

DISCOVERY OF THE BURDINE BLAKE NOTEBOOK

Genealogical data is often terse, enigmatic and capable of many interpretations. The essence of the personality of our ancestors is generally lost in the sands of time. But there are exceptions.

James Harold "Bud" Doughty (1908-1976) was my mother's brother. His discovery of Burdine Blake's notebook was pure serendipity. He recalled walking home one day when he noticed a notebook laying on top of a box of trash that had been laid along the street for trash pickup. Hoping it would contain writing paper, Bud carried the book home.

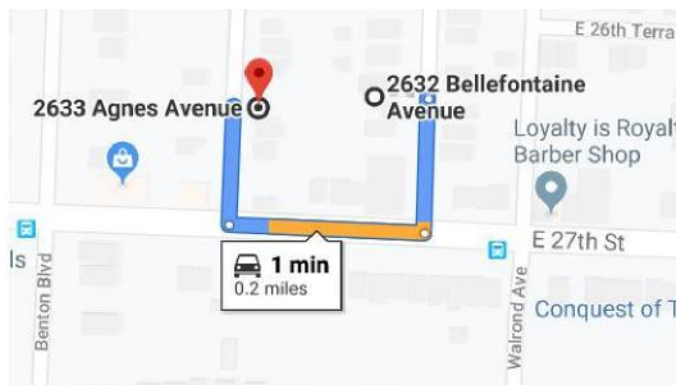
Much to his surprise, Bud found the notebook contained over 230 pages of poetry and notes dating back to the 1870s. The notebook's author was one Burdine Blake, a former mayor of London, Ohio. Bud tried for several years to contact persons in New London and elsewhere who might be interested in the book, to no avail.

Bud passed away in 1976. In going through his effects, I discovered the notebook in a buffet drawer in the dining room of the Doughty home at 2633 Agnes St., Kansas City, MO. In the same drawer were some a few scattered typed notes about his research of the book.

The notebook lay on a shelf of our house for decades. Then, at age 85, I had a vision of my own demise, the notebook being taken out with the rubbish – but nobody rescuing it this time. With the help of the internet, I figured I had a much better chance of finding a good home for Burdine's notebook.

I accidentally found Leigh Larson's website with its neat layout of Burdine Blake's family tree. Through Leigh, I met Brian Blake, thus completing the cycle leading to the return of the notebook.

HOW DID THE NOTEBOOK TRAVEL TO A TRASH DUMP IN KANSAS CITY, MO?



City directory and Census records show that Daniel Felton Blake, Burdine Blake's youngest son, lived in Kansas City as early as 1903. **From 1907 to about 1924 he lived at 2632 Fontaine Avenue.** This is a short walking distance from where my uncle lived at 2633 Agnes. He said he had retrieved the notebook a short distance away from his house and I assume 2632 Bellefontaine is where he found it.

WHEN WAS THE DISCOVERY MADE?

Fixing the time of the discovery is more difficult. As nearly as I can recall, I was a teenager when I first heard my uncle discuss the notebook with my mother. That would fix the time of discovery as the late 1940s or early 50s.

The year 1928 finds Daniel still living at 2632 Bellefontaine. His wife had died in 1908 and they had no children. He is 74 years of age and still working. His vocation is listed as "appraiser" and there is one reference to Daniel as being a "trustee in guardianship" in the city directories. His place of business was listed as "Manhattan Building" and also the



"Keith and Perry Building" at 9th and Walnut Street. This would be a daunting trip by public transportation for a 74 year old man. So, it is not surprising to see Daniel moving to the Victoria Hotel downtown by 1927. This is my choice for the time period during which my uncle found the discarded notebook. Of course it is possible that the subsequent tenant of 2632 Bellefontaine did a housecleaning at a later date.

<---- The Victoria Hotel at 300 E. 9th st

In the city directory of 1933 Daniel Blake is still living at 308 E. 9th Street. In 1934 he passed away. He was buried by this wife at Mount Washington Cemetery in Independence, about 25 miles away.

FEB 27 1934

WRITE PLAINLY, WITH UNFADING INK--THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD

ST. NO. 2

Every item of information should be carefully supplied. AGE should be stated EXACTLY. PHYSICIANS should state CAUSE OF DEATH in plain terms, so that it may be properly classified. Exact statement of OCCUPATION is very important.

