and to do so without becoming too invested in theories that just might be, after all, completely wrong-headed. To avoid the pitfalls of pointless speculation, evidence must trump everything. Therefore, upon learning that bad data has been used to the extent that an outcome has been affected, we should ascend the rooftops and boldly, jubilantly declare, "I've gotten it wrong!" Acknowledging fault is an affirmative step toward discovering truth.

1: MORTIMER ELWYN COOLEY

Mortimer Elwyn Cooley, born in Canandaigua, New York on March 28, 1855, understood the value of evidence-based data. He began his career as a naval engineer. He became a college professor and eventually the dean of the College of Engineering at the University of Michigan, a position he held for twenty-four years. He gained an enormous reputation during his career. An anonymous author wrote in 1919 that Dean Cooley was a "seasoned executive, diplomatist, arbitrator, leader of wise men, friend of youth, good fellow, fair fighter and idol of the thousands who have passed under the wholesome influence of his commanding personality," and that his name had "become synonymous with a personality, strong, robust, virile, unwavering, but always kindly and helpful, magnetically cheerful and profoundly democratic, never brutal in his admonitions, tricky with his adversaries or to the slightest degree pompous in his success – in other words, the antithesis of the typical Prussian bureaucrat."¹ That's pretty heady stuff and, one might guess, loaded with hyperbole. But consider not only that the university's engineering building is named for Dean Cooley, but so is the historic Mortimer E. Cooley Bridge, with its span of five hundred and fifty feet. Like the bridge, the dean, it seems, was bigger than life.²

Dean Cooley was a ninth-generation descendant of Ensign Benjamin Cooley, a 1640s immigrant from England to Massachusetts. He researched Benjamin's descendants for sixty years before founding the Cooley Family Association of America (CFAA) in 1936. With the dean's guidance, Vivien Bulloch Keatley organized and compiled the his

¹"Mortimer E. Cooley: An Appreciation and Biography," *The Michigan Technic* 32, no. 4 (1919): 233-237.

²Charles K. Hyde, *Historic Highway Bridges of Michigan*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993), 106.

notes into a comprehensive and cohesive work entitled *The Cooley Genealogy*. It was published in 1941, three years before his death. Although Cooley's work is concerned principally with the descendants of Benjamin Cooley, a large number of its twelve-hundred pages are devoted to "unplaced" Cooleys. In these latter pages we find a diverse set of families: the ancestors of genealogist Mildred Cooley Tallant of California, the descendants of John Cooley and Abigail Lippincott of New Jersey, a small bit of information about Peter Cooley, whose entire family immigrated as indentured servants in 1774, and others that could not be shown to be related to the "Benjamin Clan." But nothing is found regarding the Stokes County Cooleys and, with one exception, there is nothing that can be conclusively attributed to the Pennsylvania family of Lura Coolley Hamil, who had written her own genealogy in the early 1930s.³

³Mortimer E. Cooley, *The Cooley Genealogy* (Rutland, Vermont: The Tuttle Publishing Co., 1941), 945-948. Dr. William Cooley, Jr. provided several pages regarding his Fayette County, Pennsylvania Cooley ancestors.

2: LURA COOLLEY HAMIL

Lura Edna Coolley was born in Newman, Illinois to Reverend Cyrus P. Coolley and Paulina A. Biggs on 26 August 1878. Her grandfather, Reverend Jonathan Coolley, emigrated from Fayette County, Pennsylvania to Ohio in 1817 and to Indiana in 1823, where his father, John Andrew Coolley, Sr., died in 1847.⁴ Lura graduated from Lincoln College in 1898, married in 1900 to Dr. Frederick Lee Hamil—a dentist in Cass county, Illinois—and had one child, Ralph Edward Hamil (1902-1945). Among the civic duties she exercised and the positions she held, Lura Hamil was president of the Lincoln Women's Club and sat on the board of the Lincoln Public Library.⁵ In 1921, she published a collection of poems entitled *Little Book of Garden Songs* and wrote a genealogy, *A Story of Pioneering*, over a six month period in 1931. She died a little more than a year after finishing the manuscript, which ended up languishing on a shelf of her home for nearly twenty years. Cousins discovered it just prior to the dismantling of Hamil's home. Subscriptions were sold to support the manuscript's publication, and a limited run went to press in 1955.

For reasons not understood and for which no supporting documentation exists, Hamil believed her great-grandfather, John Andrew Coolley, Sr., was the son of Johannes Cool of a New York Dutch family. Not only does the Dutch theory lack support—genealogically and genetically—the organization of the work is sloppy, and her sources, the few she referenced, do not always pan out. In fact, the ancestry Hamil

⁴Lura Coolley Hamil, *A Story of Pioneering*, unpublished manuscript (1932), 33, 67, http://ancestraldata.com/ahnentafel/256/Hamil_Manuscript.html, published as Lura Coolley Hamil, *A Story of Pioneering* (Danville, Illinois: The Illinois Publishing Co., 1955). The page numbers referenced in these footnotes are per the PDF document, not the pages from the original manuscript, which are not always sequential.

