

# **Jessee Family Newsletter**

Issue #24

Winter 2004

Vol. XIII No. 1

**Dear Cousin,**

**I am sad to report the passing of Michael Brett "Mike" Malone.** Mike and Joy Jessee Malone have made so many contributions to the Jessee family, the Foundation, and this newsletter over the years, that we are forever grateful. Mike so impressed me as the man I wish I could be. He was a very good person, an inspiring role model for a father, husband, son, friend, Christian, policeman, chief, citizen, and genealogist.

Mike was a hard-working professional in all his life-long endeavors, just the kind of man you would hope would be a policeman. His care and attention to detail in his work really showed in his genealogy research, too. I turned to him often for help, and he contributed very much to the Jessee family database. I was fortunate to have had some quiet time with him and loved our conversations. I am so glad Mike has been a part of my life.

The **Jessee Historical Foundation** is plugging along, but needs your volunteer effort and help. Please volunteer to be a board member and please someone volunteer to be our board secretary, too.

It appears our immediate tasks are to have Jessee's Mill and dam, if not other sites, declared an official state historic site, and to get some protection for the John and Frankey Lea Jessee cemetery. Our president, Joe Jessee in Lebanon, needs your help to see our dreams come true. Please help. There is some good news on all this inside; have faith and keep on plugging.

I am always a bit daunted by this work. There is so much data entry to do; just the daily requests for help fill most evenings. Still, I am excited and gratified every time I extend the descendants for the Jessee family and am always astounded as I see increasing evidence of the interrelatedness of all these SW Virginia families. We are all cousins.

We have another interesting newsletter thanks to so many of you who help support the effort through generous contributions of information, photographs, documentation, and money. My spirits are uplifted by your letters, email, and calls.

**Jim Jessee**

## **Featured This Edition**

**You are invited to attend the 2004 and 5th National Jessee Family Reunion, Saturday, June 19, 2004 in Abingdon, VA.** We share more photos and memories of the 2003 National Jessee Family Reunion. Mary Akers asks for donations for the Silent Auction, and for a Jessee Family Cookbook she hopes to have ready for the reunion.

**Under JHF projects, there is an extensive discussion on the matter of preserving John and Frankey Lea Jessee's cemetery.** I hope it will not prove to be too controversial, but helpful.

**Efforts to preserve Jessee's Mill and create an historic park around it continue.** Sherman Wallace is taking the lead, but asks for help with funding immediate mill preservation efforts. He is working with **Kathryn Greever, John Funk, Tom Rudder,** and most importantly, **Mike Pulice** from the VA Dept. of Historical Resources.

**SW Virginia families** includes contributions regarding the **Charles Bickley and Samuel Gibson families.** These historic families have intermarried with the Jessees over 200 years, so we have much in common.

**Other Jesse(e) Families and Family Origins** includes tidbits of information and photos from **Kathy Messer and Tony Fenner** for the **John and Clia Smith Jesse family.**

**Find news on John and Frankey Lea Jessee and their fifteen children.** **Tom Rudder** provides a refreshed map of their **Russell Co. farm,** and a complete summary of land records, too. See new information, read heart-warming stories, and meet new cousins inside. Several have sent articles and photographs which I am happy to feature.

**Correspondence and Missing Links** is rich with news, inquiries, and information, as well as some genealogy poetry and humor we hope you will enjoy. See **Robert Keith's letter and photos.**

**Jessee Resources on the World Wide Web** has a few more clues for us computer geeks and the latest information regarding the development of the **Jessee Family Database.**

# The 2004 National Jessee Family Reunion

Saturday, June 19, 2004

at the Harry L. Coomes Recreation Center,  
300 Stanley Street, Abingdon, VA

The 2004 Jessee Family Research Day

Friday June 18, 2004

at the Russell County Library  
203 NW Main Street, Lebanon, VA

Please put the 2004 Family Reunion  
and Research Day on your calendar now

The 2004 Jessee Family Research Day will be held Friday, June 18, at the Russell County Public Library in Lebanon, VA. The activities begin at 9 a.m. and end about 4 p.m. The Jessee Historical Foundation will hold its annual membership meeting at the Russell Co. Library at 4 p.m., June 18, after the research day.

The 2004 Jessee Family Reunion and Picnic will be held on Saturday, June 19, 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Harry L. Coomes Recreation Center & Park, Abingdon, Virginia .

**To get there:** Take exit 19 from Interstate 81, go north on Route 11-Main Street toward Abingdon, approximately 0.7 mile. Bear right (north) at the second light onto Thompson Street, beside the shopping center. Go about 100 yards, then go right on Stanley Street. Coomes Recreation Center will be around the big curve, over the hill on the right.

For information about this historic area, lodging, golf courses, etc., please call the Abingdon Convention & Visitors Bureau at 1-800-435-3440;

Phone: 276-676-2282 or Fax: 276-676-3076,

E-mail: [acvb@abingdon.com](mailto:acvb@abingdon.com) or

Internet: [www.abingdon.com/tourism](http://www.abingdon.com/tourism)

Remember to bring a covered dish, enough to feed your family and at least four additional "cousins." You may bring a folding chair. Bring your musical instruments.

Please participate in the **Silent Auction** to help raise needed funds. Use your imagination to think of items to be contributed. Start "Creating Heirlooms, One Piece at a Time." See below.

For picnic day information contact the JHF Picnic Committee: Taulbee Jessee, Chairman, 276-623-1105.

## THE SILENT AUCTION NEEDS YOU

Please plan to participate in the annual silent auction, held in conjunction with the family reunion on Saturday, to help raise funds for the Jessee Historical Foundation. To make the auction a success, your contributions are needed. Use your imagination to think of items to be contributed. The items for the auctions can be brought to the reunion picnic to be held at the Harry L. Coomes Recreation Center & Park Grounds, Abingdon, VA. If you have any questions about what to contribute to the auction, please contact:

**Mary H. Akers**  
phoenix@naxs.com  
phone 540-628-9239.

**JOE JESSEE writes on the passing of Mike Malone.** I hope it is not too disturbing that Mike's photo appears on this page, welcoming you to the Jessee Family Reunion; his photos are featured on the following pages, and his many contributions are evident throughout the newsletter. Mike was the consummate gentleman and host, always there where there was work to be done. His spirit will always be with us at our family reunions. **Please find Mike's obituary inside under the George Lea Jessee family.**

The Jessee Historical Foundation has lost one of its founding and most active members in Mike Malone of Davie, Florida, who passed away November 30, 2003. Although Mike was just an associate member, he took the initiative on many projects, such as the annual History Day, membership certificates and mailing lists, and Jessee's Mill documentation, as well as volunteering for items which no one else would do, like serving as temporary secretary and taking and publishing minutes at board meetings.

We extend our condolences to Mike's family and wish them fond memories of the love and care and nurture that he bestowed upon them. I valued my association with Mike and know that I speak for the Foundation when I say that he will surely be missed as a friend and a gentleman.

Respectfully,

Joseph H. Jessee, Jr.

President, Jessee Historical Foundation, Inc.



Norma McHone and Mike Malone point the way  
to The Harry L. Coomes Recreation Center & Park Grounds.



# Highlights of the 2003 Family Research Day and Reunion

Photos Courtesy of Arlene Jessee



Mike and Joy Jessee Malone



Arlene Jessee, bottom, with Judy Jessee and Robert Tucker



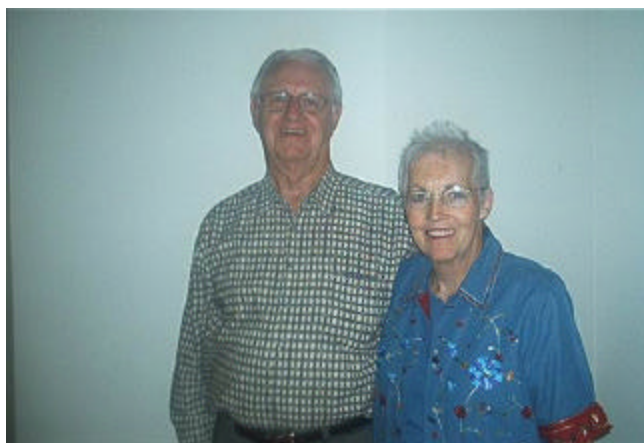
Frank and Effie Jessee



Barney Jessee's granddaughter, daughter, Deirdre Owens, and wife, Brenda Jessee



Joy Malone, Barney Jessee, Nancy "Santee" Jessee, Barney Jessee, Rev. Cecil Jessee, and many more cousins.



Archie and Doris Jessee, fellow Californians, weren't able to attend the reunion this year, but they sent along this photo that I wanted to share.



# Highlights of the 2003 Family Reunion

Photos Courtesy of Mike and Joy Malone



Lining up for the wonderful food at the Jessee Family Reunion



Doing what Jessees do best



John Jesse, Jr. Descendants



Archer Jesse Descendants



George Lea Jesse Descendants.



