

Jessee Family Newsletter

Number 12 Winter and Spring 1998

Dear Cousin,

I am having a hard time getting started. That two-week Christmas break, when I was going to work on this newsletter, is gone. The family had a simply wonderful holiday doing a lotta nothing, and going nowhere, without school, work or other worries. This could be a reason for this newsletter being late, again.

And again I am without excuses. I even received Christmas donations that inspired me and primed the pump for printing this Newsletter. I am so grateful to those of you who provide me this help. Only about thirty percent of recipients donate to the cost of the newsletter. Fortunately for all, some are generous donors who enable me to keep going. I want to thank Col. Howard G. Jessee, Barbara Young Desai and her mother Margaret Jessee Young, Herbert L. Kiser, Julia Younce, Richard L. Jessee, Stanley M. Jessee, Karen Jessee, and Tom and Shirley Rudder for being so helpful this year. Please see also the 1997 Donors Honor Roll at the end of the newsletter.

Thanks to many others who contribute knowledge, I have far more to share than I can do justice to or provide in this newsletter, so I am assured of future work! Now putting it all together into a coherent and accurate whole, and not shooting my reputation and our database full of holes is the challenge.

Jim Jessee

Featured This Edition

Irene Jessee Perry along with her sister **Janice Jessee Tiller** provide information on the **Phillip and Gabriel Jessee** family who came from Halifax Co. and pioneered in Russell Co. in the 1780/90s. Their kinship with John and Frankey Lea Jessee is unknown. Phillip Jessee always stands out for Russell Co. researchers as he is listed as 108 years old in the 1850 Census and is believed to have lived to be 116. Thus he earned the respectful appellation "Old Phillip" to distinguish him in my records.

Tom Rudder provides a "Potpourri" of information including more details on the historical record of the John Jessee family and several more important leads regarding origins of the Jesse(e) family in America. As Tom's analysis of the Russell Co. Census and questions about the various **George L. Jessees** to be found in Russell Co. in the early 1800s is daunting, I will again postpone its presentation.

Vivian Dickison Bales shares more of her wisdom and years of research with us. Vivian is a descendant of **Mary "Polly" Jessee**, one of John and Frankey Jessee's seven daughters, who married **Abednego Kiser**. She is joined in this newsletter by another Polly Jessee Kiser, as well as **Jamie "the Scotchman" Sutherland**, descendant **Lois Gail Sutherland Wark**, whose informative letter I am featuring in its entirety.

Jack Hockett adds more grist for the mill with a wonderful piece full of genealogy details about a dispute between two Jessee families, and he is joined in this newsletter by his colleague **Tom Colley** who stimulates even more questions.

Susan Coy Lowe shares a family poem by **Esterbelle Jessee McMichael Turnage**, her grandmother, about the mountain ranch home of **Judge Roy Jessee**, a legend in Hayfork, CA.

Origins of The Jesse(e) Family

Many 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. They had fifteen children. There are many "Jessee," "Jesse," even "Jessie" families in the United States and Canada who are known descendants of those children. All of us living who are their known descendants, including most of the subscribers to this newsletter, are about fifth or sixth cousins, or even closer kin.

There are also many Jesse, Jessee, Jessie, Jessey and, perhaps, Jaci, Jacy, and Jacie families whose kinship is unknown. I believe we are all cousins and share common ancestors. I welcome all to this newsletter. As "Jesse" and "Jessee" are the two most frequent spellings of this family name, and since the English form of "Jesse" is the root surname for all American Jessee families, I shall adopt the convention of using "Jesse(e)" in reference to the larger family

Please see Newsletter #10 for an extensive discussion and summary of what we know so far about the origins of the Jesse(e) families in America. The many clues there lead us to several new avenues of research on the origins of the Jesse(e) families in, at least, Amelia Co., Cumberland Co., Essex Co., Isle of Wight Co., King and Queen Co., King William Co., Lancaster Co., Middlesex Co., and Spotsylvania Co., VA, just to start.

Here I will provide additional clues on our family origins, and feature information about other Jesse(e) families that may lead us to find those common ancestors.

Tom Rudder's "Potpourri" shares a list of "Some Jessee Marriages in Virginia (1780-90)." It provides further incentive for us to do research in Powhatan, Culpeper, Middlesex, and Lancaster Counties for more evidence of other Jesse(e) families who established themselves there.