⁵"Lura Edna Coolley Hamil," *Illinois State Journal*, 10 January 1933, 7.

ascribed to Johannes Cool—who, we will see, was not the father of John Andrew Coolley, Sr.—does not agree with the very documents she cites. Furthermore, Hamil clearly exercised a degree of willful ignorance: her great-grandfather's true parentage had been published in a county history nearly fifty years earlier—in the very place her efforts should have focused. It's unlikely she was unaware of what should have been a centerpiece of her research. Indeed, as we'll see later in this chapter, she could not possibly have been unaware of the correct lineage.

Hamil wrote in 1931 that "research was begun June 25, writing the narrative August 25, and completion of the copying today, December 21."⁶ This stands in stark contrast to Dean Cooley's book, which, by the time Hamil started her research, had been in the works for at least a half century. The haste in which Hamil researched and wrote shows in the manuscript's inconsistencies, rambling language, and poor documentation.

⁶Hamil, "Fore-word," 9.

3: FRANK E. AND ELIZABETH COOLEY

Elizabeth Cooley edited the *Cooley Communiqué*, the publication of the Cooley Family Association of America, for twenty-three years. She succinctly defined the problem with Hamil's book in a 1977 letter to Dennis Young:

That book of Lura Coolley Hamil has caused [the CFAA] plenty of headaches with folks accepting her data as "gospel proof." ... It should be labeled with a huge "Skull and cross bones." Mrs. Hamil went about grabbing up anything she felt might go together, has mixed up many different Cooley families, etc.⁷

Elizabeth's husband, Frank Earl Cooley, Jr. (1900-1997), was a founding member of the CFAA. He edited the organization's first newsletter, the *Quarterly Bulletin*, from 1939 to 1953 and was its treasurer for forty-two years. Frank first heard about Hamil's manuscript in 1950 and purchased a copy once it became available. Thirteen years later, he wrote that he was "much disappointed with the book" and that "the back cover broke away from the pages" the first time he opened it. His four-page appraisal notes several problems: a large number of typos that should have been corrected in the proofing stage; the inconsistent and arbitrary numbering system; and that the spelling of names, both first and last, change without comment, and often without logic.⁸

Genealogical works assign numbers which provide unique identifiers for every person. A good numbering system gives the reader the means with which to follow a lineage forward and backward through the generations. But typos in Hamil's numbers were retained and carried to subsequent generations. Worse, she modified her system midway because the numbers had become too large and cumbersome. Hamil even

⁷Elizabeth Cooley to Dennis Young, 31 July 1977, <http://ancestraldata.com/ahnentafel/256/1977letterCFAA.html>.

⁸Frank E. Cooley, Jr., "Some Comments About *The Story of Pioneering* by Mrs. Lura Coolley Hamil," undated; and "A *Story of Pioneering*; An Explanation," 27 Dec 1968. These short commentaries are in possession of the Cooley Family Association of America:

reassigned numbers, Frank explained, from one individual to another simply because there were no descendants for the previous assignment.

"Mrs. Hamil's book," he wrote, "should never be used as an authority ... it should be used only as a guide, and all the data checked ... before being accepted."⁹ But even as late as 1968, Frank believed the book had some merit and expressed no doubt about the veracity of the Dutch lineage. He believed he needed merely to sort through the spaghetti to find the key. Obviously, his assessment changed by 1977 when his wife responded to Dennis Young's inquiry.

The Evidence

DNA test results and numerous pieces of genealogical evidence, some of which are described below, had long ago convinced me that the Stokes County Cooleys were not of the so-called Dutch Cooleys. But, like Frank Cooley forty years earlier, I considered that a close investigation of *A Story of Pioneering* might unlock secrets, that I might find buried in its pages an explanation that would reveal how Hamil arrived at her conclusions, and that there might yet be a kernel of truth in it. Up until this point, however, I had seen only photocopies of about twenty pages from the book. In 2011, after several failed attempts to acquire a copy, the Interlibrary Loan (ILL) department of the Humboldt State University library located one for me. I was astonished at what I received: the original manuscript, three-hole punched, and placed inside an old, musty leather folder held together by three rusty brads. Knowing I'd never have another opportunity to examine it, I photographed every page, assembled it into a single PDF, and

⁹Frank E. Cooley.

put it online.¹⁰ But, like Frank Cooley, I found a poorly organized effort and several careless and inaccurate citations. And although Hamil clearly knew how to turn a phrase, she wrote complex, difficult to parse sentences of three and more independent clauses. Her paragraphs are disjointed and jump from one topic to another, rendering them difficult to follow—even harder to interpret. The decaying leather binder, rusting hardware, and aging pages of the manuscript merely reflect the quality of the work itself.

To be blunt, Hamil flat out got it wrong. But before I completely tear down her work—which I am somewhat sorry about for her effort was evidently a labor of love—a baseline of understanding needs to be established. I intend to prove both of the following points:

- John Cooley of Stokes County, North Carolina is not represented in Hamil.
- John Andrew Coolley, Sr., Hamil's great-grandfather, was the son of William Cooley of Fayette County, Pennsylvania, not of Hamil's Johannes Cool of New York Dutch heritage

The latter fact is clearly stated in a published biographical article supported by three primary documents—a family bible, the 1810 federal census, an old letter, and the records of the Reformed Dutch Church in New York, as follows.

