

Jessee Family Newsletter

Number 8 The Winter of 1996

Dear Cousin,

This work has proven to me that we are all cousins; we just need to discover how. My experience also proves that we can also be colleagues and friends, sharing information and helping each other know what it means to be part of a large extended family and to appreciate our rich heritage.

Interest in the newsletter is steady and we have several new subscribers. I have received many letters, phone calls and e-mail inquiries with much new information and many more questions. I will continue to share all I can in these newsletters, but fear I cannot do justice to the work that needs to be done. I welcome your submission of complete articles or items of interest ready to print. For these and other reasons, I am chagrined that this newsletter will be late. I am embarrassed to say I simply could not afford to mail it earlier. Our vehicles demanded unexpected attention, the city, county and state all extracted extra dues, and it was Christmas. That, together with a general malaise, has kept me "holed-up" this winter. Then, just as I began to emerge from my writer's block, I made a computer blunder and lost several hours' work on this newsletter. I am still trying to figure out the lesson the Universe provided me on that one. It gave me the excuse to do the above self-confessing, for which I beg your forgiveness.

It has certainly been a winter to remember. In the Sacramento Valley, we had 100-mile-an-hour winds and torrential rains which toppled utility poles and high tension towers alike, blew down the remaining almond orchards, and uprooted vintage trees throughout the region. Most of you reading this newsletter are deep in the "Blizzard of '96" or its aftermath as I write this letter, so I can tell you nothing about winter woes. I pray for your safety, and know we will all welcome spring.

This depressing tale is in sharp contrast to "My Trip to Russell County" during the first week of October 1995. Thanks to the many Russell County residents and Jessee family members who assisted me, it was one of the most enriching and happiest experiences of my life. I was in genealogy heaven. I am attaching the essay describing this trip, and hope it provides information and inspiration. I know it's too long, but as I am too prone to do, I allowed the self-indulgence. It sets the background for much of what follows in this newsletter, so I invite you to read it on a slow afternoon, preferably by a fire.

This Newsletter

Most, but not all, Jessees in America are descended from John Jessee (1750-1815), and Frankey Lea (1752/61-1836) of Cobb's Creek, Caswell County, North Carolina and Carr's Creek (today Mill Creek) in Reed's Valley, Russell County, Virginia. All of us living at this time who are their descendants are about fifth or sixth cousins, or even closer kin. Other Jessee families in America are likely more distant cousins with whom we share common ancestors.

Many years of research into the genealogy of Russell County makes me feel at home there. I research my immediate ancestors: the Armstrong, Smyth/ Smith, Porter, Duncan, Bickley, Richman/ Richmond, BARTEE and Barrick families; and other Southwest Virginia families who have intermarried with the Jessees including: the Banner, Browning, Burk(e), Counts, Fuller, Gose, Kiser, Stone, and Vermillion families. I have an abiding interest in family history.

The purpose of this newsletter is to facilitate the exchange of information and significant documents relative to the genealogy of the Jessee and related families whose roots may be found in Southwest Virginia. I will prepare this newsletter and enter all genealogy information provided me into a Jessee Family Data Base. Upon request, I will share the mailing list, charts, or data files with you. This effort and the newsletter are sustained by donations. I would like to discover and record all of the descendants of the 15 children of John Jessee and Frankey Lea, and assist other Jesse and Jessee family members. This is admittedly a monumental chore. I am giving myself the rest of my life to accomplish it, and may he live so long! The fun is in the learning and the friendships I develop along the way. I am rewarded all the time by the visits, conversations, and correspondence I have with you.

I am asking, if you haven't done so already, to verify your continuing interest by responding to this newsletter with answers to questions, your own contributing materials, and, of course, more information about your own branch of the family. I would like to be informed of recent births, deaths, and marriages too. Even just a postcard would help.