Phillip and Gabriel Jessee

of Russell County, Virginia

Phillip Jessee(1742-1858) and his son **Gabriel Jessee (1804-1886)** are among the earliest Russell County, Virginia. families, coming as early as the 1780/90s. I have speculated that Phillip could have been an older brother, uncle, or cousin of John Jessee, but we have no proof.

Phillip's ggg-great-granddaughters

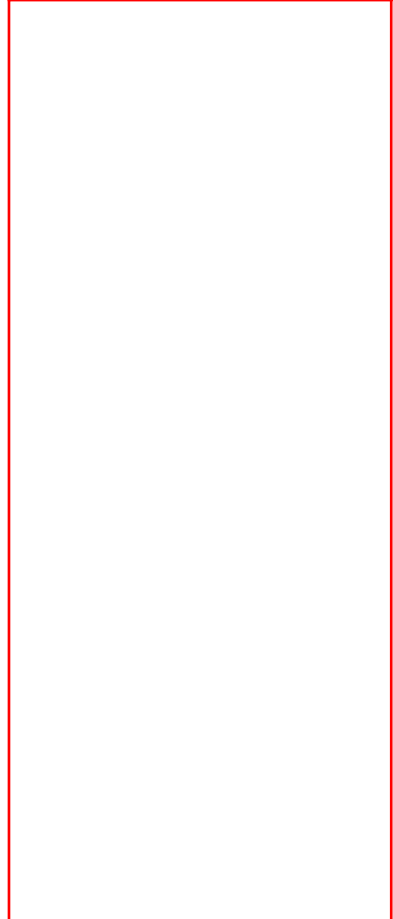
Irene Jessee Perry and **Janice Jessee Tiller** provided the following featured materials and photos regarding this distinguished family and a good deal more. Among the historical and genealogical treasures, Janice put together a complete map with inscriptions of the Jessee Cemetery (see photo with Janice) on Route #80. I thank Irene and Janice for making such a gift.

Irene and Janice shared a wealth of clippings about several remarkable family members, past and present, including author **Jean Ratcliffe**, and businessman and designer **William "Bill" Haire**, whose father was an architect and mother an artist. There were articles about outstanding teacher **Electra J. Howard**, signmakers and craftsmen **Carl** and **J. J. Jessee**, civil servant **Ethel Jessee Goodman**, Janice and Irene's daughters, **Tabitha Regina Tiller**, and **Brenda Perry Robinson**. Irene Jessee Perry is an accomplished artist, too, and it is evident that talent for art, design, and craftsmanship run strong in this family. The "contemporary coat of arms" featured on the Newsletter cover well exemplifies their spirit.

Here are excerpts from Irene's letter.

"Since the Lebanon Courthouse burned with no records of Philip and Rachel and he being 'so old' have you thought that he would be a generation beyond most?"

"We aren't trying to barge into the John and Frankie Lea space, but we do know that our fore bearers were from the Mill Creek area. There are so many names in our family that are the same as yours--George, Archer, John--of course there is Gabriel. He was different from the others!"



"Our Jessee family cemetery is as well if not better kept than most country cemeteries. Our great grandfather **John Deward Jessee**, a confederate soldier, was the first to be buried there. When standing there you can view the complete panorama of the Gabriel Jessee acres with a view of the mountains any way you turn."

Irene Jessee Perry

Editor's Note: I am also including the following descendants chart for Old Phillip and Gabriel Jessee, which is a reflection of my data, complete with errors and omissions. As always I invite you to help me correct and complete this information by informing me of errors and by providing new information or documentation.

Phillip Jessee descendants chart 1

Phillip Jessee descendants chart 2

Phillip Jessee descendants chart 3

John and Frankey Lea Jessee Family Research

I am sorry there is nothing new regarding our search for the antecedents of John and Frankey Lea Jessee, but much has been shared helping document their life and times and the descendants of their fifteen children.

Tom Rudder corrects Tom Rudder, and I escaped this time as the "prime suspect," with a correction to his letter that appeared in Summer and Fall 1997, Newsletter #11. On page 10, the 6th line should read "Lea's son Stephen born 1812," not 1822, my error.