One: The Biographical and Portrait Cyclopedia of Fayette County, Pennsylvania includes a page-long biography of a John Cooley, born in that county in 1816 and still living when the book was published in 1889. This John was a son of Jonathan Cooley (1777-1817), who Hamil acknowledged was the brother of John Andrew Coolley Sr., her ancestor. The article confirms the notion that John's paternal grandparents were William

¹⁰See http://ancestraldata.com/ahnentafel/256/Hamil_Manuscript.html

Cooley and Elizabeth Firmin, and that William—of Irish origins—had been a wagoner from Maryland during the American Revolution. The couple's children were, the biography tells us, John Cooley, Jonathan Cooley, Matthew Cooley, Isaac Cooley, and Frederick Cooley.¹¹

Two: The family bible of William's son, Jonathan Coolley, is extant and in the possession of Jennifer Mates Reece. This document records the death date of "William Coolley Senior" as June 20, 1817 and the death of his "consort," Elizabeth Coolley, as January, 9, 1837. Among other events recorded is the birth of Jonathan's daughter, Elizabeth Firmin Coolley, on July 4, 1809.¹² Indeed, the name Firmin survived in the family until at least 1960 with the death of Firman Homer Cooley, Jr.¹³

Three: The household of William Cooley is enumerated on the 1810 census for Fayette County. Two adults, a male over the age of 45 and a female over 45, are living in Franklin Township. Living near the couple are the brothers Frederic and Jonathan Cooley. Their brother, John A. Cooley [Sr.], is found in Tyrone, and another brother, Samuel Cooley, in Bridgeport. The presence of these families perfectly coincides with the statements made in the 1889 biography. We can confidently assume that the elder couple was William and Elizabeth.¹⁴

Four: A letter written in 1849 proves the relationship between Jonathan Cooley

¹¹John M. Gresham, editor, *Biographical and Portrait Cyclopedia of Fayette County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: John M. Gresham and Co., 1889), 421. A copy of the sketch, transcribed by Marta Burns, is online at <http://ancestraldata.com/ahnentafel/256/elizabethfirmin.html>.

¹²I became aware of the Jonathan Coolley bible record through correspondent Frank Cooley of Ludlow Falls, Ohio. His transcription is among my online notes at <http://ancestraldata.com/Notes/index.cgi?1230345169+/ahnentafel/256/lineages/william-desc.html>.

¹³Firmin died in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania on November 28, 1960. See Find A Grave Memorial 116808371.

¹⁴Household of William Cooley; p. 239 [handwritten], line 58, Franklin Township, Fayette County, Pennsylvania Census of Population; *Third Census of the United States, 1810* (National Archives

(the son of William Cooley and Elizabeth Firmin) and John Andrew Coolley, Sr., who Hamil claimed was the son of Johannes Cool and Elizabeth Firmin. In fact, the transcriptions of six letters, two of which were written in 1815, represent the most important and useful material found in Hamil's manuscript. Three were written to John Andrew Coolley, Sr. and three to his son, John Andrew Coolley, Jr., both of whom had emigrated to Ohio and later to Indiana. Of particular interest to this study is the 1849 letter from John Cooley—the same John Cooley who was the subject of the 1889 biography—to his cousin John Andrew Coolley, Jr., who had gone to Ohio with his father in 1817, just a year after John was born. Hamil states that the letter "is the only link we have of that branch of the family." In fact, the letter is a critical document. With it, John found opportunity to update his cousin, John Andrew Coolley, Jr. about the side of the family that remained in Fayette County. Considerable genealogical data is present, all of which supports the 1889 biography. It's wholly evident that the lineages of the two men—John Andrew Jr. of Indiana and John of Fayette County, Pennsylvania—were joined at their paternal grandfather.¹⁵

Five: Cornelis Cool, son of Johannes Cool and Neeltje Roosa, was baptized in New York in 1715. Cornelis first married Sara Westval with whom he was father of Johannes Cool—the man for whom Hamil made so much hay. Cornelis married next Claesje Jongbloet and they had sons Jacob and Cornelis Westbroeck Cole.¹⁶ This

Microfilm Publications M252, roll 54); Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29.

¹⁵John Cooley to John A. Cooley [Jr.], 3 Feb 1849, in Hamil, 145-146. The letter, which was mailed from Connelville [Fayette County], Pennsylvania, begins "Dear Sir or cousin" and is signed "Your cousin."

¹⁶For the marriage of Cornelis see *The Minisink Valley Reformed Dutch Church Records 1716-1830* (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, Inc., 2008), 129; for the parents and baptismal record of Johannes Cool, see *Records of Baptisms of the Reformed Church at Machackemeck (Deerpark), Orange County, New York, 1716-1742*; for the baptism of Jacob Cole, see *Records of Baptisms of the Reformed*

represents the true parentage of Johannes Cooley and demonstrates that Hamil not only got the Johannes' descendants wrong, but misread his ancestry.

That's the record.