Jessee Research Day

# Jessee Historical Foundation

Founded March 8, 2001

## The JHF board and officers are:

Joseph H. "Joe" Jessee, Jr., President  
Laura Jessee Thomas, Vice-President  
Mary Akers, Membership Secretary  
Carolyn Sue Jessee, Assistant Membership Secretary  
Henry "Hank" Davis, Legal Advisor  
Norma McHone, Treasurer  
Taulbee "Toby" Jessee, JHF Picnic Chair  
James W. "Jim" Jessee, Newsletter/Web Page Editor  
Members At Large: Peggy Jessee Adams, John F. Bolling, Carl B. Jessee, James C. "J.C." Jessee, John Daniel Jessee, Joseph Harold "Doodle" Jessee, Sr., Robert Trigg Jessee, Rev. Vernon Cecil Jessee, W.D. "Tip" Jessee, Irene Jessee Perry, Helen R. Reedy, Vernon Salyers, Janice Sue Jessee Tiller.

Go to [www.jessee.org](http://www.jessee.org) for more information, minutes of Foundation Board meetings, photos of Foundation activities, and Foundation news and events. *Please Join Us.*

## Membership Information

The Jessee Historical Foundation extends an invitation and warm welcome to new members and welcomes your annual membership renewal.

Annual Membership will now run from reunion to reunion each year, dues being collected at the annual reunion in June for the following year. Those who have previously paid dues through December 2003, will have their membership extended to June 30, 2004.

There are three categories of membership. Anyone age 81 or older may request free lifetime membership. The annual fee is \$10 per person. Ask about lifetime membership, too.

**1. Regular Member:** If you have a Jessee, Jesse, Jessey or Jessie surname, or are an adult Jessee descendant you are eligible to be a regular member with full voting privileges. Please provide information to verify your Jesse(e) lineage.

**2. Associate Member:** Spouses, related family, or friends of a regular member, who are non-voting.

**3. Junior Member:** Family members under age 18, who are non-voting.

**Send an application.** Get one at [www.jessee.org](http://www.jessee.org) or provide the following information: Name, Street or PO box address, City, State, ZIP, phone, email address, and your Jessee pedigree. Please send your application and check, payable to Jessee Historical Foundation, Inc., for \$10 per person, to Mary H. Akers, the membership secretary, at the following address.

Jessee Historical Foundation Inc.  
C/O Mary H. Akers, Membership Secretary  
19346 Oakwood Dr.  
Abingdon VA 24211  
540-628-9239  
[phoenix@naxs.com](mailto:phoenix@naxs.com)

# Foundation News

MARY AKERS [phoenix@naxs.com](mailto:phoenix@naxs.com)] wrote, 11/3/2003 with this update of JHF activities, and asks for help with a couple of projects. Mary is organizing the printing of a **Jessee Family Cookbook** to be ready for the 2004 Annual Reunion.

## I have been researching companies that print cookbooks.

This information will be presented at the March meeting. I'm sure it will pass and would like to gather as many family recipes as possible. In order to get 200 cookbooks we have to have at least 175 recipes. If I gather these recipes we will be ready to get them to the printer and hopefully be ready for the June reunion. Have the recipes mailed to me along with any family information. By sending the recipe that will give us permission to publish it. Don't send one if you don't want it published.

## Mail Recipes To:

Mary H. Akers, Membership Secretary  
19346 Oakwood Dr.  
Abingdon VA 24211

Membership dues for 2004 will be due in June 2004. The board approved this as well as members at the past reunion. Some of the older members requested an easier way to remember and this was suggested and approved.

Board meetings for 2004 will be held at Quality Inn in Abingdon. This is much better as it is a conference room with no noise, etc. Meeting dates are March 6, June 18 after Research Day at Russell County Library, and last one on October 2.

Major topic at the last meeting was trying to get access to the Jessee Cemetery. This was tabled as Mr. Herndon will not allow it. The only way to get in there is to buy the farm. How sad for us.

Both research and reunion/picnic days were taken care of.

It would be appreciated if you would also include in your newsletter the fact that **we need lots more items for our silent auction.** Didn't have much this past reunion.

Thanks ever so much, Mary

## Projects and Activities

The following projects, activities, and undertakings have been discussed, some acted upon, and will be on the agenda of future Foundation meetings. Whether you are a board member or not, these projects and activities will need volunteers and other help. Please consider what you can do to help.

**1. Providing public access to, fenced protection and restoration of the John and Frankey Lea Jessee Cemetery, and other Jessee family cemeteries is one of the main reasons for founding the JHF.** This cemetery is owned by Jimmy Herndon, who now lives on the property and has renovated the home there.

*We have learned that Mr. Herndon is not now willing to cooperate with the Jessee family on these goals, and suggests that if we want access, we purchase his farm.* I would love to do that, and hope we keep that in mind. For now, I believe we need to look at more options on how to protect the cemetery, how to hold the landowner harmless for any liability, and to help him with costs for preserving it. See much more on this below.

**2. Preservation of Jessee's Mill, Dam, and School.** This will need much study and documentation, requests for appropriate historical designation, and major fund-raising and grant development. [Please see the articles that follow.]

**3. The establishment of Virginia State Highway or Russell County Historical Markers for Jessee's Mill and other appropriate Jessee Family sites.** [See the following.]

**4. Creating a Jessee Family Cook Book.** [See the discussion above.]

**5. Planning for the next and future National Jessee Family Reunions, Research Days, and Annual Meetings.**

**6. Clean-up and preservation of other Jessee cemeteries and historical sites.**

#### **FUTURE JHF BOARD MEETINGS**

**Saturday, March 6, 2004**  
at Quality Inn, Abingdon, VA.

**Friday, June 18, 2004 after the Research Day**  
at the Russell Co. Public Library

**Saturday, October 2, 2004**  
at Quality Inn, Abingdon, VA.

## **Jessee's Mill Historical Site and Marker Projects**

The Jessee Historical Foundation intends to undertake the establishment of one or two state highway historical markers pertinent to the history of the Jessee Family in Russell Co., VA, with Jessee's Mill as the first priority.

**J.C. JESSEE** and **MIKE AND JOY MALONE** had previously researched what is involved to establish a state highway historical marker, compiled all the information, and submitted all required paperwork to the Virginia State DOT last year. J. C. Jessee reports the following.

Our initial application for a Jessee Mill roadside marker was reviewed and denied at the September, 2002 Department of Historical Resource Board Meeting. The stated reason for denial was that it did not qualify according to the standards adopted in 1994 that it must first meet standards requiring state and national significance. At the November, JHF Board Meeting the committee asked that the roadside marker project be placed on hold until standards requiring state and national significance were met. It is my understanding that Joe Jessee is working with Mr. Sherman Wallace, Jessee Mill property owner, to obtain the required standards. To my knowledge the Jessee home across from the mill was not sold at auction.

This does not preclude the family's establishing an historical marker on a county road or even private property, if an appropriate location can be determined. This option will be held in abeyance until work on establishing the Mill, Dam, and School as an official State historic site is completed.

**JOE JESSEE is now chairing the committee working on requesting that Jessee's Mill be declared a Virginia State Historic site.** See report below.

## **John and Frankey Lea Jessee Cemetery Protection Project**

Protection and restoration of the John and Frankey Lea Jessee Cemetery, if not public access, is one of the main Jessee Historical Foundation goals. This cemetery is owned by Jimmy Herndon, who now lives on the property and has renovated the home there.

*We have learned that Mr. Herndon is not willing to cooperate with the Jessee family at this time, has expressed various complaints, asks for privacy, and suggests that if we want access to the cemetery, we purchase his farm.*

I believe we will need more investigation of our options and how to seek the cooperation of Mr. Herndon in at least providing demarcation and protection of this cemetery from further deterioration or damage from agricultural or other activities. I believe we need to work with Mr. Herndon to find a way to hold him harmless for any liability for those who may visit this cemetery with or without his permission.

**In the meantime, I, and the JHF, ask that we not aggravate Mr. Herndon with unauthorized visits to his farm, home, and this cemetery.**

**DEBRA ROOKARD** [d\_rookard@adelphia.net] wrote, 11/4/2003, in response to the above information with this very generous offer of help and additional information about this matter.

I read on our Jessee List about not being allowed into the cemetery by Mr. Herndon. I am an historic cemetery restoration/preservation specialist and am writing to offer free consultancy help. VA cemetery law does not allow remedy for access if the land owner objects, but .... there are legal "ways" to coerce the subject into compliance.

Please write and tell me what you know about Mr. Herndon and the communication you have had with him to date. It would be an honor being allowed to help in this matter.

I am also a Herndon descendant; (from Rachel Harrington Herndon's g'father David). This makes me related to every Herndon in Russell and Washington County.

I will be most pleased to help with whatever you and the Jessee family might need.