Tom greatly enriches our knowledge about John and Frankey with the following land and tax records, which he has carefully extracted from Caswell Co., NC and Russell Co., VA records.

John Jessee Land Records

Caswell Co., North Carolina

1777 On tax list of Richmond District. No tax shown.

1777 Henry Jessee in Richmond District. Tax 102-15.

1779 John Jessee received Land Grant for 450 acres from State of North Carolina for 50 shillings per 100 acres. Deed Book "A" P-496.

1781 Henry Jessee (thought by some to be the father of John Jessee) made his will on the 20th of June which shows only personal property. Will Bk. "A" P-165, Inventory of estate, Will Bk. "A" P-172.

1783 On Mar. 4th John Jessee sold 450 acres to John Hodge. Deed Book "B" P-31, land purchased from State in 1779.

1783 George Lea (believed by some to be Frankey Lea's brother) received Power of Atty. from Isaac Brown to

sign deed for 550 acres to John Jessee as soon as Isaac Brown can get deed from State of NC.

1784 On tax list from St. Lawrence District. 631 acres.

1785 The purchase of 526 acres bought by John Jessee from Isaac Brown in 1783 was recorded.
Deed Book "C" P-106.

1787 John Jessee sold 277 acres to Barnett Lea (believed by some to be another brother of Frankey Lea). Deed Book "E" P-200.

1787 John Jessee sold 75 acres to Wm. Warren.
Deed Book "E" P-208

1787 John Jessee sold 276 acres to Wm. Warren.
Deed Book "E" P-209.

Russell Co., Virginia

1788 On Wm. Webb Land Tax List. 200 acres.
(Upper District)

1788 On Wm. Webb Personal Tax List. (Upper District)

1789 On Wm. Webb Personal Tax List (Upper District)

Note: The fact that John Jessee is shown in the Upper District of Russell Co. in 1788/89 would tend to confirm the statement of Eliza Jane McReynolds Turner (*Pioneer Recollections* by E.J. Sutherland, pg. 428) that John Jessee and Frankey lived in Burke's Garden before moving to Reeds Valley.

1791 John Jessee bought 200 acres from Thos. Price on Cedar Creek. Deed Bk. 1 P-133.

1794 John Jessee bought 50 acres on Carr's Creek from William Gilmore. Deed Bk. 1 P-302.

1794 John Jessee bought 200 acres on Carr's Creek from William Gilmore. Deed Bk. 1 P-304

1796 John Jessee sold 100 acres on Cedar Creek to George Fuller. (Land bought from Thos. Price) Deed Bk. 2 P-164.

1798 John Jessee sold 100 acres on Cedar Creek to Wilson Vermillion. (Land bought from Thos. Price) Deed Bk. 2 P 483.

1821 John Jessee, prior to his death, was in the process of selling 50 acres to his son William who in turn, with the concurrence of the heirs, sold the land to Archer Jessee. Deed Bk. 6 P-409.

1828 Archer Jessee bought 118 acres of the John Jessee Estate from the heirs. Deed Bk. 8 P-87.

1828 George L. Jessee bought 82 acres of the John Jessee Estate from the heirs. Deed Bk. 8 P-90.

Tom Rudder also provides the following "Potpourri "of information, a letter, and finally a transcription of a land grant to **John Jessee, Jr.** signed by then-**Governor James Monroe**. This document is very important to the John Jessee Jr. family, and Tom's explanation helps resolve one of the lingering questions about when John Jessee, Sr. first bought land in Russell Co., VA.

Col. Howard Jessee has previously provided me a fine copy of the original James Monroe document. Howard would be sure to remind us that Governor James Monroe spelled John Jesse's name correctly with only one "e."