The number of inconsistencies and contradictions in Hamil's manuscript are not infinite but virtually uncountable all the same. The poor research combined with her jumbled writing style makes it difficult to determine what Hamil really meant to say. To arrive at some semblance of an understanding, it's necessary to look closely at Hamil's references to Johannes Cool and his supposed brother, William Cooley. (I'll continue numbering the points, as above.)

Six: Hamil arbitrarily changed names, both first and last. The most obvious morphing of names is, of course, the change from Cool (which is pronounced "Cole" in Dutch) to Cooley.¹⁷ But Hamil also freely altered first names. She believed, for example, that Cornelis Cool—the man who married Sara Westval—was born in New York in 1694. She varied his name between combinations of William or Willem, Willem C., and Cool or Cooley.¹⁸ She further stated that Willem Cool's son, William Cooley (purportedly Johannes Cool's brother), changed his name to Francis after he moved to Pennsylvania, but she also calls him Wilhelmus and makes reference to *his* purported son

Church at Machackemeck (Deerpark), Orange County New York 1747-1749; for the baptism of Cornelis Westbroek Cole see Records of Baptisms of the Reformed Church at Machackemeck (Deerpark), Orange County New York, 1749-1750.

¹⁷Genealogical clues come from a variety of sources, even from language and linguistics. Considering that Cool (or Kool, as it is often spelled) was pronounced Cole, it's not surprising that Cole became a common variant of the name. Indeed, elsewhere in this book I use Cole as the general moniker for this family merely for the purpose of reminding the reader of the phonetics. But Hamil generally used Cool, so I also do in this chapter in attempt to avoid confusion.

¹⁸It's difficult to remain consistent given such inconsistency. I call Sara Westval's husband (who was really Cornelis) Willem or Willem Cornelis when referring to Hamil's text and as Cornelis or (Willem) Cornelis when referring to the record. I use William for his "son" and Francis (which was his name) for *his* son—whose father, in fact, is presently unknown.

as William Francis.¹⁹ If it sounds confusing, it is—and this is just a tiny slice of a thoroughly confused genealogy. But to make matters worse, Hamil later makes William's son Francis the son of Peter and Anneke Cool, the sort of contradiction found all too often within the book's pages.²⁰

Seven: Hamil claims that Johannes Cool, who she re-christened John Cooley, married first Annetje Decker and second Elizabeth Firmin. However, we know that this is the woman who married William Cooley. Hamil provided no documentation or citation for the marriage; she merely stated it as unchallenged fact. Why Hamil did this will likely remain unanswered.

Eight: Hamil wrote that John Cooley (a.k.a. Johannes Cool) died and left a will in Kent County, Maryland in 1823. This had taken me in for some years. Although I'd already been convinced that John Cooley of Stokes County was not Hamil's Johannes, her John seemed to have been a living, breathing man with a wife and family. However, the Kent county clerk, in response to my inquiry, wrote that no such will exists.²¹

Nine: Shortly after the death of Elizabeth Firmin, Hamil claims that Johannes married Rebecca Kastner who, she says, was his brother William's widow.²² But Jonathan Coolley's family bible (remember, Hamil claimed Jonathan was Johannes and Elizabeth's son) tells us a different story. Elizabeth died in 1837, outliving both Johannes and William. Unless Johannes was a bigamist or had divorced Elizabeth, he could not have married his sister-in-law, Rebecca Kastner. In any event, no record of the marriage has ever been found.

¹⁹Hamil, 87.

²⁰Hamil, 90.

²¹Nancy Jewell, Register of Wills, Kent County, Maryland to Michael Cooley, 27 January 2010.

Ten: Hamil wrote that Charles E. Stickney's 1867 *History of the Minisink Region* "frequently refers to William Cooley and his sons - there were six - and mentions the tradition of William's great stature and strength." Stickney, she wrote, commented that among these sons "not one of them [was] a drunkard."²³ One short account of a Cooley family is found in Stickney's book, but there's absolutely no mention of William / Willem / Cornelis or of any of the six sons Hamil attributes to (Willem) Cornelis Cool and Sara Westval. And, thanks to the search capabilities of the Internet, it's readily ascertained that the word "drunkard" appears nowhere in the text. One might imagine that Hamil mixed up her sources, but two paragraphs later she describes an incident that *is* found in Stickney's book: the murder of the wife of a David Cooley, who is of unknown relationship to William and his sons.²⁴ This is particularly troubling. Not only does it prove the extreme sloppiness in Hamil's work, it begs the question, Did she intentionally distort the evidence to support her conclusions?

But in the end, the ancestral lineage Hamil provided for Johannes Cool—and virtually everyone else—doesn't concur with the New York Dutch records nor with Richard H. Benson's *The Barent Jacobsen Cool Family* (Boston: Newbury Street Press, 2001), possibly the definitive modern genealogy for the New York Cool / Cole family.²⁵

To summarize Hamil's account, (Willem) Cornelis Cool had six sons, including William and Johannes. William (who, she says, changed his name to Francis) had son Francis who married Eleanor Vandervort. Johannes, according to Hamil, was the father

²²Hamil, 25, 87.

²³Hamil, 23.