**Via the Jessee List on Internet I shared the above message and asked the JHF Board or representative to respond to Debra Rookard and to include her in future discussions.** I think doing nothing may lead to further deterioration of the cemetery and that we need to map, demarcate or get a fence around that cemetery as soon as possible, to prevent further damage from agricultural or other activities. I have seen that just having cattle graze over the cemetery has knocked down the last of the standing stones. This is also in Mr. Herndon's best interests.

**In response to the above appeal, Joe Jessee reported the following information, and his own and the current JHF board stance on this matter.**

JOE JESSEE [joejessee@yahoo.com] wrote, 11/6/2003, with the following. I have edited this slightly from the original and words in [brackets] have been added by the editor to maintain meaning.

Please feel free to make the contacts you mentioned [Ms. Rookard, and seeking other information] ... and send a written report with suggestions to me and others for discussion at the next Jessee Historical Foundation ("JHF") meeting in March 2004.

Two years ago I made an appointment with Mr. Herndon, the landowner of the John Jessee cemetery, and met with him on May 12, 2001, to discuss possible restoration and or access by JHF. This appointment was made at the resolution of the JHF Board of Directors.

Mr. Herndon expressed several reservations regarding entry onto his property and stated that he did not wish to allow entry at that time. These reservations were based upon

1. past problems with 'Jessees',
2. things said and done,
3. promises made but broken,
4. his personal liability for invited and uninvited guests, and
5. that the cemetery was grown up and neglected when he bought the property.

I reported this to the Board of Directors and others and the decision was made at that time to not approach or be a nuisance to Mr. Herndon. Particularly, to see things from his point of view, like it was "your property", and respect the property and privacy of the landowner.

However, this did not occur. Subsequently, in the summers of 2002 and 2003, two different groups of people, including JHF Directors, acting unknown to the JHF Board, [I believe there were more- Ed.] went to Mr. Herndon's property, unannounced and unexpected by Mr. Herndon, and ask to have immediate access to the cemetery. ... [At some point one group of visitors] were told that they could "purchase the farm."

... continued attempts to gain access to the cemetery will or would only continue to make any person more resistant to allow access upon their property. Mr. Herndon is a decent man who will not destroy the cemetery; and he told me that he would restore the cemetery at a time of his convenience.

The JHF was created to make a concerted attempt on restoring the cemetery as opposed to uncoordinated individual attempts. Further actions which might serve to bother Mr. Herndon are extremely counterproductive. And some of us have to live here!

Mr. Herndon during my visit with him was polite but unyielding to any current entry or restoration or fencing of the cemetery due to the past problems listed above.

Leave Mr. Herndon alone until maybe 2008 and then he can be approached with a concrete plan for the cemetery which contains provisions to protect the landowner.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph Jessee

President, Jessee Historical Foundation, Inc.

**I may have upset some with my postings on this to the Jessee List, and if I aggravate more with this article, I am sorry.** Two members of the JHF board, who asked to remain anonymous, wrote me a note to say that Joe had misinterpreted at least some of the contacts with Mr. Herndon, and that their contact with him was very cordial. They also strongly agree with Joe's conclusions. They chastised me for making this

matter public on the Jessee List. They insist, along with Joe, that the JHF has "tabled" this matter for now. They both asserted that Mr. Herndon is an honorable man and will not harm the cemetery. *They ask that we have respect for Mr. Herndon's property rights and to leave him alone.*

**Family and friends, I am a Jessee, and, like many others who share my love for family, afraid I am stubborn and persistent, and dogged about matters of family history and heritage.** I do not believe that anyone made promises to Mr. Herndon that were not kept, nor were there any things said or done by family members that I know that warrant his umbrage. I, among others, have visited that cemetery at times over 25 years, and have watched it deteriorate. In summer 2002, his gate was open and I drove up his driveway to meet Mr. Herndon. I told him of the family interest in the cemetery, and that Joe Jessee represented the JHF on this matter. I made no demands, not even for "immediate access" to the cemetery for me or the family who were with me that day and wanted to see it. I am very disappointed that the JHF board may not take a helpful role in the future, but still urge them to, and even more worried that a debate over property rights could split us up into political camps. Let's not.

**Just a little understanding about people's feelings for the sacred burial place and home of their ancestors, and simple human decency, if not plain old fashioned Russell Co. neighborliness, could resolve all this to the satisfaction of everyone.**

Please, Mr. Herndon, consider that this is the original pioneering farm in 1790 in Russell Co. where John and Frankey Lea Jessee raised their fifteen children. This is the first known Jessee cemetery for most of the Jessees in America, and the ancestors of many other Russell Co. families. It is the resting place of an American Revolutionary War patriot, and that of his grandson, Thomas Jefferson Jessee, a C.S.A. Civil War veteran. They have thousands of descendants living today, and hundreds of them know of this land and cemetery through their own family lore, Russell County history, this newsletter and Website, and much more public information. Interest in the cemetery and the desire of hundreds to visit it or know that it is at least safe for the future is a tide that cannot be turned. I cannot put this Jessee back into the bottle.

**I strongly believe we need to respect Mr. Herndon's property rights, his privacy and wish to be undisturbed at his home, and absolutely must hold him harmless for trespassers and even invited guests who may wish to visit this cemetery.**

**I advocate cooperating with Mr. Herndon to ask visitors to not trespass or intrude on his farm or home, providing he works with us to map and protect the cemetery, and to post appropriate signs as described below.**



## **HERE ARE MY RECOMMENDATIONS.**

**1. Gather information regarding the means and cost to map and demarcate the extent of the cemetery, to determine exactly where there are graves, and where visible boundaries might be established to assure no future intrusion into the cemetery land by agricultural or other activities.**

This may involve using modern scanning technology, and a proper recording of the cemetery using precise coordinates. I am attempting to learn more about this kind of service. I would appreciate help from someone in the area who might contact local colleges and universities, or other agencies or individuals who are doing this kind of forensic anthropology work.

**2. Gather information on the means and cost to clear and reduce if not eliminate vegetation that has overgrown the cemetery.** This may have to be done before #1 above to provide clearance for a proper survey of the graves found there and finding appropriate boundaries for the cemetery. This could be as simple as buying Mr. Herndon some herbicide, gas for his tractor, or offering to sharpen his mower.

**3. Gather information on the means and cost to best demarcate and protect the cemetery from future intrusion by agricultural or other activities.** This could be a chain link fence, but I wonder if such a fence becomes a nuisance with respect to allowing vegetation to grow on it and limiting appropriate access to the space to mow or contain the weeds and trees. I want to make this easy for Mr. Herndon to see the boundaries of the cemetery when doing agricultural activities, and to give him easy access to help maintain it. This could just be simply some corner posts for now if cattle are not to be grazed there.

**After we know what the above may cost, I ask that the JHF again approach Mr. Herndon to share the information, and offer to pay him or provide mutually agreed upon volunteers, or contractors if necessary, to do what is desired.** Mr. Herndon expressed a willingness to do these things himself. If he does so, I believe we should compensate him for the cost of materials, and additional labor he may require.

I would be satisfied with the accomplishment of above that Mr. Herndon is sincere in not harming and making an effort to preserve the cemetery "as is." If so, I would agree to do nothing further, not seek redress of any damage done, nor ask for cemetery restoration at this time. Should Mr. Herndon actively lead the effort to restore the cemetery, he would be a family hero.

If we can reach that accord, I would ask one more consideration from Mr. Herndon that could also help end trespassing or other intrusion into Mr. Herndon's life in the future.

**I ask that the JHF seek permission from Mr. Herndon and, if agreed, plan and fund the placement of a historical sign or landmark on Mr. Herndon's property, as appropriate along County**

**Road 645 where someone might safely be able to pull over or off the road to read it.**

Wording can be developed later, but should indicate that this land is the ancestral home of John and Frankey Lea Jessee and their fifteen children, the burial place for an American Revolution patriot and C.S.A. Civil War veteran, along with historical information. It should indicate that the original Jessee cemetery on the hill (in the appropriate direction needed) behind this sign, has been protected by the landowner, but there are no stones or other evidence visible above ground, and there are no original buildings left on this farm.

**I would ask that the following wording or something like it be included boldly on the sign.** *The Jessee Historical Foundation asks visitors to respect the property rights, farming activities, and privacy of the homeowner. Please do not trespass on this private land nor go to the home here to request permission for access to the cemetery.*

I want to try this friendly persuasion, rather than just post notices. I believe we need to find legal means holding the land owner harmless for liability for anyone visiting his farm or the cemetery, invited or not. Perhaps this is a matter of Virginia state law, and if so, there must be many land owners in the same boat. Could an easement be purchased from Mr. Herndon, should he ever be willing, to allow some formal means of access to the cemetery? If such can ever come to be, perhaps the JHF can consider actual restoration of the cemetery, someday. For now, I can be content to let John and Frankey sleep undisturbed, if I know this ground is protected.