Please feel free to correct anything I may have wrong. My goal is an accurate and well-documented data base to give to our posterity. Please provide me additional names and addresses of others who may be specifically interested in this effort. I am looking for those who are willing to help provide and exchange information or represent their branch of the family or area of the country. I can provide and receive genealogy information using the GEDCOM format on IBM or Mac diskettes and by e-mail. I am available on Internet at JJESSEE@OAVAX.CSUCHICO.EDU.

I need and very much appreciate your donations in defraying the considerable cost of research, printing and postage of this newsletter and the other materials I send out. \$10 a year will sustain the newsletter (two issues), more will help support the effort. I do not want to exclude anyone with real interest who can't afford to contribute. Please share what you can. Those who have been especially generous are helping those who can't. Please see the 1995 Thank You Honors List in this issue.

Jim Jessee

John Jessee Research

The previous two newsletters provided significant research leads on the Colonial origins of our John Jessee. Tom Rudder of Carmichael, CA and Dean Jessee of Salt Lake City, UT provided exciting new information about a John Jessee who lived in Mecklenburg Co., VA and then "removed himself from the county" about 1772, only a few years before we have evidence of our John Jessee in Caswell Co., NC, only 40 miles away. We need to continue looking for evidence of John and other Jessees in Mecklenburg and other more easterly Virginia counties. We need to consider that John could have met and married Frankey Lea in Virginia, and together they traveled to Orange, later Caswell Co., NC after 1772.

Dean Jessee also provided copies of pages of the original John Jessee Bible which establishes both his birth year, 1750, and the spelling of his name. Yes, he does sign it with two "ee"s as he did other documents we have as well. This Bible was passed down for many generations, and appears to have passed through the families of John Jessee Jr. and his son Joseph Jessee, my own line. I wish we knew where this Bible is today and hope this article helps us find it.

The John Jessee research and publication hero of this newsletter is Marshall Jefferson "Jeff" Jessee of Florida. He has

published an excellent booklet, "Some Descendants of Stanford Lea Jessee." Stanford Lea is descended from John Jessee Jr., and his son Jefferson Jessee who married Nancy Counts. The booklet is full of photographs and provides as much as seven generations of descendants in a very nicely organized way. It is a wonderful example of desk-top publishing. Jeff has placed a copy in the Russell Co. Library, and will share it with you if you are interested. Write to Marshall Jefferson Jessee, PO Box 18-2000, Castleberry, FL 32718-2000, or call him at 407-699-6000.

Jeff has also expressed interest in editing a Jessee Family Cookbook. He has been inspired by the beautiful example printed by Brenda Todd Larsen and her branch of the Jessee family, based on recipes shared at their family reunions. Let Jeff know if you would like to work on that idea. I have been musing on the idea of having a Jessee Family Calendar, with the birthdays and anniversaries of Jessee Family members. It could be tailored to specific branches of the family. I would welcome anyone who would care to work on that. I am sure I can provide a data base of names and appropriate dates, and with the right calendar-making software, it would be a piece of cake.

Franky Lea Research

In previous newsletters I asked, "Will the Real Franky Lea Please Stand Up," then had to follow that with "Will Some of You Franky Leas Please Sit Down?" I continue to meet new researchers and receive additional information on the Lea and Lee families. I am tuned into the national genealogy bulletin boards on just this subject. Still we may never have a definitive answer. There are at least eight "Franky" Leas/Lees identified in the research, family lore, or speculation, and their is still the possibility that she is none of the above. Most of these were discussed more completely in the last two newsletters.

Your choices are:

1. Frances "Frankie" Lee, (b. 1752)

Some unknown relation of Robert E. Lee

2. Frances "Franky" Lea (b. 1755)

da. of John Lea and Winneyfred

of Country Line Creek, Caswell Co., NC.