²⁴Charles E. Stickney, *A History of the Minisink Region* (Middletown, NY: Coe Finch and I. F. Guiwits, 1867), 69-70, 120. By Hamil's style of accounting, the six sons were Leandert, William, Andries, Josias, Cornelius, and Johannes.

²⁵Note that the name Cooley appears nowhere in Benson's book.

of John Andrew Cooley, Sr., making Francis and John Andrew Sr. first cousins through their fathers.²⁶ But nothing found in any record supports the relationship. And finally, that Hamil's work resulted in longstanding fallacy is proved with DNA: there was *no* patrilineal relationship between Johannes and Francis, as described in the next chapter.

Yes, it's terribly confusing. And, because of the factitious nature of virtually all of it, the above points probably would not deserve a second reading. But Hamil's collection of falsehoods resulted in a near century-long derailment from a correct understanding about these families.

Hamil's manuscript doesn't claim knowledge of John Cooley of Stokes County. But she did import at least three families associated with the Stokes Cooleys into her complex web—those of John Cooley, Joseph Cooley, and Daniel Cooley, who she claimed were brothers, sons of a Joseph Cooley, and grandsons of a Robert Cooley of Pennsylvania—and devoted a whole section of her book to them.²⁷ It would be difficult, confusing, and certainly pointless to recount the many ways Hamil got these families wrong. Considering the numerous errors, it's a wonder that any researcher has managed to identify their ancestors in Hamil's text. In fact, most have not. But Hamil was sure she had, and, at a later date, so did Dale Walker.

²⁶Hamil, 25-26.

²⁷Hamil, 127-134.

4: DALE LEE "PATRICK" WALKER

In its barest state, genealogy is about lineages, straight and firmly drawn lines that move from point A to point B and beyond. One branch leads to another, much like the arteries of a road map or the vessels streaming to and from a heart. Although we generally imagine human lineages when we hear the word genealogy, works have been written about the genealogies of any number of diverse subjects: language origins, horses, plants, and music genres, to name just a few. We can imagine steaming up the Mississippi from the Gulf of Mexico to discover a "genealogy" of all the streams, rivers, and creeks that flow into or conjoin with the great river. But it's not until we read Mark Twain or stories about Seabiscuit, for example, that we truly learn something substantially more than what the decorative maps of networks and pedigrees can provide. Likewise, it's not until we examine the lives found in our genealogies that flesh and blood take shape to fill out the stark scaffolding of an ancestral chart. Only then do our ancestors become more than a mere assemblage of ahnentafel numbers, names, places, and dates.

Well-crafted genealogies develop narratives and link them by familial relationships. Each story provides insight into the nature, motivations, and conundrums of a human life. Taken together, they can greatly enrich a family history. It's incumbent on the genealogist to record the stories—and the lineages—as accurately as possible. Dale Walker, a descendant of John Cooley of Stokes County through his son James Cooley (1772-1821), wanted to get it right. In the course of his two or more decades doing genealogy, he welcomed evidence and took pride in the stories he uncovered.

Dale Lee Walker was born June 5, 1946 in Van Nuys, California to Delta

Maureen Cooley, a daughter of Daniel Cooley and Martha Frances Davison. Dale, who changed his name to Patrick after his conversion to Catholicism, corresponded with Bernita Jones Sharp for at least seven years beginning in 1978. His letters, transcribed by Dennis Young and in possession of Mary Cooley of Grants Pass, Oregon, reveal a flexible (if somewhat capricious) researcher, one willing to alter his views once new facts emerge (as any genealogist should do). In September 1978, for example, Pat—as he now styled himself—wrote that his ancestor, James Cooley (1772-1821), was a son of Daniel Cooley of Ray County, Missouri.²⁸ But by November of 1978—after correspondence with "Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Buirch" of Lodi, California—Pat understood that John Cooley of Stokes County was the progenitor of the Missouri family and that Daniel and James were likely brothers, not father and son.²⁹ (The results of DNA tests now instruct us that Daniel was *not* of the Stokes County Cooleys.)³⁰

Pat wrote [typos correcte], "I have always been told that the Cooleys were a Dutch family descended from Van Cuylers of Amsterdam, Holland." He made no further claim and merely speculated about a possible seventeenth-century ancestor, Jan Coele.³¹ But, evidently, Pat discovered Hamil's lineages, if not the book itself, in 1979 after a correspondence with "a 2nd cousin...in Lyons, Illinois." He became "fairly convinced that John Cooley was the youngest son of William Cornelius Cooley ... He had a son John born 1740, which is just about right for our John."³²

²⁸Pat Walker to Bernita Sharp, 23 September 1978, <http://ancestraldata.com/ahnentafel/256/PatWalker-letters.html>. Daniel emigrated to Missouri from Kentucky, dying in Ray County in 1826.

²⁹Pat Walker to Bernita Sharp, 26 November 1978. We now know through DNA testing that Daniel was *not* a son of John's.

³⁰See Cooley group CF13 at ftdna.com.

³¹Pat Walker to Bernita Sharp, 20 October 1978.

³²Pat Walker to Bernita Sharp, 30 September 1979.