**We need leadership in the area to explore local resources for taking the actions above and to work with Mr. Herndon.** This is an Eagle Scout project, if I have ever seen one, but needs lots of help and cooperation to happen. I ask that those best able, who are family, friends, neighbors, or just a knowledgeable person to please help. You may share my newsletter and views with Mr. Herndon, and my apologies for the necessary intrusion. There is a way for all to be satisfied here. Please help us find the way.

**MIKE AND JOY MALONE** [drjoym@bellsouth.net] sent previously, 2/18/01, related information to the discussion above about an opportunity to properly recognize and record the grave site of our John Jessee Revolutionary War soldier. Specific information on this was provided in the July 2002 newsletter which is available on line at [www.jessee.org](http://www.jessee.org). **We still need to get John Jessee recognized as a Revolutionary War Soldier and the cemetery where he and Frankey are buried acknowledged as a Revolutionary War grave site.** We know that it is also a Civil War soldier grave site, and may need this recognition as well. New volunteers are needed to pick up this baton.



**HOPE DAVIS** [iambored1@gamewood.net] sent, 7/22/2003, this important information and petition that is instrumental to our efforts to save the **John and Frankey Lea Jessee Cemetery**.

Neglected, Abandoned and Licensed Cemeteries

Fellow genealogists/researchers, please consider signing this petition for the protection/preservation of "Neglected, Abandoned and Unlicensed Cemeteries in the State of Virginia", particularly if you are researching your own genealogy originating from Virginia. Also, please consider passing this along to others who may be interested in signing such as other genealogists, historians, heritage groups, VFW groups, etc. Sincerely, Sheri Millikin

<http://www.PetitionOnline.com/hnvr2003/petition.html>

To: Virginia's lawmakers (General Assembly & Senate of Virginia) We the undersigned request the approval of the Proposed Legislation on Neglected, Abandoned and Unlicensed Cemeteries in the State of Virginia.

This proposed act, which may be cited as the "Neglected, Abandoned and Unlicensed Cemetery Act" (proposed/noted as Chapter 3, Article 22A,=A7 57-22A-1), reads in part the following:

(a) The care accorded the remains of deceased persons reflects respect and regard for human dignity as well as cultural, spiritual, and religious values. The General Assembly declares that human remains and burial objects are not property to be owned by the person or entity which owns the land or water where the human remains and burial objects are interred or discovered, but human remains and burial objects are a part of the finite, irreplaceable, and nonrenewable cultural heritage of the people of Virginia which should be protected.

(b) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the provisions of this chapter be construed to require respectful treatment of human remains in accord with the equal and innate dignity of every human being and consistent with the identifiable ethnic, cultural, and religious affiliation of the deceased individual as indicated by the method of burial or other historical evidence or reliable information.

We ask the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia to approve this proposed legislation to protect all private/family/non-profit cemeteries, particularly those cemeteries which are no longer on property owned by family members, but still frequently visited by family members, researchers, genealogists, and/or historians. These cemeteries contain the remains of Virginia's forebearers. Men, women and children, all who made great sacrifices in a variety of ways to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Many of these cemeteries contain the remains of Native Indians, founders of many areas within Virginia, African-born slaves and their descendants, Revolutionary War heroes and other war Veterans having served in such wars as the War of 1812, War Between the States/Civil War, World War I and even World War II. Please show them the due respect and decency they deserve and approve this proposed legislation so they may, once again, rest in peace.

**VERNON JESSEE** [vernon@cros.net] wrote, 10/14/2003, with a bit of information about the Jack Jessee Cemetery and some good advice for us to consider in our efforts to preserve other cemeteries.

I went to Va. the 8th. and came back the 12th of October. My son and daughter-in-law took a couple of days off from work and went with me, and he did the most of the driving. While we

were there we went to Mill creek, and I showed him the Jessee's Mill, because he had never been there, and we went to the Cemetery where Jack Jessee is buried, and while we were there, the owner of the property on the hill above the Cemetery came down and talked with us awhile, his name is Roy Kramer, he said that he had heard that there was plans to put a new fence at the cemetery, and that it would be a chain link fence. He said if it was a rail fence instead, that he would keep the Cemetery cleaned up, such as mowing the grass, etc. But he said that a chain link fence would allow vines to grow up it, and that he couldn't mow under it. I thanked him, and told him I would get in touch with you and you might put this on your web site.

It is the Cemetery behind the Mill Creek Baptist Church, Reeds Valley Rt. 645 Where Andrew Jackson "Jack" Jessee, and his wife Elizabeth are buried, The Church, and Cemetery is just across the road from the old Jessee School house where Rt. 640 turns off of Rt. 645 going toward Castlewood.

## **Acquisition of Jessee's Mill and Andrew Jackson Jessee Home Remains a Dream**

As some of you may know, Kathryn Greever, John Funk and I, among many others, believe that the JHF or other significant benefactor or foundation should look into acquiring Jessee's Mill along with the dam above it and the Jessee School for a **Jessee's Mill restoration project, as the anchor for a Mill Creek Historic Park**. See the following articles. We had hoped that we could acquire enough land around the mill, dam, school, the Andrew Jackson Jessee home and the miller's home to preserve a sense of the original Mill Creek Community environs. Sherman Wallace indicates he is very willing to work with the Jessee family regarding these ideas. This is a wonderful opportunity to preserve these significant historical landmarks and perhaps create a small historical park around it for Russell Co. and all its sons and daughters across America.

I have learned that the Jessee Historical Foundation, while a non-profit corporation, limits its membership to Jessee descendants only, and thus would not qualify as a public charitable non-profit organization for receipt of tax-deductible donations or other grants or contracts. Thus the JHF organization cannot undertake this project directly, but can help develop the ideas and lend support to a benefactor or an appropriate public non-profit charitable group, corporation, or foundation which could undertake this.

I ask members in or near Russell County to consider how this might happen. Would the Russell County government, Chamber of Commerce, Genealogy or Historical Society, or other appropriate group be willing to look into creating a Russell County or Mill Creek Historic Park with a renovated Jessee's Mill as its centerpiece? If not, is there sufficient interest to create a separate non-profit tax exempt organization or foundation for this purpose?

## Jessee's Mill Restoration

**The restoration of Jessee's Mill is a dream shared by many of us who read this newsletter or email me via the Jessee List.** I am willing to do what I can to encourage such an idea, and offer this newsletter and the Jessee Genealogy Service Website as one vehicle for sharing information about how to accomplish this. While the JHF supports this project, it is also beyond the charter of the JHF. As always, we need volunteers and leadership in or near Russell County. Your help is needed.

**There has been significant progress made towards having Jessee's Mill declared an historic landmark.** During spring 2003, Joe Jessee and Sherman Wallace submitted a preliminary application to the VA Dept. of Historical Resources for State Historical Status. On June 16, 2003, Joe and Sherman toured the Jessee Mill with Mike Pulice who is the Architectural Historian, Roanoke Regional Preservation Office, Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

**Mike Pulice believes the Mill is fully eligible for both State and National Historical Register status, and commented on its remarkable integrity.** He is advising Sherman on appropriate preservation measures, some of which are needed immediately. We shall now need to complete a full application, providing what Mr. Pulice advises and requires. He was impressed with the historical significance and condition of the Mill, and will help with detailing the particulars required.

**Sherman Wallace has arranged a meeting with Mr. Pulice and all the land owners involved, including the Mill Creek Baptist Church, to discuss the option of having all these related properties donated to the VA Dept. of Historical Resources with appropriate arrangements for compensation.** We await the results of this meeting and hope to report in the next newsletter.

**Kathryn Greever has been working with Joe, Sherman, John Funk, Tom Rudder, and Mr. Pulice to help make this happen, and has volunteered to help Joe prepare the application.** Joe indicates that the current committee should continue on this project. We welcome additional help, and ask the committee to also include Tom Rudder, Kathryn Greever, and me as much as possible, we are all eager to do what we can.

**Mike Pulice says that, normally, it takes a specialized consultant to be hired, and several thousand dollars to prepare a full application.** Some of us feel that we can do this with JHF members and resources, but it may mean many hours of volunteer time and coordination. **Please let Joe know how you can help.** Write to Joe at joejessee@yahoo.com.

**KATHRYN GREEVER** provides this additional information regarding the application.

For Mike Pulice's organization, go to [www.dhr.state.va.us](http://www.dhr.state.va.us) Hit "enter" then hit "National & State Registers" then hit (near the bottom of page "Preliminary Evaluation and Nomination Process" and then go down to near the bottom where it says: Downloading Preliminary Evaluation and Nomination Forms. There you will find 5 different "downloads" These are different forms for different kinds of projects. Hit the first one and you'll be led to the actual form. Now, this way you'll have first-hand info.

**SHERMAN WALLACE**, wrote, 2/19/2003, with this **special request to help preserve Jessee's Mill, which I am repeating again in this newsletter.**

### **To the Members of the Jessee family:**

Over the past three to four years, I have had the pleasure of meeting and becoming acquainted with many members of the Jessee family and have become aware of the ties the descendants have to their past heritage. This relationship with the Jessee's has also made me aware of the importance that Jessee's Mill is to this heritage. No other psychical object could express the contribution that the Jessee family has made to history. The hope of every Jessee seems to be that some day the mill could be restored to be a monument to this great family.