3. Francis Lea (b. after 1752)

da. of Henry Lea and

Elizabeth Lea of Caswell Co., NC

4. Franky Lea (b. after 1752)

da. of James Lea of Cobb's Creek

and Elizabeth Lea of Caswell Co., NC

5. Frances "Frank" Lea (b. 12/ 2/ 1761)

da. of George Lea and Lucy Tolbert

of Caswell Co., NC and later Georgia

6. Franky Lea, (b. abt 1752)

unrecorded da. of William Lea of Cobb's Creek, and

an assumed Mary (Archer?)

7. Frances "Frankie" Lee (b. aft 1750)

da. of Richard Lee, b. 1725 and

Lillie, b. 1727, of Edgecombe Co., NC.

8. Franky Lea (b. aft 1750)

Cherokee or Melungeon daughter from NC.

The first four choices remain doubtful based on the information and opinions of others that I have received. Frankey #2 is the popular choice and much adhered to by several. #3 and #4 may be the same person reflecting two marriages for Elizabeth. I have seen nothing to disprove #5, and therefore she remains an option. Frankey #6 is the speculation of Tom Rudder and, I believe, deserves the most serious investigation. This speculation is based on the location of the families in Caswell Co., and the occurrence of names used in John and Frankey's family. Tom provides a new summary in this issue. This supposition is supported by new information provided by Jon Wolf of Washington DC. From the "Heritage of Person County, NC" he provides the children and grandchildren of a Richard Lea, who by age would have been a contemporary or a little older than our Frankey. While his wife is unknown, his children's names include John Bradshear Lea, Mary "Polly" (who married Stephen Harris and named a daughter Fanny Archer and a son Lea), Nancy, Elizabeth, Frances Archer, Moses S., Reuben Richard, William, and George J. Lea. The name Frances Archer grabs your attention. We believe that Frankey Lea, daughter of William and Mary (Archer?) Lea, had an older brother named Richard Lea. Jon Wolf asks if these two Richards are the same. We would welcome further research on this question.

Harlan Stanley of Lexington, KY, identifies #7, Frances Lee, daughter of a Richard and Lillie Lee of Edgecombe Co., NC. The county name and the specific birthdates for Richard and Lillie are new information for me that also deserves investigation.

Frankey Lea #8 is a new speculation, based on some reported family lore that Frankey Lea and other ancestral grandmothers were Cherokee or Portuguese. We have increasing evidence that the "Melungeon" people were already well-settled throughout the southern Appalachians when our European grandfathers first arrived. While often categorized as Cherokee, they may have been a mixed race with Native American, Spanish, Portuguese, Caribbean Indian and African origins. Melungeon is a Portuguese word used to refer to their sailors, who may in fact have been Moors or Jews called Conversos, escaping the expulsions and the Inquisition raging in Spain and Portugal during the early colonial time. They, along with remnants of early Spanish conquistadors, missionaries and colonists (maybe even some "lost" English ones too), and escaped African and Caribbean Indian slaves, intermarried with Native Americans as early as the 1500s. This is certainly a very interesting line of speculation and research.

I invite your continued research, analysis, critique, and correction of the Lea Family information. We still have much to do to establish who is our Frankey Lea.

John Jessee Memorial

The central issue of my trip to Russell County became what to do about the John and Frankey Lea Jessee cemetery and proposed memorial. Here is the situation as I see it.

Along Mill Creek on Route 645 about 1/4 mile north of Jessee's Mill is the original farm of John Jessee and Frankey Lea Jessee, who acquired it in 1791. There they raised their fifteen children, several of whom settled on the place or nearby. The farm was purchased by their sons Archer and later George Lea as part of the settlement of the estate. In this century, it was owned by the Counts family, and most recently managed by Dr. Roy and Catherine Smith. The current home there may have the original John Jessee home within it. According to the WPA research found in the Russell County Library, we know that it contains the George Lea Jessee home. The testimony in 1924 of Eliza Jane McReynolds, who was present at George Lea Jessee's funeral, indicates that he and his father are buried in the cemetery on his farm. The outbuilding and other evidence of more than 200 years of farming activity and family life make the farm not only a Jessee family heirloom, but an historical and archaeological treasure.