Several year later, Eleanor L. Rue summarized two family group sheets Pat had constructed. The first, dated November 22, 1980—a little more than a year after his find—lists John's parents as William Cornelius and Sarah Cooley, which is in keeping with Hamil. But Pat claimed that William's parents were Lambert [Leendert] Cool and Sarah Van Gorden, which is not in keeping with Hamil. Pat's second version, dated May 1982, makes the father the grandfather, and vice versa.³³ The revision brings the lineage back in line with Hamil and makes Hamil's Johannes the uncle of Pat's Johannes—but also removes it further from the truth. (They were second cousins.) So, while Hamil claimed that her John A. Coolley was Johannes Cool baptized on June 17, 1740 in Orange County, New York, a son of Cornelis Cool and Sara Westval and married Elizabeth Firmin, Walker claimed that his John Cooley was Johannes Cool baptized on May 31, 1741—a grandson of Cornelius Cool and Sara Van Gorden, and married Elizabeth Fermin.³⁴ In fact, the records of the Dutch Reformed Church tell us that Leendert (Pat Walker's Lambert) and Sara Van Gorden (actually, Van Garden) were parents of the Johannes baptized in 1741. Leendert and Cornelis were first cousins, not father and son.³⁵ (This is a mouthful, I know, and it's difficult to parse. The chart at the beginning of the chapter should add clarity.)

Pat likely hadn't seen Hamil's book at this point and relied on the Illinois cousin for the information. In any event, the lineage he conjured up is different from the lineage

³³Eleanor Rue, "Probably the Dutch Cooley Line," September 1986. A photocopy of the one-page summary, received from Arthur E. Fulmer in 1994, is in the possession of the author.

³⁴Hamil mistakenly wrote that he was baptized in 1740, the son of Leendert Cool and Sara Van Gordon [sic].

³⁵Hamil, 24, 25, 87; For Johannes' 1740 baptism see *Records of Baptisms of the Reformed Church at Machackemeck (Deerpark), Orange County New York, 1716-1742*; For Johannes' 1741 baptism see "Church Register of the Walpeck Congregation," *Minisink Valley Reformed Dutch Church Records*, ed. Royden Woodward Vosburgh, Collections of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society 5 (New

Hamil attributed to James's brother, Joseph Cooley, not to mention her erroneous claim that they were sons of another Joseph and grandsons of a Robert Cooley of Pennsylvania.³⁶

Pat published a newsletter, *Cooley Cousins*, for six or more years during the 1980s and '90s. The quarterly was primarily concerned with the descendants of Timothy "Tink" Cooley, a son of James Cooley (1772-1821), and served to update family members on contemporaneous births, deaths, and marriages. Although Pat occasionally alluded in its pages to the Dutch Cools, it didn't focus on genealogical research. Nowhere, as far as I can tell, did he lay out the Dutch lineage or explain how he came up with it.³⁷

York: Printed for the Society, 1913), 1.

³⁶Hamil, 81, 127. According to Hamil, Joseph Cooley (1720-1802) married Margaret Miller. She makes several of these children the Stokes County Cooleys, but they were all born a decade later.

³⁷Most, if not all, issues of *Cooley Cousins* were scanned by Sandra Stanton in 2010, <http://ancestraldata.com/ahnentafel/256/cooleycousinsnewsletter/>.

5: THREE TALES OF ELIZABETH FIRMIN

If we are to believe everything we read, Elizabeth Firmin lived three independent but concurrent lives:

- Hamil claimed Elizabeth married Johannes Cool of Orange County, New York, the son of (Willem) Cornelis Cool, and that she died sometime prior to his death in 1823. They lived in Maryland, Hamil claims, before moving to Pennsylvania. With Johannes, she had four sons: Jonathan, Daniel, David, and Frederick—John Andrew having been born in 1767 from Willem's first marriage.
- Walker claimed that Elizabeth "Fermin" married John Cooley, formerly Johannes Cool, son of Leendert Cool, of Orange County, New York, and lived in North Carolina and Kentucky.³⁸ With this John, Elizabeth had as many as eleven children—none of whom were the children she "had" with Hamil's Johannes Cool, although the birth years overlap.
- The 1889 *Biographical Cyclopedia*, which is supported by several pieces of documentation, states that Elizabeth Firmin married William Cooley and that they resided in Maryland and Pennsylvania. They had five sons: John, Jonathan, Matthew, Isaac, and Frederick.
A simple glance at the sources for the three versions of Elizabeth's life quickly

reveals which is correct. Walker's charts are not verifiable, not even within Hamil's manuscript, which includes none of the children Walker attributed to Johannes Cool and Elizabeth Fermin. Hamil's account, in any case, is wholly untrustworthy. That leaves the 1889 Fayette County biography, the particulars of which would have been provided to the publishers by a close family member, if not by the subject of the sketch himself,

³⁸Elizabeth's last name is spelled "Firmin" in Hamil, in the *Biographical Cyclopedia*, and in Jonathan Cooley's bible. Although one of the several legitimate variations on the name, Walker's spelling of "Fermin" is unique when used to refer to Elizabeth. We can guess that the appearance of "Fermin" online and elsewhere indicates that Walker is the probable the source, rather than Hamil.