About three weeks ago, a very dedicated member called me to see what could be done to get this process going. We talked about the short-term and long-term needs of the mill. She asked to remain anonymous but is very committed to get things going. We talked about the short-term needs of the mill, things that need to be done to preserve the structure now. I pointed out to her that weathered boarding on the wheel side of the mill had deteriorated to the point that rain can now reach the main structure of the building and needs to be replaced about 1/3 the way up the side. Also, the roof which I have painted several times needs to be replaced. The windows on the west side have all fallen out and need to be replaced or covered temporarily with Plexi-glass. Over the years, hay, dirt, dust, and tobacco have accumulated on all the floors and has created a fire hazard as well as has prevented the wood floors from receiving proper ventilation. All this needs to be cleaned out and doors need to be installed to prevent vandalism and fire. The mill dam which has equal importance has a large stump blocking the lower gate which has caused water to back up. A large flood could cause the dam to fall from this pressure. A large excavator is needed to remove this stump and allow the water to flow through the bottom of the dam.

This Jessee descendant mailed me a check for \$2,000 to establish a fund to address the needs to assure that Jessee's Mill is not allowed to deteriorate beyond restoration. This is why I am writing each of you to request your help to see that these needs are met before it is too late. Anyone who would like to donate to this fund could do so with a check now or a commitment to help once costs have been determined.

Please feel free to call me at my office at 276-889-2865 or home at 276-762-4433 or mail a contribution to:

**Sherman Wallace**  
**Rt 1 Box 18**  
**Cleveland, VA 24225**

You can also email me at [morganw@naxs.net](mailto:morganw@naxs.net).

**Editor's Note: I have requested that the Jessee Historical Foundation donate to Sherman Wallace for this specific purpose, well outlined above.** Sherman owns Jessee's Mill, Dam, and land around it, and is a Jessee descendant, as well. I have met

Sherman, toured the Mill and Jessee lands ( including the cemetery when he leased it) with him, and know of his interest in preserving the Mill. My wife and I were guests in his mother's home, and enjoyed his generosity and hospitality. I find him to be an honorable man and trust him completely.

**I have recommended that the JHF establish a specific fund to which members and others might donate money for preserving the mill, and that the JHF manage this fund, making disbursements from it as able and appropriate.** Disbursement may be made to Sherman Wallace for these needed preservation actions and for directly related activities, such as the following.

**I have asked that the JHF also take the lead or support others in establishing a separate non-profit corporation for the acquisition, preservation, and restoration of Jessee's Mill, if not to establish a Mill Creek Historic Park that would include Jessee's Mill, Dam, School, and historic Jessee home.** This separate corporation is needed if we are ever to ask the property owners and others to donate to this cause. This corporation could seek grants, donations, and other opportunities to accomplish these objectives, which the JHF cannot do. The JHF is already working with Sherman Wallace on seeking historical designation for the Mill, which is one of the first steps in this whole process.

**I very much believe we need much wider leadership, and participation from other Russell Co. government, groups, organizations, and individuals to establish this non-profit corporation.** Jessee's Mill is a Russell County historical icon. The legend and legacy of the Mill Creek Community with the mill, dam, Jessee home, school, store, Mill Creek Baptist Church, and the memories of all those wonderful people who lived there, are treasures to preserve for our children and grandchildren. **I ask for help and advice on getting this message out to a wider audience.**

**PLEASE NOTE: Those who do not wish to wait for all the falderal above are encouraged to make a donation directly to Sherman Wallace now. I know Sherman will put your money directly into repairs and preservation of Jessee's Mill. God bless him.**

JOHN R. FUNK [renkiewicz1@earthlink.net] has corresponded with me, Kathryn Greever, Sherman Wallace, and the Jessee List providing several Websites with specific information on the architecture, design, construction, and operation of the mill over the last few years. These have been featured in previous newsletter, and on the Jessee Family Website.

**On the following page please find a sample of photos John has provided of the Mill, Dam, historic homes, and surrounding area.**

When John writes, he eschews capitalization, and has a very unique writing style, that makes printing or forwarding it "as is" very problematic. It requires extensive editing, which I am not able to do of late because of my increasing disability. B. J. Clouston has come to the rescue, providing translation and editing of John's contributions into articles I can post to the Jessee and Russell Co. Lists, include in the Website and in the Jessee Family Newsletter. Thank you B.J. for giving us a chance to share John's information and thoughts. Here are more of his wonderful insights into this area.

While I was in Mill Creek, I talked with Jerry McReynolds, who has lived there his entire life. Here are a few things that Jerry told me with proof to back it up.

His father purchased the land he lives on, by the big Mill Creek waterfall where the sawmill sat, from the Kiser family. His father was a lifelong Mill Creek resident, born and raised in the old McReynolds' homestead, down by the railroad track by the Clinch River. The homestead is still lived in today.

The old Kiser Cemetery is located up the hill from Jerry McReynolds' house in a 40-acre pasture, also purchased from the Kiser family. The cemetery can be accessed from a dirt road from the area by the Clinch River and the railroad. Jerry told me he is required to give access to any Kiser relative who wants to visit the cemetery but they are required to schedule an appointment and to hold him harmless for any liabilities that may occur if and when they are on his property or his access road.

The Kisers apparently owned the sawmill. It was located on their property and the big falls, which ran the sawmill, belonged to the Kiser Family.

Most of the creek area just below the falls exhibits signs of being the source of ledge rock mining used in area construction. There are also deposits of yellow clay on McReynolds property that could have been used to make the local brick. It appears the McReynolds property by the big falls was the local building supplier when the white man first came to Mill Creek, formerly known as Carr's Creek, Bear Creek, and by a man's name followed by Springs.

I found a lot of onyx, as in black onyx except this is pure white, up by the old Kiser Cemetery. I had expected this because any place where sinkholes exist one can find broken off stalactite and stalagmite material that becomes onyx when they are formed.

I believe there are extensive caverns under the McReynolds' property because his mountain is one of the only ones in the area that has not collapsed in the center. When they were drilling his new well, they hit an artesian well. This only happens in areas like this where extensive cavern networks exist.

The McReynolds property has appreciated in value. The bad news is that all the land just below the mill is ten times more valuable today than it was last year. I figure it will go even higher in the next few years.

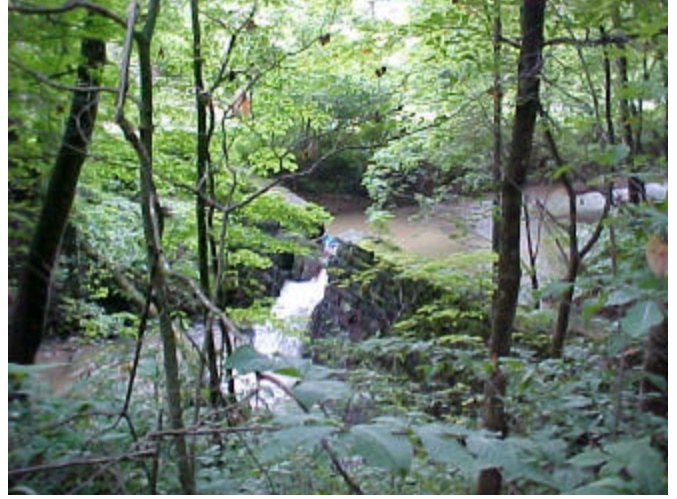
**TOM RUDDER** provided this Web reference to a **topographic map locating Jessee's Mill**. It can be found at **TopoZone.com** which is a fantastic topographic map resource with many **Jessee landmarks identified, including the cemetery. Have fun playing on this site.**

**[Http://www.topozone.com/map.asp?z=17&n=4085539&e=395992&s=25&size=m](http://www.topozone.com/map.asp?z=17&n=4085539&e=395992&s=25&size=m)**





Jessee's Mill



The dam upstream from the Jessee's Mill on Mill Creek



The Andrew Jackson "Jack" Jessee home. He owned Jessees Mill which is just across the road on Mill Creek from this home



Mill Creek



Classic Russell Co. House



Beautiful Russell Co. Vista

Please see Correspondence for an essay by Patricia “Morningstar” Riggan on Jessee’s Mill, and additional contributions by Tom Rudder, Mike and Joy Malone, and others in this newsletter.

## Jessee’s Mill Dam an Historic and Architectural Treasure

JOHN R FUNK [renkiewicz1@earthlink.net] has written previously with extensive information regarding the dam just upstream from Jessee’s Mill. This information can be found in prior newsletters and on the Jessee Website. John asserts that this may be one of the oldest and most unique structures of its kind in the United States. We hope the Jessee Historical Foundation can use this information to help establish the Jessee’s Mill, Dam, and School as a Virginia or Russell Co. Historical Site.