In 1994 the land was sold to Jimmy Herndon of South Carolina. His parents live in Honaker. While Mrs. Smith had

agreed that we could add a covenant to the deed which would protect and provide access to the cemetery, the sale was concluded without any such clause. I have written to Mr. Herndon regarding our interest in restoring the cemetery and establishing a memorial there for John and Frankey. I asked to meet him when I was in Russell County and for his permission to visit the cemetery. He did not respond to my letters. Jimmy Herndon in effect asked Clyde and Betty Yates to leave his place when they were making an effort to clean up the cemetery. They had received permission from his parents to proceed. He suggested the cemetery was a nuisance for him when he develops the land. This has led us to suspect his motives.

Howard Jessee and I met with Nancy Dickenson, then the Commonwealth Attorney of Russell Co., and outlined our problem and concerns. While she was sympathetic, she said there was little in Virginia law to help us get access to private cemeteries on private land. While Mr. Herndon cannot disturb the remains, there is nothing to prevent him doing anything he wants with the surface of the land if the cemetery and access to it are unprotected in the deed. She indicated that the burial site of Civil War soldiers have some protection under Virginia law, but not Revolutionary War soldiers. We are now making an effort to bring this matter to the attention of the new Commonwealth Attorney, Mr. Mike Bush. We have seen the stones and Mary Ann Myer points out in recent correspondence that Sarah Browning and Nannie Candler, two wives of George Lea's son Thomas Jefferson Jessee, are buried there, and we speculate that Thomas and his brother Noah may be buried there as well. Both are Civil War soldiers, veterans of the 29th Virginia volunteers. If we can prove this it will confirm our opinion that this cemetery does contain Civil War veterans and perhaps afford it some protection. Other legal options with respect to Mr. Herndon appear limited at this time, although we would love to see appropriate legal action if he attempts to desecrate the site.

Here are some alternatives.

We still welcome an amicable solution with Mr. Herndon, where we could have appropriate access, clean up and fence the cemetery, and place there whatever markers and memorials we wish. I welcome a positive response from him regarding that simple request, and ask that anyone who may know Mr. Herndon ask him to please cooperate with the Jessee family on this matter.

Access to the cemetery does require one to intrude a few hundred yards into the property, going through a gate (either of two which are closest to the cemetery from the road), crossing pastures, fields and potentially crops, to get there. While one can get there without disturbing the crops or going near the house, the cemetery is at the top of the hill and the path could be strenuous for some. I agree Mr. Herndon should control access and require that specific permission to go there be secured in advance, as long as we can be assured that such permission will be granted, and that he will communicate promptly with those who request it. He should be held harmless for any liability.

Amongst alternatives to consider if we are unable to find any legal or moral leverage with Mr. Herndon, is to stop all efforts. It is very un-Jessee like to quit, but perhaps cooler heads should prevail. In this case, we should immediately return all donations made to the Memorial Fund. It is the easiest thing to do, and I would rather return the money now than later. While pledges are many, the actual donations are few, and the annual charge for the account is more than the interest earned. I will return any donation already made if you request it.

Another Jessee alternative is to get mad and fight. We can get a lawyer and start the pissing contest and see who's got the bigger skunk. I am afraid all we would get is soaked. I would welcome any legal opinions regarding any grounds we may have to fight upon, but don't wish to spend the memorial fund for such. I think this should be a concern of the Commonwealth Attorney and a case that is in the public interest. I would welcome volunteer effort.

Another alternative is to scale down the effort to a plaque or historical marker we can place by the side of the road. Even a marker at Jessee's Mill is an acceptable alternative. Howard Jessee has promised to find out if the Sons of the American

Revolution can provide a marker for John Jessee and if they can do anything to protect this cemetery. This will require learning County highway requirements and how to get permission to do this. Howard and I would welcome anyone in Russell County investigating this option too.