In the next newsletter I will bring together an extensive amount of census information on this family provided by **Tom Rudder, Carlyne Ritter, and Peggy Mills.**

**100 Acre Land Grant
to John Jesse Jr.
by the Commonwealth of Virginia,
James Monroe, Governor**

**Surveyed 1798
Granted 1800**

James Monroe Esquire of the Commonwealth of Virginia to all to whom these present shall come greetings. Know Ye that by virtue of Land Office Treasury Warrant Number Eleven Thousand Three Hundred and Fifty Three issued the Eleventh day of March One thousand Seven Hundred and Eighty Two there is granted by the said Commonwealth unto John Jesse Junior assignee of Richard Price a certain tract or parcel of land containing one hundred acres by survey bearing date fourth of June One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety eight lying and being in the County of Russell on the headwaters of Beck's Branch and bounded as follow to wit. Beginning at a White Oak and double Beech near a spring branch, North fifteen degrees West sixty poles to a White Oak, North

sixteen degrees East eighty poles to a Spanish Oak, North twenty three degrees West sixty poles to a Dogwood on the north side of a ridge, south eighty degrees West eighty poles to a Chestnut oak and a Maple on a high Knoll, south twenty eight degrees West ninety eight poles to a Chestnut and South fifty nine degrees East one hundred and sixty nine poles to the beginning. With its appurtenances to have and to hold the said tract or parcel of land with its appurtenances to the said John Jesse Jr. and his heirs forever. In witness whereof the said James Monroe Esquire Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia hath hereunto set his hand and caused the seal of the said Commonwealth to be fixed at Richmond on the twelfth day of September in the year of our Lord One thousand Eight Hundred and of the Commonwealth the Twenty Fifth.

James Monroe

Mary "Polly" Jessee Kiser

Mary "Polly" Jessee (1787-1836) was the second of seven daughters of John and Frankey. She married **Abednego Kiser** and is the ancestor of many a Kiser from Russell Co. On the following pages I am featuring a letter from her gggg-granddaughter, **Lois Sutherland Wark**, who provides those interesting details and bits of color that flesh out a family history and make these people come alive. Lois also shares her **James "Jamie the Scotchman" Sutherland** roots and asks for our help in her research.

Vivian Bales' letters provide bits and pieces regarding her branch of this family who migrated to Kentucky, then into Southern Indiana, along with further insights into her colorful life.

17 September 1997

"My cousin Albert Wilson, whose mother was a sister to my father, said many times that a lot of Jessees in New Castle were from the ones in Carter Co., KY. He knew them, the older ones, in KY. He said Grandma Melvina Kiser Dickison always told him those Jessees were from the Russell Co., VA Jessees. Grandma was born ca. 1854/55 and lived to be 87."

16 November 1997

"... I think I have figured out, without proof that is, how my Dad was related to Mary Coleman. They called each other cousin and were always close in friendship and kinfolk love. Mary Coleman was Mary Boggs before she ma. Ed Coleman, his 2nd wife. [Mary's father] Whitt Boggs ma. Mary Ellen Jessee [a descendant of John Jessee, Jr.].... and my parents were always close to the Whitt Boggs family.... I guess my Dad and Mary Coleman descended from the same early Jessee ancestor."

10 December 1997

"... Is Fullen and Fuller supposed to be the same name? One of Noah and Dicie Kiser's sons was named Fullen. The Kisers were great to name a son for someone who was admired as a hero or patriotic man. My great grandpa was Hugh Tiffany Kiser, Noah and Dicie's first child. There was a man in Tazewell Co., VA named Hugh Tiffany who was counted in the brave and patriotic field.An other younger son was named Marion Frances, for the southern soldier Marion Frances, the Swamp Fox.

I am old now, not far from 85. ...I want to tell you about me. When I was 8 years old, desperately ill, the Doctor said I had no hope, and that one night told my parents I would die about 2 a.m. ... call him in the morning and tell him when I died. At 8 in the evening God told five of his children when they were praying in their evening prayer [at the nearby church] to come to my parents house. They obeyed, came, prayed for me, and I arose and asked for a glass of water. Never again did I have typhoid fever.

In 1979, Christmas Day, I was rushed into surgery, full of cancer, a sneaky and killer disease. The Drs did surgery, then didn't sew me up, just stapled and clamped. They said sewing wasn't necessary, I was too far-gone.

My church prayed everyday. I didn't improve much if any. Then one day I had difficulty breathing, very weak. It was church night, I got to church. As the Pastor came in, he asked if anyone needed to come to the altar. A good saint of the church helped me. When the Pastor anointed my head, I said "Father I have come to the Throne." That instant I saw His Throne in my spirit and I was completely healed. I walked back to my seat, normal.