Elizabeth's grandson John Cooley (1816-1892), who lived another three years after the book's publication. Furthermore, the bio is backed up by the bible record of John's father, Jonathan Cooley, and by the 1849 letter written by John to his cousin John Andrew Coolley, Jr. Hamil's claims cannot be reconciled to the *Biographical Cyclopedia* nor to the records of the Dutch Reformed Church. Indeed, if we are to believe both accounts (the 1889 bio and Hamil)—that Jonathan's parents were William Cooley and Elizabeth Firmin, and John Andrew Coolley, Sr.'s parents were Johannes Cool and Annetje Decker—William and John Andrew Coolley would not have been related at all. As we will see, however, DNA tells us they came from the same paternal stock and backs up the strong genealogical suggestion that they (William and John Andrew) were father and son.

Hamil did not include information from the Fayette County biography, which is, as far as I know, the only extant secondary source naming Elizabeth Firmin. Nor does she mention Jonathan Coolley's family bible—the only primary source known to reference Elizabeth by name. The question is, How did Hamil know about Elizabeth, let alone her surname, without consulting either of these sources—both of which mention or infer that Elizabeth was married to William Cooley, and neither of which hint at a Dutch ancestry? I don't have the answer to that question. But we do gain insight to the how-of-it by examining Hamil's methodology, which lacks proper research, discipline, and coherence.

Dale Lee Patrick Walker died at the age of forty-six on May 4, 1993 in St. Louis, Missouri. He was an enthusiastic genealogist possessed of an inquiring mind. He committed himself to the pursuit with energy and intelligence and had no qualms about admitting that he'd gotten something wrong. But Pat's charts, mistakes and all, found their way to the CFAA and, despite the earlier efforts of Frank and Elizabeth Cooley, the

so-called "Dutch Cooleys" became a fixture in a bizarre, other-universe reality, a quantum-like world where two men can exist as one, and a woman can have multiple husbands in several locations at the same time. Had Pat lived long enough, he certainly would have recognized the problem.

6: MILDRED COOLEY TALLANT

We find more clues to the how-of-it by looking at the papers of Mildred Tallant. Mildred's daughter, Lotus Alderman Steele, wrote in 1977 that her family had been unable to take the line further back than to James Alvin Cooley (1795-1835) and Frances Miller (1797-1883).³⁹ Although Mildred apparently never established a North Carolina heritage, she was an important player in the early study of the Stokes County Cooleys and has become, if unwittingly, part of the solution to the Hamil problem.

Born Mildred Nettie Cooley in Chetco County, Oregon on November 23, 1878, she was the daughter of Henry Miller Cooley and Florence Howland and great-granddaughter of James Alvin Cooley and Frances Miller. Mildred and her first husband, Sylvanus Edgard Alderman, had three children: Muriel Alderman Harris (1899-1988), Lotus Alderman Steele (1900-1982), and Blair Thaw Alderman (1902-1949). Her husband, Sylvanus, died in 1904 and, after eight years as a single mother, Mildred married Edward Charles Tallant (1858-1936).

Dennis Young, the CFAA's treasurer from 1997 to 1999, maintains an online archive of Tallant's papers. Here we find two letters to Mildred from Lura Cooley Hamil. The first, dated January 30, 1932, begins, "This exchange of letters is getting to be quite an exciting affair and this time the postscript of your letter, with its information about Mrs. Frances Cooley Herron and her line assured me of one more cousin at least. And you know I feel strongly that you [are] of the Samuel Cooley line..." In the margin, Mildred wrote, "Not true however."⁴⁰

³⁹Lotus Steele to Frank E. Cooley, *Tallant Papers*. Lotus died 18 Mar 1982 in Santa Barbara, California.

⁴⁰Lura Hamil to Mildred Tallant, *Mildred Cooley Tallant Papers*, 30 January 1932, <http://www.eskimo.com/~day/cooley/docs/>.

When Hamil wrote to Mildred again on July 11, 1932 she had already changed her mind about *Mildred's* ancestry, saying, "You will see that I called you 'Cousin' in the beginning. Well, we are that at some remove. For Elizabeth and Daniel Cooley who located in Kentucky in 1783 were—you will find, I am positive—the parents of your James. And Elizabeth, baptized in New York state in the old Mahackemack (Minisink) Dutch Reformed church on March 25, 1764, the daughter of John Cooley and Annetje (Decker) Cooley." Mildred wrote in the margin of the letter, "Do not think this is correct."⁴¹ Hamil continued:

The book is now in the hands of a publisher who wanted to look it over... Have been so tired out since finishing this big job of copying that the hot weather is all I can manage.... Let us hope that the Depression won't make my work wasted. In the meantime one copy is to retire to my husband's fire-proof safe so that wrecks or failures of publishing companies can't jeopardize everything.⁴²

It's not known whether the publisher simply didn't work out or that it abandoned the project. In any event, Hamil had a stroke that December and died on January 9, 1933 at the age of fifty-four. Her obituary begins,

Mrs. Lura Edna Hamil, wife of Dr. Frederick L. Hamil, 229 North Union Street, one of the city's most active civic workers, passed away at Deaconess Hospital at 8 o'clock Monday evening. About three weeks ago she was stricken with paralysis while alone in her home and this illness, complicated by weakness of the heart, resulted in her death last night.⁴³