Another alternative is to buy Mr. Herndon out. If there is sufficient interest, let's begin efforts to purchase the cemetery and an access easement. "Interest" ultimately must be measured in donations, and this solution adds perhaps thousands to the original estimate of \$2500-4000 for the memorial. We would be happy to transfer the memorial fund to a bank in Russell County, if someone there will lead this effort. I would also welcome help in determining whether this is feasible and an estimate of the cost to do it.

If that idea has any merit and big bucks don't scare you, then let's think even bigger. Let's buy that cemetery, the Jack Jessee Home and the site of Jessee's Mill as a cornerstone for the Russell County Family Heritage Foundation. Let's make as great a contribution to our posterity as that Family History Room at the Russell County Library, and be its perfect complement. I am very afraid to even dream this one right out loud, as someone might expect me to do it, and I do not have the ways and means. This would require serious help from those in Russell County to incorporate a non-profit foundation and establish a board of trustees.

It will require a lawyer to help create a private foundation dedicated to a purpose of acquiring land or development rights with the objective of preserving the family heritage of Russell County and providing facilities for the enjoyment of its family history and rural environs. Having a local attorney assist us would be our best hope. The foundation board of trustees would best be served by individuals who are first and foremost inspired by local history, genealogy and the rural lifestyle, as well as others with real estate knowledge, development and zoning law expertise, not to mention financial acumen. I don't begin to have these, nor could I ever effectively contribute them from California. I know there is a sufficient pool of intelligence, know-how, and gumption in Russell County to do it. If a sufficient number of you organize yourselves there as the Board and start calling yourself a Foundation, I believe we can realize this dream.

I imagine a Russell County Family Heritage Park at the site of Jessee's Mill. It could include the wooded neck of land upstream between the church and mill and the Jack Jessee home across the road. I would like to see the old Mill Creek road restored as a walking path that proceeds from the Mill Creek Church along the west side of the creek, as it did originally, and cross over a footbridge on the old footings still visible there across from the Jack Jessee home. A picnic ground and some sheltered space using the barn that stands there could be developed. Parking would have to be planned, but perhaps the church would allow parking. The restored Jessee's Mill would be the centerpiece of this little park. There we could provide memorials to John Jessee and other founding Mill Creek Families. The Jack Jessee Home could be a most beautiful show home, a place for weddings, family reunions, and other special events.

I would like to see the Foundation either pursue appropriate zoning to preserve the rural and historical nature of Russell County farms, or to purchase the development rights strategically so that property owners are compensated and future adverse development is prohibited. The objective would be to preserve these areas for their historical and aesthetic values, and to keep them for farming and recreational use. I imagine other areas of Russell County would be ideal for such consideration too, including the Reverend David Jessee ancestral land on Moccasin Creek. The objective should be the preservation of family farming, a rural lifestyle, the beautiful old homes, and the pastoral views that are part of the beauty of this country. This natural beauty and these architectural, historical and genealogical resources are worth preserving in their own right, but they would also enhance Russell County's appeal as a tourist center and locale for family reunions, genealogy research, historical exploration, and related recreational activities.

Across America there are thousands of descendants of these Southwest Virginia pioneers who will treasure what can still be found in Russell County. The Russell County Library and Historical Society, in league with a Russell County Family Heritage Foundation, local government, business and others, can create a center for the research, study, celebration, and enjoyment of family heritage. A park and picnic grounds designed for family reunions, weddings, christenings, and other

special occasions in a beautiful setting like Mill Creek would be an attractive venue. Historic footpaths and trails can be restored. As much as even I hate the thought of it, I believe that increased tourism in the cause of preserving a rural heritage, not to mention the natural beauty of this area, is far better than the conversion of this land to urban uses and other kinds of environmentally destructive development.

I introduce several individuals and families in my essay *My Trip to Russell County*. I would not hesitate to nominate each and every one of them to be founding trustees to initiate this effort. There are many of us out here in America who will lend our support. We and our posterity will be forever grateful. Please let me know what you think we should do.