I opened up my Bible with no thought in mind, I looked down and in large words (my Bible is small print) I saw these words: "I cried unto the Lord and He healed me." Next day I wondered where that scripture was. I went to the Concordance. It is the 30th Psalm, 2nd verse.

The next morning I was making breakfast and told my husband I feel better. He said "you look better, 100% better." I told him the Lord healed me last night. I didn't bother to see the Drs., no more chemo, no more clinic. The Drs were angry with me. About 2 years later I had bronchitis and they sent me to the hospital. They did every kind of test, even CAT scan and bone marrow, but could not find any cancer. Praise God! I am a child of the King, I am one of his miracles."

[Lois Sutherland Wark Letter Goes Here](#)

[Mary Polly Jessee Descendants Chart here](#)

Correspondence

The following letters, notes, and e-mail inquiries are only a few of the many I am fortunate to receive. These, in particular, give color to our work, address problems of shared concern, provide new information, corrections or updates to previous newsletters, and both answer and ask new "missing links" questions.

Marilyn, a friend on the Internet, sent this.

"I had to pass this along. It is a true story that just happened to me this morning. I was talking to a stranger in the grocery store today and she was trying to tell me about her mother in a nursing home. She had 'one of those doctors who specializes in old people, you know, a genealogist.' Boy did I have to laugh. If she only knew."

Tom Rudder sent this bit of color.

From *Colonial and State Records of North Carolina* at a Council held at Edenton in 1726:

"For saving of Lands for the future every house shall be fifteen foot long. Ten Board made tight and habitable of Clapboards or Loggs squared with the roof and chimney place and a Door place. The whole acre cleared well, the Major part of it broke up and planted with Fruite Trees or Grain."

Arvin Jessee of Greenville, SC contacted me via the Internet and asked for help. Even with the excellent clues he provides below, I could not place Arvin and his Jessee ancestors, although I feel certain he is one of our Russell Co. clan.

"Mr. Jessee, I found your Jessee pages and am enjoying them very much [I believe he found *Jessee Central* on the Internet, developed by Carin Vance Rhoden]. My family and I are trying to go back as far as we can with our family. My Dad and his brothers were born in Kingsport, TN. I know that our lineage goes back into Backwater, Lee Co., VA. My grandfather's name was **Oscar Jessee**, and my great-grandfather was **Charlie Jessee**, who was married to Belle Collier. All of them, I believe to be buried in Sullivan Co., TN. I would appreciate any information you may have on how our family line ties into yours."

Jack Hockett of St. David's Place, PA, provided the following excerpt, found in the *Holston Pastfinder* Vol. 12, No. 2, Holston Territory Genealogical Society:

"Abingdon Virginian, 11 August 1871...

Chancery Court Russell Co., 26 June 1871-Fullen Jessee, Andrew Habein Jessee, Geo. L. Jessee, Eunice Jessee, Malissa Jessee, Louise E. Jessee, Archer F. Jessee & Lilburn M. Jessee, infants sue by mother & friend, Eunice Jessee vs. Cynthia Jessee, Hopkins Jessee, Ellen Jessee, Jenney Jessee, Joseph Simmerly, John T. Jessee, Daugherty Gilmer & wife, Mary, E. K. Jessee, John W. Purcell & wife, Sylvenie, John Browning & wife, Eliza, Abel Smith & wife, Eunice. Object is to extract legal title from defendants & should defendant Cynthia Jessee recover dower to said lands that she recover value thereof from said heirs of Joseph Jessee, decd. John T. Jessee is a non-resident of VA."

The above well documents the family of my own g-great-grandparents, **Joseph Jessee** and **Cynthia Smith**, and makes one wonder what was the dispute and who is this George L. Jessee? **John Tivis Jessee**, my great-grandfather, the "non-resident" of VA, had married **America Elizabeth Bickley** and moved to Champaign Co., IL, by this time, so they are well shuck of this sticky one.

Eunice Monroe Habern Jessee, whose family is also well documented above, is the widow of **William Jessee, Sr.** a son of **Archer Jessee**. Their daughter, **Louisa E. Jessee**, married **George L. Jessee**, son of **Joseph and Amy Browning Jessee**, so that's that. However, this suit does not name **William Vincent Jessee Jr.** or **Alexander Robert Preston Jessee**, who I also show as sons of William and Eunice Jessee.