After Hamil's death, Mildred wrote the following undated notes:

These were the Cooleys Mrs Hamil was searching for. William Cooley - (of Irish extraction) was in Maryland at the time of Rev [Revolution] ... Elizabeth Firman. Married in Baltimore or Havre de Grasse [sic] ... Mrs. Hamil has letters written 1849 from John to Cooley cousins in Ill. I am sure this is her line, altho she

⁴¹Lura Hamil to Mildred Tallant, *Tallant Papers*, 11 July 1932. I've slightly altered the punctuation in the Tallant quote for readability. In fact, this may be one of the few things that Hamil got half-right. It's now generally accepted that James Alvin Cooley was the son of Daniel Cooley and his first wife, Mildred Ball.

⁴²Lura Hamil to Mildred Tallant, *Tallant Papers*, 30 January 1932.

⁴³"Lura Edna Coolley Hamil," *Illinois State Journal*, 10 January 1933, 7.

doubted it. A man at Uniontown Pa sent this 'data' to me and I sent it on to Mrs Hamil.⁴⁴

From this we can comfortably conclude that Hamil knew about the marriage of William Cooley and Elizabeth Firmin. After all, judging from Mildred's account, they had exchanged letters about it. We also know from Hamil's July 1932 letter to Mildred that she had been in correspondence with Dean Cooley. But when the dean published *The Cooley Genealogy* in 1941, Hamil's lineages were not included. Cooley did, however, include several pages prepared by Mildred. From these facts we can readily ascertain that Mortimer Cooley had intentionally stayed clear of the Dutch Cooley business.⁴⁵

One might think Hamil's manuscript would have been relegated to the dustbin of history, and perhaps that's what Dean Cooley had in mind by not acknowledging her work. But it's been resurrected at least twice. Once, when Hamil's cousins rescued it from the wrecking ball nearly twenty years after her death, and when Pat Walker "rediscovered" the Hamil lineages after another two decades.

But why should "A Story of Pioneering" merit a lengthy discussion? First, because it's wrong and inaccurately represents the families about which Hamil wrote. Secondly, because the faux Dutch lineage is recorded on dozens, perhaps hundreds, perhaps even thousands of webpages and family group sheets—an avalanche for which some energy is required in the effort to reverse. But worse, when researchers are queried about their inclusion of Hamil's material, the inevitable response is along the lines of, "It's in a book"—a book, in fact, that hardly anyone has seen. It is imperative that the inaccuracies, fallacies, and myths of Hamil's lineages be put to rest so that proper

⁴⁴"Research Notes (Miscellaneous)," *Tallant Papers*, undated.

⁴⁵See Mortimer E. Cooley, 892-905.

research by and for the several Cooley families can finally proceed with seriousness.

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More than eighty years since Hamil's death, the descendants of the Fayette County Cooleys still do not know their lineage back further than William Cooley and Elizabeth Firmin. Until the spring of 2014, the descendants of John Cooley and Abigail Lippincott of Hunterdon County, New Jersey had no better idea about their lineage other than that John's father's name *might* have been James, as suggested by Dean Cooley in 1941.<sup>46</sup> We now know two things about Mildred Tallant's Daniel Cooley: that she was correct in believing he was not of Dutch ancestry, and that Pat Walker was wrong in suggesting he was a scion of the Stokes County Cooleys. And more than three decades after Pat learned his James Cooley (1772-1821) was a son of John Cooley of Stokes County, numerous researchers have failed to improve on that—notwithstanding the bogus Dutch Cooley diversion.

The public has gained access to an additional eight volumes of federal census records since Hamil's time. An uncountable number of genealogy-related books have been published and the Internet has revolutionized research of all kinds. DNA technologies once reserved for highly-educated population geneticists are now available to the casual genetic genealogist. It's true that we don't know whether William Cooley of Fayette County, Pennsylvania married more than once or whether he had a brother named John—born Johannes Cool or not. Nor can we say with certainty that Firmin was Elizabeth's maiden name rather than her name from an earlier marriage. No one knows that the widow of one man did not marry his cousin. And there's no proof that John

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<sup>46</sup>Mortimer Cooley, 910. As shown in the next chapter, DNA studies have shown that the Cooley / Firmin and the Cooley / Lippincott male descendants have the same Y chromosome, the significance of

Andrew Cooley, Sr. and Jonathan Cooley were not *half*-brothers, as claimed by Hamil.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, DNA has shown conclusively that Hamil's Coolleys has no genetic ties to the New York Dutch Cools, that neither family is related to John Cooley of Stokes County, and that, in fact, there are at least six unrelated families represented in Hamil's book.

But stay tuned. The new, burgeoning science of forensic genetics has given us the means to evaluate new evidence and construct, as much as possible, a more accurate representation of not only the Cooleys of Stokes County, North Carolina, but all Cooley clans.

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which is yet to be determined.

<sup>47</sup>In fact, there's a ten year gap between the births of the two men, a gap that might be explained by the death of Hamil's imagined earlier wife of William's.