MISSOURI STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS
CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

Do not use this space.
1465

1. PLACE OF DEATH
 County Jackson Registration District No. B 5-1
 Township Kewanee Primary Registration District No. 4803
 City Kansas City, Mo. (No. Fellows Compounding House 27 + Front Ward)

2. FULL NAME Daniel F. Blake
 (a) Residence, No. Victoria Hotel St. _____ Ward _____
 (Usual place of abode)
 Length of residence in city or town where death occurred yrs. mos. 9 ds. How long in U. S., if of foreign birth? yrs. mos. ds.

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS				MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH	
3. SEX <u>Male</u>	4. COLOR OR RACE <u>White</u>	5. SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED <u>Widowed</u>		21. DATE OF DEATH (MONTH, DAY, AND YEAR) <u>Jan 28, 1934</u>	
5A. IF MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED HUSBAND OF (OR) WIFE OF <u>Lillian Blake</u>				22. I HEREBY CERTIFY, that I attended deceased from <u>Jan 18, 1934</u> to <u>Jan 28, 1934</u> I first saw him live on <u>Jan 27, 1934</u> . Death is said to have occurred on the date stated above, at <u>11:30 a.m.</u> The principal cause of death and related causes of importance were as follows: <u>Chronic interstitial nephritis</u> Date of onset <u>1928</u> <u>13 30</u> <u>151</u>	
6. DATE OF BIRTH (MONTH, DAY, AND YEAR) <u>Sept 11, 1854</u>				Other contributory causes of importance: <u>Myocarditis, Chronic</u> <u>Nov 1923</u>	
7. AGE YEARS MONTHS DAYS <u>79</u> <u>4</u> <u>17</u> If LESS than 1 day, hrs. or min.				8. Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as spinner, sawyer, bookkeeper, etc. <u>Bank Referee</u>	
9. Industry or business in which work was done, as silk mill, saw mill, bank, etc. <u>Court</u>				11. Total time (years) spent in this occupation	
10. Date deceased last worked at this occupation (month and year)				12. BIRTHPLACE (CITY OR TOWN) (STATE OR COUNTRY) <u>West Union Adams Co. Ohio</u>	
13. NAME <u>Burdine Blake</u>				Name of operation _____ Date of _____	
14. BIRTHPLACE (CITY OR TOWN) (STATE OR COUNTRY) <u>Ohio</u>				What test confirmed diagnosis? <u>Urinalysis</u> Was there an autopsy? <u>no</u>	
15. MAIDEN NAME <u>Unknown</u>				23. If death was due to external causes (violence), fill in also the following: Accident, suicide, or homicide? _____ Date of injury _____, 19____ Where did injury occur? _____ (Specify city or town, county, and State) Specify whether injury occurred in industry, in home, or in public place.	
16. BIRTHPLACE (CITY OR TOWN) (STATE OR COUNTRY) <u>Unknown</u>				Manner of injury _____ Nature of injury _____	
17. INFORMANT <u>Ward P. Stewart</u> (ADDRESS) <u>1414 Grand Street</u>				24. Was disease or injury in any way related to occupation of deceased? <u>no</u> If so, specify _____ (Signed) <u>A. Britton, M.D.</u> M. D. (Address) <u>515 Bryant Bldg</u> <u>Kansas City, Mo</u>	
18. BURIAL, CREMATION, OR REMOVAL Place <u>Mount Washington</u> DATE <u>Jan 31, 1934</u>					
19. UNDERTAKER <u>Ott & Mitchell</u> (ADDRESS) <u>Independence, Mo</u>					
20. FILED <u>Jan 30, 1934</u> <u>R. M. Brown</u> <u>Registrar</u>					

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF JAMES HAROLD DOUGHTY



Bud's father, Frances "Frank" Doughty (1883-1962) and mother, Alma Phoebe Seela (1884-1974) were married in Pittsburg, KS, in 1904. They immediately embarked on a trip to the west, on horseback, seeking their fortune. They tended to remain in mining towns where Frank would work as a barber.