I am including Descendants Charts for William Jessee Sr. and of Joseph Jessee, whose widows Eunice Habern and Cynthia Smith Jessee are on opposite sides of this dispute. I sure would like any information or corrections to my data that can explain this situation and better document these families.

William Jessee Descendants Chart 1

William Jessee Descendants Chart 2

Joseph Jessee Descendants Chart 1



John Tivis Jessee (1836-1890, son of Joseph Jessee, grandson of John Jessee Jr.), and **America Elizabeth Bickley Jessee** (1853-1929). Both were born in Russell Co., VA, Reeds Valley and Bickley Mills, respectively. Moved to Champaign Co., IL. These are the editor's great grandparents, and our link to Russell Co.

Research for **Nelda Meline Jessee**, my wife, turned up ancestors **Joseph Kuntze** (b. before 1700) and **Anna Reinschmidt**, of the Germana Colony, VA, whose daughter **Catherine Kuntze** is the only child recorded in her information. Could he be the same **Joseph (Jost) Kuntz** (1674-1739) Carin Vance Rhoden records as the grandfather of the famous Russell Co. pioneer **John Counts "of Glade Hollow"** (1765-1843)?

Carin's data indicate that Jost Kuntze's son is **John Counts, Sr.** or **Johannes Kuntz** (1706-1777). I am attaching my version of all this information, which also shows him to be the same **Johannes Kuntz** but born 1725 and died 1803, and asking for help with these discrepancies.

My data would make it more probable that Johannes Kuntze could have been a brother of Catherine Kuntze

(b.1720) who married **Harman Kemper** (1718-1774), my wife's **Camper** family ancestor. I may simply have all this wrong and would appreciate being straightened out. Could it be my wife is also related to half of Russell County through her Kuntze family ancestors?

Katherine Burk Greever of Morgantown, WV, referred me to **Tom Colley** of Hanceville, AL, as an "expert" on SW VA genealogy. I e-mailed him and introduced myself. He provided a very rich abstract of birth and death records for me regarding the Bickley and Jesse(e) surnames. I have since keyed in the information and it greatly enhanced or confirmed many bits o' data for me. He replied to my inquiry as follows.

"Greetings from Alabama. It's always good to hear from another interested in SW Virginia history. I have had you on my "things to-do" list for some time. I guess you beat me to writing ...

Being a long time researcher of Russell/Washington/Smyth counties, I have had occasion to see two of your Jessee Newsletters. Your work is greatly appreciated and an excellent reference source for many SW VA families. Thank you very much for sending me a copy. I'm always interested in any families resident this area before 1850.

The two Jessee Newsletters mentioned above were from selected pages sent me by **Thomas (Jack) Hockett** of St. David's, PA, in regard to your Lea/Jessee relationship to Browning/Burk/ Counts etc. families. Jack and I have combined our research on many surnames and part of the behind the scene through Mr. Hockett & Ms. Greever, I have in some small way helped add to your database. (Re: "Experts" ...be wary of em, I do not consider myself as such... but I do enjoy my hobby of genealogical research.)[Ditto, Jim]

As you know the Jessee & Colley families have long been associated in early Washington/Russell Co. history and I'm happy that we can continue the association. Since you already have considerable Jessee information and I don't know specifically what you need, I will list a few births & deaths from my SW VA file of abstracts of Russell Co. Birth and Death Register 1853-1867 in hope that you may find a few "new" names or dates of interest.

Good luck in your search and please let me know if I can be of help."

Tom's information may have revealed another problem in my records, as well as raising some questions pertinent to our Jessee research.

I have two Rebecca Vermillion Jessees in my data who may be distinct persons or the same:

Rebecca Vermillion (RIN 14088), daughter of Jessee "Jake" Vermillion and Nancy Unknown, married Stephen G. Jessee, son of David Jessee and Katie Banner; and

Rebecca Vermillion (RIN 16421), daughter of Jessee Vermillion and Nancy Burk, who is married to an unidentified Jessee. The existence of this Rebecca Vermillion Jessee and her parents is verified by Tom's abstract.

