

KIVETTS WHO ADDED THE "E"

Some are surprised to find the various spellings of the name of our patriarch to be different from the most frequently used "KIVETT" spelling of today. It is reasoned that these was the result of well intentioned, but inaccurate, translations into English from the uncertain earlier European language spelling. Other spellings have also been seen in early census records such as "KIVIT", "KEVIT", and even wilder variations like "CUVETT". Today we can only guess that these creative spellings were the result of early phonetics at work in the ear and mind of some early census takers. Remember that often these earlier Kivetts may not have been able to read or write, and thus could not correct the misspellings of their own name. Approximated spellings, coupled with the flourished written script of census takers frequently selected for the artistic beauty rather than readability of their writing, made for some unusual accidental recordings of early Kivett family members' names. But, along the line, some family members also consciously began to add an "E" to the spelling of their name – producing some entire branches with names purposely spelled "KIVETTE". Why did they do this? It's hard to be sure. In the several years this compiler has been recording Kivett family names and dates, these stories of a few possible reasons have been received.

After some of Pieter and Anna's grandchildren and great-grandchildren migrated to distant places, they lost close contact with those far behind in Randolph County. This separation was sometimes to less civilized places which did not offer the opportunity, nor present the need, for much formal education. So, unlike Pieter who we know signed his name on his will, several of his descendants in later generations did not learn to read or write. In these new places the Kivett name was not familiar to their neighbors like it had been in Randolph Co. So, those new literate neighbors, and county officials in these other places sometimes assumed that such a French sounding name should end in "E" – kind of like we get used to seeing an "E" on many French derivation words with "ETT" endings [cigarette, baguette, etc.]. Other far away relatives heard about this new "KIVETTE" spelling through letters that may have been written to them by someone who could write. More unknowing family members then also began to use the "E" in their name, thinking it was the proper spelling. Such is reported to have happened to an isolated family living in Alabama around the time of the Civil War. They heard that some of the family who had moved to Cumberland County, NC were spelling their name "KIVETTE". The Alabama family promptly also changed to "KIVETTE" leaving records of different spellings among members of the same, but separated, family branch.

In any family a few more upstanding, prosperous, or even pompous members grow to loath the association with their less distinguished, or seemingly less cultured cousins. So it was also with the Kivett family that, even within close communities, some apparently began to add the "E" to their names in the vain hope that this would show the world that they were not really related to their less desirable cousins. It was boldly asserted by some in the imagined upper social strata that "We are not related to that OTHER KIVETT set". For obvious reasons, no examples of specific individuals will be cited here who initiated such discrimination by name. However, it has been told in private that all too often it really did happen this way. A few readers may recognize some regal "KIVETTE" who may have opted for the spelling change out of grandiose self-illusion, or they may see a common "KIVETT" or two who proudly disassociated themselves with that aristocratically aloof "OTHER KIVETTE" family.

Finally, with the gallant participation of the Kivett family members in military service over many conflicts, their names on service records were occasionally misspelled by a careless clerk, to remained forever changed by the governmental bureaucracy. A reported example involves the son of a widow who died in WWI in France. His name had been misspelled as "KIVETTE" on his service entry record. When his younger "KIVETT" brother, went on behalf of their bereaved mother to reclaim the returned body of their fallen family veteran, it would not be released to someone with a different last name. So, to resolve the dilemma, the younger brother went to court and had his name legally changed to "KIVETTE" - the only way to obtain his brother's body for final burial in America. Hence in this one family we find two brothers named "KIVETTE", a father and other siblings named "KIVETT". It is suspected that other, less emotional, kinds of governmental Snafus may have produced other "KIVETTES"

Both spellings are used in the records of this compiler, being as faithful as possible to retain that one found on any available document. Occasionally, conflicting spellings are found in different records for the same person. In that case, the one used here is that reported by a source familiar with the individual involved. A few spellings remain uncertain. In any case, all are considered descendants of Pieter and Anna, whose last names were surely not written like either modern spelling. As spelled differently for whatever reason, all located "KIVETTS" and "KIVETTES" are included here without judgement about cause and warmly welcomed as true members of *The Kivett Family*