TOM RUDDER (tomr@infostations.com) provides evidence, 6/20/2003, that the original dam and mill may have been established even earlier.

I think that everyone discussing the mill site should keep in mind that it was there prior to 1791. It is mentioned in the William Gilmore survey dated 13 June 1791. The mill was on Carr’s Creek at the corner where the 200 acre and 50 acre survey lines meet. It appears that the mill was built by Aaron Vanhook who had made improvements on the land before he assigned his right to Gilmore who received a land grant on 17th. of Dec. 1792.

JOHN FUNK wrote more this summer providing very interesting information about Aaron Van Hook, and much evidence and support for the historical designation and restoration of Jessee’s Mill and Dam as a significant National as well as State of Virginia and Russell Co. Historic Site.

Recently John directed me to a Website featuring the Van Hook Family Coat of Arms and family history [<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Flats/7746/coa.html>]. It contains references to Aaron Van Hook. John Funk speculates that this could possibly be the Aaron Van Hook who built Jessee’s Mill.

It says here [on the Van Hook Website] this was a man of means and he lived in North Carolina at about the same time period as the construction of Jessee’s Mill. And it is highly doubtful that during that time there were two aristocrats with the same name. The Dutch were accomplished Mill Wrights and Millers, and had access to the 13 books of Codex.

### HERE IS THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ON AARON VAN HOOK AND THE COAT OF ARMS

The Van Hook coat of arms has a long history. Riestraps lists the family as “of Courlande, originally of Holland.” Courlande was a local district in Holland. This is where the family obtained the arms which means basically that the family owned land there in 1516. We know from James M. Van Hook of Charleston, Indiana (1899) that the motto was “Te Deus Defendet.” The arms show up again on July 4, 1750 when it was reconfirmed to the Van Hook family. Ten years later a “Coat of Arms” was mentioned in the inventory of Aaron Van Hook (d. 1760 in North Carolina).

The representation of the arms can change from generation to generation as long as it has the essential elements. The armorial representation found in Aaron’s inventory had the name “van Hoecks.” This probably means that Arent Isaacszen Van Hoeck brought it over from Europe. From records in the Hague in Holland, we know that Arent was born in Hooksiel in the county of Oldenburg (in modern Germany) in 1623, and this would account for the “s” in the Dutch transliteration of the surname on the arms. Added to this is the fact that after 1664, when the British took over the Dutch Colony, “Van Hoeck” quickly became “Van Hook.”

So, Arent would have given the arms to his son Lawrence Van Hook, of New York and New Jersey. Before he died in 1724, he would have given or willed the arms to his son Aaron. At this point some other family may have disputed the arms forcing each to go to court. The arms were reconfirmed (as previously stated) on July 4, 1750. Aaron moved to North Carolina in 1755 and died in 1760. The Coat of Arms was next given to Lloyd Van Hook who died in 1815 in New Jersey leaving it to his son Lawrence who died in 1847. His son, Marcus Aurelius Van Hook, had it when he lived in Jackson, Mississippi. It was he who corresponded with James M. Van Hook of Indiana and hence preserved the motto, date, and name on the arms in 1899. Marcus’s son, Henry Ware Van Hook, left it to his son Benjamin Ormond Van Hook. The last person ever to see the representation was Benjamin’s daughter, Alma Eugene. Supposedly, she took it to Power Elementary School in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1934 where it was lost or stolen. Fortunately, she remembered enough of what it looked like for a rough sketch to be drawn. When later this was compared to Riestraps Armorial and what Bernice Keister knew, it was nearly identical.

What you see on this page is based on all of the historical evidence given above. Alma believed that the helmet, however, was slightly opened making it a knight’s instead of an esquire. The artist is Edna Graham of Abilene, Texas. You can order a full color version of what you see from her by writing to 3441 Edgemont, Abilene, Texas 79605 or calling 915-692-3060

### John writes with a little bit more information for us to consider on this speculation.

Holland has been building windmills to pump back seawater for years and probably wrote the book on wooden gears. Most early windmills had wooden gears. Dutch and German millwrights were years ahead of the rest of the world in building wooden gear-driven clocks and windmills. These windmills were used for many chores – pumping seawater, grinding grains, sawmills and forges.

One other point: certain types of cuts, craftsmanship and methods of connection and assembly have identified the builders of many early millwright machines. Maybe these traits are identifiable in the Jessee Mill machinery. As you know from reading history books the Netherlands, Holland was part of the Spanish Hapsburg Empire that broke away from the Austrian Hungarian Hapsburg Empire after Charles V died. However much of the Netherlands and the German province of Hanover, Germany, came under the control of England. This is why much of the British Colonial army was Hessians.

Another little known fact: The present House of Windsor, the modern day English royalty, was called the House of Hanover prior to WWI. It was referred to as the House of Windsor after Queen Victoria and after WWI. In fact, the present name of Montbatten used by the English royalty was referred to as the Battenburgs prior to WWII.

Many early immigrants to America were German and Dutch from English controlled colonies in those countries. The name Kiser is also found in Germany and Holland.

The Dutch were very good stonemasons, especially where no mortar was used. Many dikes in Holland are unmortared masonry sandwiched over earth and rip-rap rock. These don’t leak either – just like Jessee’s dam! They were also highly skilled in moving and



placing very large quarried rocks like those found in Jessee Mill and experts with horse and mule-drawn excavators called mucking buckets. Other countries had the same skills.

Even today dikes are built from reinforced concrete sandwiched over hard compacted earth and rip-rap.

The lack of mortar in the (Jessee's) dam and mill foundation, the earthen buttress dam upstream with no mortar tends to make me believe that the craftsmanship looks more and more like Dutch.

Someone might want to research the type of craftsmanship found in Jessee's Mill and compare it to known techniques used by the French, English, German and Dutch millwrights. I feel very strongly that an accomplished Dutch stonemason did the mortarless rock masonry. The Dutch were part of the Spanish Hapsburg prior to the English conquest and had access to the 13 books of codex that still are in the custody and ownership of Spain. I believe the design of Jessee's dam originated from the 13 books of codex.

Read very closely what the Van Hook's family crest looked like. In fact, someone might contact the woman who has it. Then keep your eye out in the Lebanon area to see if it pops up on furniture, in the peaks of some building, on any record books in the courthouse, or on documents such as the bill of sale for the Mill, if it is available. Most families with crests used them as notary stamps in any and all legal documents in the same manner one would use rubber stamps today.

### **John writes further with this encouragement for us to preserve and restore Jessee's Mill and Dam.**

When one looks at the old mansion, the mill, and the dam, one cannot help notice that all these structures show signs of a master craftsman. Note the attention to detail. When the dam was built, most people would not have concerned themselves with how it looked. They would not have cared if the face of the dam was straight and plumb. The builder of this dam took the time to put only flat, clean rock at the front of the dam and he put it very level and straight. The overall appearance is professional and very, very neat. The workmanship on the gears and structure of the mill is a work of art. The neatly stacked rock on the dam and on the mill foundation is very impressive. Great attention was given to the detail of the gable end trim. These structures were not the work of an old jack-of-all-trades country farmer. These structures, including the church and the school, were built by master craftsmen and are great examples of early American art. They are as good as any in the entire state.

## **SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA FAMILIES**

Here I will feature articles, documents, and other information about other Southwest Virginia families who have intermarried with the Jesse(e) Family over many generations. Your contributions are welcome.

**JACK TEMPLETON** [jlh.temp@verizon.net] wrote, 9/22/2003, regarding **Charles Bickley of Castlewood** and his second wife, **Delilah Wigfield**, providing an important correction for the database. Jack provides additional information about the **Templeton family**.

I came across your website with its extensive Bickley information. Re Charles (1753-1839) and his 2nd wife, Delilah... I just came across an 1839 newspaper, the Southwestern Christian Advocate with an article re Charles' death, and some family background. This article confirmed that Delilah's maiden name was Wigfield not Winfield. I had long thought that Charles was tied to the Wigfield-Templeton line in Scott County (they resided along Copper Creek near Manville, just north of Gate City), as he appears

in land transactions in the 1830s with these families. Specifically, Charles is one of several individuals cited as land holders holding property previously owned by my great(4)grandfather, Thomas Templeton and Thomas' father-in-law Benjamin Wigfield. Can you offer me any insight regarding the info you have re Benjamin? I hadn't yet come across reference to his wife. Your info re Peggy and her parents was very enlightening, and I'd love to know more. I certainly appreciate the wealth of information you have posted on your site, and am most happy to share what I have. [Jack provided the following.]