I am including pedigree charts for both Rebecca Vermillions, as they each have a distinct pedigree and share a common great grandfather, William Vermillion, in the hope that someone can help straighten me out. Who is the Unknown Jessee Rebecca RIN 16421 married? If it is Stephen G. Jessee do I have his wife's pedigree incorrect? Other errors?

Kuntz/Counts Family Descendants Charts here.

Rebecca Vermillion Jessee Pedigree Chart 1

Rebecca Vermillion Jessee Pedigree Chart 2

Jim and Susan Coy Lowe included the following poem by Susan's grandmother, **Esterbelle Jessee McMichael Turnage** in their Christmas greeting. It is about the home ranch of **Judge Ray Jessee**, a legend in Hayfork, CA, a remote area of Northern California. Ray Jessee is a descendant of **Lea and Barbara Gose Jessee**, a grandson of **Archer Catron Jessee**, one of California's pre-gold rush pioneers.

"There is a road that winds out therein,
As it leaves the Highway and all the din.
Just a country road far from the clamor and roar
Will take you right up to the Jessee Ranch Door.
Here stands the house at the end of the road,
It's the dream of a life time is this abode.

It holds such treasures of copper and brass,
Its deep windows filled with colored glass.
The hanging lamps and the braided rugs,
The kitchen shelves with their earthen jugs.
The logs in the fireplace crackle and glow,
Their cheerfulness and comfort on all bestow.

The ancient clock on the mantel is ticking away,
The pictures on the wall are in perfect array.
The patch work quilts add a touch of glory,
Time and patience and work, each tell their story.
The saw buck table is waxed and ready for dining,
The iron stone stove is polished and oh, so shiny.

The hutch with its Wedgewood or maybe its Spode,
Everything is priceless in this ranch abode.
Soon we shall sip our coffee and reminisce,
In front of the hearth in a relaxing bliss.
For this is the R. J. Ranch of hospitality and cheer,
Here's hoping we can come again next year."

Esterbelle "Essie B." Jessee McMichael Turnage

1997 Honor Roll

I thank the following donors who supported the newsletter during 1997.

Alma H. Marsells

Barbara Young Desai

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Wilse E. Jessee

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The Purpose of This Newsletter

I believe that we are, indeed, all cousins and that we can be colleagues and friends, too, sharing information and helping each other know what it means to be part of an extended family and to appreciate our common heritage. To these aims I dedicate this newsletter.

I research my own JESSEE ancestors, including the Armstrong, Smyth/ Smith, Porter, Duncan, Bickley, RichmOND/RichmAN, BARTEE and Barrick families; and many 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.

I would like to discover and record all of the descendants of the fifteen children of John and Frankey Lea Jessee, and assist other Jesse(e) family members with their research. 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.

The purpose of this newsletter is to facilitate the exchange of information and documents relative to the genealogy of the Jessee and related families whose roots may be found in Southwest Virginia. I will enter all genealogy information provided me into a Jessee Family database. I will share charts or data files with you on request.

I am asking you to respond to this newsletter with answers to questions, documentation, your own materials, and, of course, current information about your branch of the family. Please feel free to correct anything I may have wrong.

I am providing this newsletter free to anyone who has asked for it, provided me information, or has expressed serious interest in this work. You are welcome to provide addresses of others that may be interested in our effort and would like to help. I am looking for those willing to provide and exchange information or represent their branch of the family or area of the country. I can provide and receive genealogy data by computer diskettes and via Internet e-mail.

How To Help

I need and appreciate your donations in defraying the considerable cost of research, printing and postage of the newsletter and other materials I send to inquirers. I am asking for a minimum donation of \$10 a year for two issues of the newsletter, more will help support the effort and those who can't donate more.

Newsletter Reprints

At the request of many, I have now collected Jessee Family Newsletters #1-7, #8-9, and #10-11 into separate sets of reprints (without some attachments that have become obsolete). You may request these, as well as specific pedigree or descendants charts for \$10 a set. Your additional donations to help me defer the costs of research, printing, copying, and postage are very much welcome.

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The Jessee Family Newsletter

**c/o James Wilson "Jim" Jessee
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Contemporary Coat of Arms of the Descendants of Gabriel and Nancy Wallis Jessee. Revised design by Carl B. Jessee, Sr., 1986 honoring the integrity and innovative spirit of the farmers, carpenters, and the creative.