Their first child, Alma Frances (1905-1999), was born in Roslyn, Washington. Their second child, Maybelle (1907-1989), was born in Black Diamond, Colorado. James Harold "Bud" (1908-1976) was born in Las Vegas, New Mexico. Their last child, Clyde M. (1909-1910) was born in Morley, Colorado.

Morley was a new mining town near Raton Pass, between 7000 and 8000 feet above sea level. Clyde Doughty died at one year of age and Bud was frequently sick himself. After he had a severe bout of pneumonia the doctor told Frank that his son would surely die unless he was taken out of the mountains to a lower altitude. My mother (Alma) recalls the whole family leaving Colorado immediately, the same night, by train.

The family moved to Kansas City where Frank Doughty worked as a barber.

Bud's health improved but he remained more frail than other members of his family. He graduated from high school and began saving money to pursue an engineering degree at the Missouri School of Mines. At one point he worked as a telephone lineman. He also had jobs more aligned with his interest in art and reading. He painted signs and was associated with artist Sidney Moore, who later supervised the restoration of Missouri Town. Bud was a skilled artist

<---- At left – Bud's parents in 1930

The years before and after the Great Depression were difficult for the Doughty family. The time sequence of these events are hard to fix in retrospect.

1. Frank Doughty secured a patent on a lock he had designed. He made plans to manufacture it. The day before they planned to withdraw the family savings, the banks closed and they lost all their money.
- 2.. In Kansas City, a price war started among the barbers. Being unable to earn a living as barber in Kansas City, Frank returns to the Cripple Creek, CO area, leaving his family in Kansas City. He continued as a barber but also panned gold. He returned to Kanas City several years later.
3. Bud' fiancée died of tuberculosis.
4. A short time later, Bud developed recurring bout of severe "dizziness" that would leave him incapacitated for sometimes days at a time. He refused to see a





doctor. He feared having attacks in public, so he stayed at home the rest of his life. He sometimes would walk to the grocery or a store nearby, but I never saw him get in a car or public conveyance.

<---- Portrait of Bud's mother (age 17, from photo), Alma Phoebe, painted by Bud

The nature of Bud's illness is a matter of conjecture. Panic disorder can be accompanied by a fear of leaving the house (agoraphobia). However, when I observed him during these episodes, he looked more like he felt nauseous during these episodes of "dizziness." I am more inclined to think he was suffering from Menière's Disease, a rare disease of the inner ear.

Given's Bud's habits, I think it highly likely he discovered the notebook at close walking distance from the parental home at 2633 Agnes.

in later years he taught himself touch typing and earned some by writing for Readers Digest and he also composed and marketed crossword puzzles. He wrote sketches of a novel he was planning.

Bud's father Frank succumbed to a cholecystectomy at age 78. He was working at his barber shop until two weeks before the operation.



DEC 1955
*James Harold ("Bud") Doughty
with Skippy at 2633 Agnes
Kansas City, MO*

Bud's mother lived a very active life. She raised a number of foster children and she worked at a school cafeteria until her 70s. She was very active in church work. She died at age 90.

Bud was a thoughtful, likeable person, who often looked like he was feeling poorly. He spent much of his time on the couch in the dining room, reading.

He taught his dog to retrieve the newspaper from the street every morning. He also taught a squirrel to come into the house where Bud would feed him peanut butter sandwiches.

Every Christmas, Bud made imaginative gifts for my cousin and me. I recall a wooden boat (mousetrap hidden inside) that would fly apart when a porthole was hit by a dart. I recall very realistic snakes made by canvas segments covered with canvas and painted with oil paints. There were mouse traps that did not kill the mouse and water guns made from bamboo.

His neighbor said he was very regular about his habits. He remarked "You could set our watch by him. He went upstairs every night at the same time." The first time he failed to do so, the neighbor entered the house he found Bud lying dead on the couch. There was no sign of disturbance. There was a phone within easy reach. The neighbor also said that Bud had painted the outside of the house several days before and probably over-exerted himself. He was pronounced dead on April 20, 1976, in his parental home. The death was presumed cardiac.

By William Rinck, M.D.
Independence, MO.
Jan. 11, 2020