**CHARLES BICKLEY**, born Va., July 27, 1753; went to western Va. to protect his sister, Mrs. Carter, whose husband had been killed by Indians near Blakemore's Fort, Clinch River. That sister died about 1821. He married Mary Hatler (died April 11, 1801), Green Co., Tenn., Sept. 23, 1788; seven children; married Delilah Wigfield, Scott Co., Va., and had six more children. He had been a militia captain; died Russell Co., Va., June 1, 1839. [Found on pg 5 of **August 24, 1839 issue** of Genealogical Abstracts From Reported Deaths The Southwestern Christian Advocate 1838-1846  
**By Jonathan Kennon Thompson Smith**  
Copyright, Jonathan K. T. Smith, 2003]

**TAMMY MAY DISMUKE** [tammym21498@comcast.net] sent, 9/25/2003, this remarkable photo of Russell Co. Pioneer, **Samuel Gibson** (1775-1764), who married **Catherine Gratner** and had 11 children. This is one of the founding families of Russell Co, and many a Gibson descendant has married a Jessee. Tammy passed along this information from another of her contacts.

In the State Library in Richmond Virginia. There is a folder on this family there. ... this line was considered Melungeon. ... This was a well known and respected family.



Photo 1. Samuel Gibson



## JESSE(E) FAMILY ORIGINS

There are many "Jessee," "Jesse," even "Jessie" families in the United States and Canada that we know are descended from families whose American origins are in Virginia. There are many Jesse, Jessee, Jessie, Jesse and, perhaps, Jeshy, Jaci, Jacy, and Jacie families in the world whose kinship is unknown. I believe we are all cousins. As "Jesse" and "Jessee" are the two most frequent spellings of this family name, 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., Nansemond, Co., Middlesex Co., and Spotsylvania Co., VA, not to mention the Isle of White and Devonshire, England.

## Other Jesse(e) Families

**KATHY MESSER** [kand@techline.com] wrote, 7/19/2003, regarding her grandmother **Annie Pearl Younger** whose mother was **Mary Ann "Mollie" Jesse**, with this information about the **Younger family**, who have intermarried with descendants of **John and Clia Smith Jesse**, another **JESSE** family that we have featured from time to time. Thanks to the contributions of **Harry and Beverly Jesse Shuptrine**, nearly 5000 descendants of this family have been included in the family database at [www.jessee.org](http://www.jessee.org), and I add more all the time.

My name is Kathy Messer and I have viewed your web site. I was very surprised to find my family in it. My great-grandma was Annie Pearl Younger whose mother was Mary Ann Jesse. I have been trying for years to find information on her and suddenly there it was. Well some of it. My great-grandma always told family she was first cousin to the Younger Brothers of outlaw fame. This is one thing I have not been able to find. Is it possible that you have this information?

**TONY FENNER** [Vigro@Adelphia.net] sent, 9/26/2003, the following note and photos of descendants of **John and Clia Smith Jesse** who are included in the Jessee Family Database, thanks to the work of **Harry and Bev Jesse Shuptrine**.

I wanted to express my gratitude for the work you have done which has allowed me to find out so many things about my Jesse relatives and for that I am very very grateful. I descend from John Jesse and Clia Smith via their son William, his wife Mary Ann Parker eventually to Hattie Parker and Luther Jesse who were the parents of my grandmother Ruth Lavonne Jesse and my Uncle, Ruth's brother, Chauncy Parker Jesse. They, Ruth Jesse and Chauncy Parker Jesse are both deceased but I have information on both and on their descendants if it is of interest to anyone. They did not die in Arkansas as someone surmised (with a question mark) in your info of the two. I am in possession of photos one of which I



John, David Luther, and Henry Jesse



Wedding Picture of Hattie and Luther Jesse



Chauncy Parker Jesse and Ruth Lavonne Jesse, brother and sister. Children of Hattie and David Luther Jesse in photo 4. (Info on back of picture 3 is: Taken in Blackwell Oklahoma 1922 or 23. He is 14 and she is 17.)

will include with this note, both front and back of their dad and two brothers. Chauncy Parker Jesse has an interesting background and is buried in Arlington. His sister Ruth, my grandmother, died here in California which is where I live. ... I would be happy to send other scanned pictures from this era that I am in possession of or info of descendants should someone be interested.

## PHILLIP AND RACHEL JESSEE

**Phillip Jessee (1742-1858)**, wife **Rachel**, and his son **Gabriel Jessee (1804-1886)**, of still unknown relationship to John Jessee (1750-1816), are among the historic Russell County, VA pioneering families. Phillip, who is reported to have lived to be 116, is sometimes referred to reverently as "Old Phillip." Here I will feature articles, documents, and other information about Phillip and Rachel Jessee, their son Gabriel, and their descendants. Your contributions are welcome.

**Gabriel Jessee descendants, Irene Jessee Perry, Janice Jessee Tiller, and J.C. Jessee, have been generous supporters and stalwart workers who have helped establish the Jessee Family Foundation.** For their past and continuing work, we thank them. I invite them and other family members to submit photos and other articles of interest for us all to enjoy.

**Of note, Jimmy Herndon, owner of the John and Frankey Lea Jessee cemetery and original farm, is a Phillip and Rachel Jessee descendant.**

## JOHN AND FRANKEY JESSEE

**Many, if not most, Jessees in America are descended from John (1750-1815) and Frankey Lea Jessee (1752-1836)** 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 fifteen children. All of us living descendants are about fifth or sixth cousins, or even closer kin.

Here I will report new information for John and Frankey and highlight news and significant contributions regarding each of their fifteen (I-XV) children. I will rely upon special requests and search of the Jessee Family Database to provide the detailed genealogy information to those interested in any particular branch, rather than provide all the new information I receive in the newsletter. There has been much new information added to the database regarding the descendants of John and Frankey Lea Jessee, so please visit [www.jessee.org](http://www.jessee.org) and look up your line.

I enjoy corresponding with many descendants of John and Frankey's fifteen children and have gleaned much new descendant and pedigree information. I cannot provide all of it in the Jessee Newsletter. Please visit the family database at [www.jessee.org](http://www.jessee.org) to see many new additions each month.

**TOM RUDDER** [tomr@infostations.com], in support of efforts to acquire and restore Jessee's Mill, Dam, School, and environs, has been updating and revising both the land records and the map (see on following page) of the John Jessee land holdings, on which John and Frankey raised their fifteen children, are buried, and on which Jessee's Mill was established.

## JOHN JESSEE LAND RECORDS

**Compiled by Tom Rudder 2003**

### Caswell Co. N.C.

1777 On tax list for Richmond District

1779 John Jessee received land grant for 450 acres from the state of North Carolina. For 50 shillings per 100 acres. Deed Book A, page 496

1783 John Jessee sold 450 acres to John Hodge. Deed Book B, page 31.

1783 George Lea 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 the state of N.C.

1784 John Jessee on tax list of 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, page 106

1787 John Jessee sold 277 acres to Barnett Lea. Deed Book E, page 200.

1787 John Jessee sold 75 acres to Wm. Warren. Deed Book E, page 208.

1787 John Jessee sold 276 acres to Wm. Warren. Deed Book E, page 209.

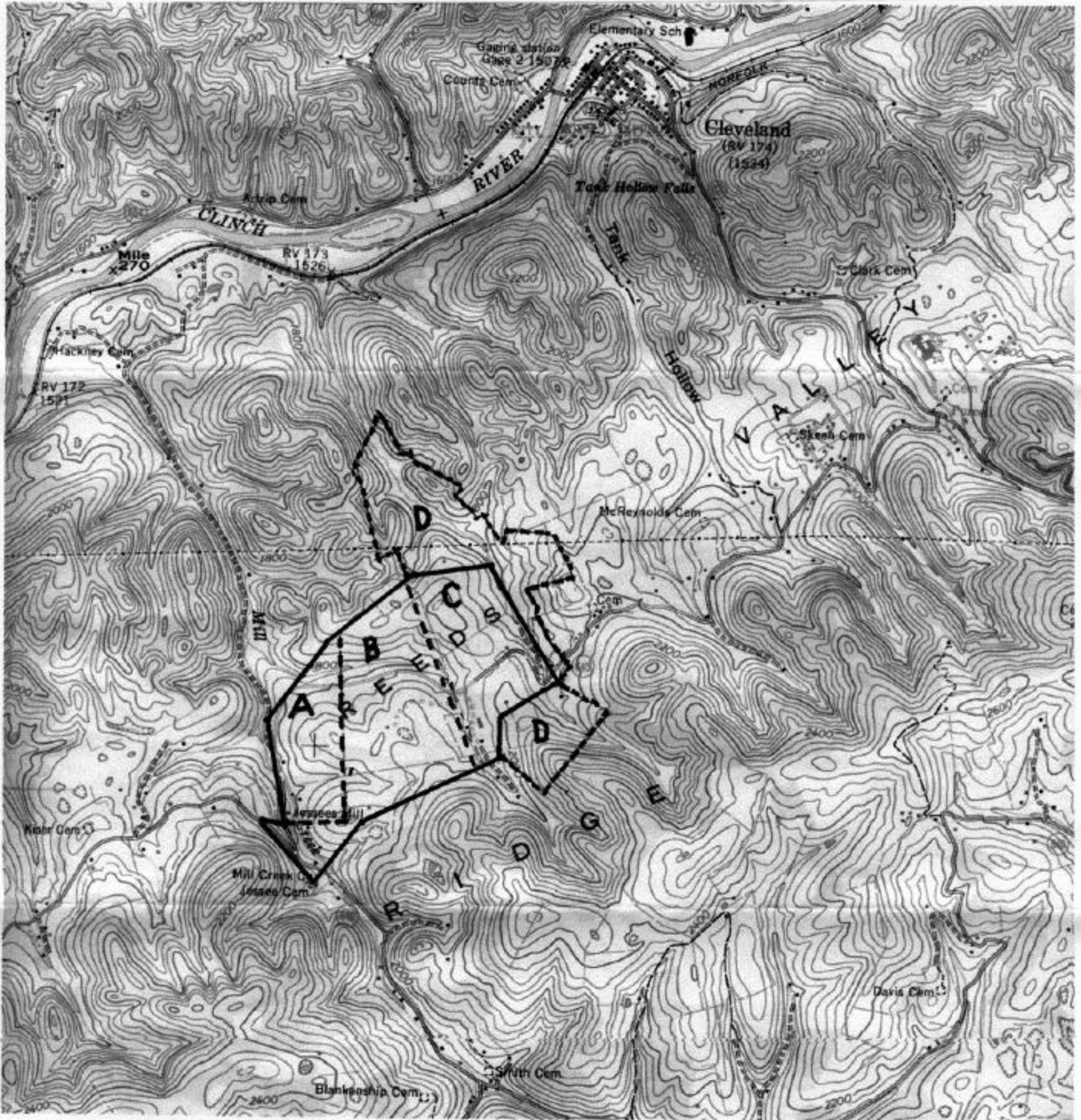
### Russell Co. VA.