The Jesse(e) Family in America and The World

There are many "Jessee" and "Jesse" families in America and Canada who are descended from our John and Frankey Jessee. There are many Jesse and Jessee families in America, even in Russell County, who are not descendants of our John and Frankey Jessee as well. The Old Phillip and Gabriel Jessee descendants in Russell Co. are notable representatives. There are Jesse families in England, France, and Germany, and perhaps Poland and Moravia, if not more countries in the world. I believe we may all be related through common ancestors. I hope this newsletter will inspire the research we need to discover our common heritage. I am providing here, as an ongoing feature, information I have regarding other Jesse and Jessee families in America and the world.

I wish to thank Reverend Henry Jesse of Denver, CO who upon return from a recent trip to England, sent me a photo of a "John Jesse Ltd." business sign from a London street scene reminding us of our common English roots and Jesse(e) propensity for being entrepreneurs. He indicated that the name John Jesse is very widely recorded in various but specific places in England. That will not make research there any easier, but we all welcome efforts to connect us to our English cousins. Henry Jesse is descended from relatively recent English Jesse immigration, is not a John and Frankey Jessee descendant, but has become one of the newsletter's steady supporters.

In the last issue I featured Alan Selig's research on evidence of other Jessees in America before the Revolution. I will summarize his information here. Please help us learn more about these individuals, and provide me whatever evidence you may have of other Jesse(e) family members in America and the world. Who are these Jessey, Jesse, or Jessee ancestors?

George Jessey, b. abt 1715, discharged 1740, Port Royal.

William Jessee, b. abt 1737, drafted 1757, Isle of White.

FROM: *Colonial Soldiers of the South, 1732-1774*, by Murette June Clark, Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1983. Pg. 240: His Majesty's Ship Windsor Muster Book: Supernumeraries being officers and soldiers belonging to Captain William Merrick's Independent Company, June 6, 1740-1741. #22 Private Jessey, Geo: Remarks: D (discharged) 17 June 1740, Pr Royal. Pg. 450: Size Roll of Seventh Company of the Virginia Regiment, Commanded by Captain Joshua Lewis July 1757. #52 Jessee, W:m age 20, 5'7", from Virginia, trade: Planter, Enlistment: drft, Isle White.

John Jesse, b. abt 1762, m. Catherine Beamon, 1782.

Mary Jessey, b. abt 1762, m. Samuel Goodwin, 1782.

FROM: *Marriages of Some Virginia Residents, 1607-1800*: 1964, Dorothy Ford Wulfeck, St. Park Ave., Naugatuck,

Connecticut. Jesse, John, m. 4 Aug., 1782, Catherine Beamon, Christ Church*, p. 208. Jessey, Mary, m. Samuel Godwin (1st wife).

Thomas Jesse, b. abt 1766, m. Sarah James 1786.

FROM: Batly, Elizabeth Petty, *Virginia Marriage Records*; Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1984: September 23, 1786--Jesse, Thomas & Sarah James, Amelia County.

Jane Jessee, b. bef 1765, Middlesex Co., VA.

FROM: *The First US Census, 1790*. Jane Jessee, Middlesex County VA, listed as head of household

There is evidence of other Jesse(e) individuals in other counties of Virginia and several other states. Mrs. Zella Detweiler suggests we research the John Jesse who witnessed some deeds in Spotsylvania Co., VA in the 1740s and to keep on the lookout for a Jesse(e), surveyor or chain carrier, on some old land grants. All of the Jesse(e)s noted here are antecedents or contemporaries of our John and Frankey, and their relationship is unknown. John Jessee may have been part of a larger family which was well established for several generations. Then maybe they were Melungeons?

In this issue I would like to ask who was Thomas Jessee, a free colored resident of Russell Co. in 1830 and where are the descendants of this African-American Jessee family today? In the August 1995 issue we provided a copy of the 1830 Russell Co. Census page illustrating the Frances Jessee household. Just following our Frankey is listed Thomas Jessee as a free colored person, head of household age 34-55 with 19 dependents. Thomas Jessee is a completely new and unexpected family. There are 9 males and 10 females, all but five under the age of 24, one male and female each being ages 34-55. Were these freed Jessee family slaves? Many families in this part of Virginia freed their slaves after 1800. I believe many of these freed slaves eventually moved away from Russell Co. I am wondering whether they retained their Jessee surname and where these descendants are today. I have seen African Americans with the surname Jesse, but never spelled with two ees. While I consider this a sensitive part of our family history, it is clear the Jessee family owned slaves in both North Carolina and Virginia. That they were freed in Russell Co. as much as 40 years before the Civil War, and that they took the Jessee family surname if not shared closer bonds, may mean the relationship with these former slaves was good and respectful. There is evidence some freed slaves accompanied Jessee families as they moved west. I would like to learn whether there are African-American Jessees who may share common heritage in Russell Co.

Missing Links

While I have had great success in linking many Jessee family members who have called, written or e-mailed me questions about their heritage, I have not been able to do so for all. I offer this column as an opportunity for you to make inquiries about missing relatives and other lost connections to the Jessee family.

Last year James Sherman III wanted to know how Archer Catron Jessee is related to the Jessees? He provided very interesting information on his gr-gr-gr-grandfather Archer Catron Jessee. He was b. December 25, 1821 in Russell Co. He moved to Missouri with his parents, and remained with them until 1842, when he married in Atchison Co., MO, Mary Harbin, a native of Tennessee. A. C. Jessee farmed in Missouri until 1846, when he and his wife joined a party going to California. First settling at Sutter's Fort in Sacramento, CA, he soon enlisted under John C. Fremont as a first lieutenant. He figured prominently in the early history of the State.

Several researchers contributed evidence that Archer Catron is a grandson of John and Frankey Jessee, a son of Lea Jessee, their only son known to have moved from Virginia to Missouri. Lea married Barbara Gose, whose mother was

Barbara Catron. Tom Rudder has provided definitive evidence from Missouri records that Archer Catron Jessee was Lea and Barbara Jessee's son.

Just as this picture begins to clear, Pat Jessee Mosser of Kingwood, TX would like to obtain more information about the two Lea Jessees, Lea #381 son of John and Frankey born 1781 discussed above, and Lea #457 a son of William Jessee born in 1811. Attached you will find a chart illustrating these two individuals. She indicates that her ancestor Lea Jessee b. 1811 did not have a daughter named Elizabeth, but his uncle Lea b. 1781, did. From her information she believes both may have been merchants in Sneedville, TN and asks which one was partners with Mr. Tyler in the town store? Further she has determined that Lea b. 1781 moved on to Hawkins Co., TN and died there in 1842. My information indicates Lea b. 1781 moved to Missouri and died after 1850 in Jackson Co., MO. We need help determining who is who in the above narrative and attached material.

Research Opportunities

Several of you have expressed willingness to do research if we could give you a specific opportunity or lead. Others have provided specific problems with which they need help. As a regular feature of the newsletter, I would like to share those and request your help with research, opinion, or documentation on the issues.

Marshall Jefferson Jessee asks who was Confederate Colonel George M. Jessee, who played a distinctive role in Kentucky Civil War history. Jeff provides an article of great interest by Jim Reis titled "The Great Train Robbery" which I have attached to this newsletter. We do not know how this George M. Jessee is linked to our family.

Tom and Shirley Rudder have been making a systematic effort to research the missing families of John and Frankey Jessee's fifteen children. Through exhaustive search of Census and other records of nearby counties, states, and other likely destinations for migrating pioneers, they have already provided several more names of their grandchildren and the additional research leads that are noted below and in Tom's attached chart. Several of John and Frankey's children require continuing research to help us discover their modern day descendants. We welcome more help on all these and other families.

Lea Jessee and Barbara Gose: We now know they moved to Missouri in the 1840s. Archer Catron Jessee discussed above is one of their children. Tom and Shirley Rudder have provided the names of all eleven children from Missouri records. See Tom's chart, pick a few and go.

Boedicea Jessee and Stephen Gose Jr.: Tom and Shirley Rudder have traced this family to Boone County, IA by 1832 and determined the names of their eight children. We need research in Iowa to discover their descendants.

Frances Jessee and William Stone: Previously we knew they had five children and moved to Browning, MO. Tom and Shirley have discovered the names of seven of their believed eight children. We need research in Browning and Jackson Co., MO.

Sarah Jessee and Wilson Vermillion: We have record of three of their five children and have yet to discover where this family went and their modern day descendants.

James Jessee and Jane Burk: We know the names of only two of their children and have no new leads. Help wanted!

Elizabeth Jessee and George Gose: We have nothing further on their twelve children, but lots of good leads here.

Rebecca Jessee and William Burk(e): Tom and Shirley have extended the names of their children from three to ten so that should help a lot.

Jane Jessee and Henry Fuller: Tom and Shirley's research indicates they had at least ten children, but we do not have their names. They appear to have moved from Russell Co. after the 1830 census. A mystery to be unraveled.

My data base and I are confused about which Jefferson Jessee married Melissa E. Wyatt, 3/15/1883 in Russell Co. Attached you will find a page illustrating my problem. I have Melissa married to two different Jefferson Jesees, and with very similar families. Jefferson #3255 is the son of David Counts Jessee and Margaret "Becky" Smith. Jefferson #542 is the son of Martin Jessee and Jane Price. One of these marriages is wrong. Can you help?

The 1995 Honor Roll

I thank those who made monetary contribution to sustain the newsletter and further this effort during 1995. In the order of your generosity I honor you

Howard Gilmer Jessee, Hondo, TX

Herbert L. Kiser, Melbourne Beach, FL

Richard L. Jessee, Chico, CA

Margaret Jessee Young, San Luis Obispo, CA

Jon L. Wolf, Washington, DC

Barbara Young Desai, Riverside, CA

Tom and Shirley Rudder, Carmichael, CA

Archie Earl Jessee, Nevada City, CA

Clyde and Betty Yates, Cleveland, VA

Caroline Kiser, Lebanon, VA

Faynola Osborne, Wilmington, DE

Henry Jesse, Denver, CO

Janice Rodby, Joliet, IL

John Tivis Jessee, Jr., Yuba City, CA

Hans J. Plaat, Davis, CA

Harold "Doodle" Jessee, Lebanon, VA

Jack Hockett, St. Davids, PA

Karen Jessee, Wilmington, DE

Lois G. Wark, St. Davids, PA

Nellie R. Jessee, Lebanon, VA

Sandra Hall, Franklin, TN

Pat Jessee Moser, Kingswood, TX

Iris Lambert Hall, Pueblo, CO

Javan DeLoach, Mechanicsburg, PA

Ruth Skeen Going, Sacramento, CA

Sue Ellen Breeding, Prairie Village, KS

Arlene Jessee, Gainesville, GA

Ellawese Jessee Reed, Fountain, FL

Jackquelyn Volkanovich, Merrillville, IN

Jane Yates, Kingsland, TX

Marilyn Jessee LeBeau, Mesa, AZ

Peggy Mills, Ridgecrest, CA

Sandy Jessee, Norfolk, VA

Lavelle Swinney Boyd, Nashville, TN

Norman Jessee, South Jordan, UT

If I left anyone out please forgive me, and please inform me. Without your help I would not be able to continue.

The Jessee Family Newsletter
is edited and printed by
James Wilson "Jim" Jessee

**1272 Hobart Avenue
Chico, CA 95926**

**(916) 342-2652 Home, 898-4535 Work
Internet: JJESSEE@OAVAX.CSUCHICO.EDU**

© All Rights Reserved.