1788 John Jessee on Wm. Webb Land Tax List. 200 acres Upper District 1788 John Jessee on Wm. Webb Personal Tax List. Upper District

1789 John Jessee on Wm. Webb Personal Tax List. Upper District.

1790 John Jessee on John Weirs Land Tax List. (Assignee of Price, 200 a.)

## John Jessee Sr. Land



Solid lines mark the boundry of the 250 acre tract that John Jessee Sr. purchased on Carrs Creek from William Gilmore in 1794.

- Tract A...The 50 acres Archer Jessee purchased from heirs in 1820
- " B...The 118 acres Archer purchased from heirs in 1827.
- " C...The 82 acres George L. Jessee purchase from heirs in 1827.
- " C & D...The 222 and 1/2 acres which comprise the Geo. Estate in 1882.

Note: This map supersedes a prior map which appeared in the Jessee Family Newsletter Number 11, Summer and Fall 1997.



1791 John Jessee bought 200 acres on Cedar Creek from Thomas Price. Deed Book 1, page 133.

1794 John Jessee bought 50 acres on Carr's Creek from William Gilmore. Deed Book 1, page 302.

1794 John Jessee bought 200 acres on Carr's Creek from William Gilmore. Deed Book 1, page 304.

1796 John and Frances Jessee sold 100 acres on Cedar Creek to George Fullar. Deed Book 2, page 164.

1798 John and Frances Jessee sold 100 acres on Cedar Creek to Wilson Vermillion. Deed Book 2, page 483.

1821 Prior to his death John Jessee was in the process of selling 50 acres to his son William. However the 50 acres were sold to Archer Jessee with the concurrence of the Jessee heirs. Deed Book 6, page 409.

1828 Archer Jessee bought 118 acres from the heirs of the John Jessee Sr. estate. Deed Book 8, page 87.

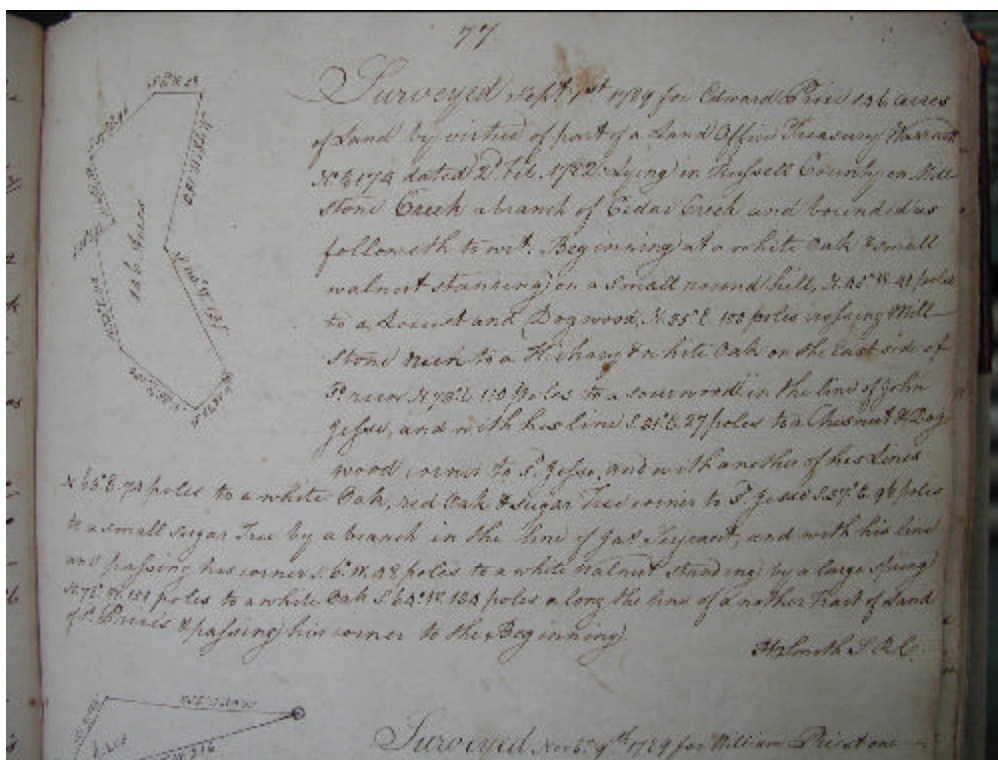
1828 George L. Jessee bought 82 acres from the heirs of the John Jessee estate. Deed Book 8, page 90.

**MIKE AND JOY MALONE** [drjoym@bellsouth.net] have also been working with Tom on this effort, and provided the following information and photos of the original records, which follow.

Tom, the survey books were very interesting, sorry we didn't have longer to read every page. We went to Washington County and attempted to look up the survey on page 302 of the Washington Co. Surveyors Record. We could not locate the record nor could the clerk in the records office. We checked all of the survey books that could be located.

We then went to Russell County and with the help of a clerk located the Russell Co. Survey Book # 1. This is when it gets interesting. The Survey on page 122 dated June 13, 1791 for William Gilmore does list a mill as one of the landmarks for the survey. However, there is no indication anywhere that it referred to the Jessee Mill. Records show that John Jessee owned land at least several years prior to this date. It is very possible that John Jessee did build a small mill somewhere on the creek that bordered his land. Mills in that time were essential to the development of their property.

Even with the limited time we had at the Russell Co. Courthouse, we were able to see that many land claims were for unpatented lands in the early 1780's. An act of the assembly in



Russell County Survey Book #1 pg 77

later years entitled "An Act of Adjusting and Setting the Titles of Claimers to Unpatented Lands Under the Present and Former Government, Previous to the Establishment of the Commonwealth's Land Office."

The interesting news is that one survey recorded on September 1, 1789 for Edward Price on page 77 of the Russell Co. Survey Book #1 mentions at least two times that Edward Price's boundary adjoined John Jessee's land. This dates John Jessee in Russell Co. owning land at least two years before the March 22, 1791 purchase of land from Thomas Price. A survey done on May 26, 1790 for James Gibson on page 87 of Book # 1 also lists boundaries with John Jessee. This corresponds with John Jessee being on the Wm. Webb Land Tax List in 1788. This would also correspond with John's last sale of land in Caswell Co. NC in October of 1787.

The history of the area states there were a number of mills located along Mill Creek. One of the surveys lists the name as Mill Stone Creek, and another as Mill Run Creek.

We were so busy with the Jessee Family Reunion activities that our time was extremely limited for research. We plan to pursue this on our next trip to Russell Co. and we will get back to you with our findings. I am attaching a few of the relevant surveys with this e-mail.

**JERRY HERNDON** [jerryherndon@earthlink.net] wrote, 7/11/2003, with information about one of the **Lea Families** that we have speculated was that of our **Frankey Lea Jessee**.

**Col. Howard Gilmer Jessee** went to his grave swearing this was the lineage of our Frankey Lea. Please look up **Thomas Lea** who married **Sarah Lea** in my database at [www.jessee.org](http://www.jessee.org) and follow this royal pedigree back to 800 AD through all the royal families of Europe. Jerry points out another connection, how this Lea family also includes **Roots** author **Alex Haley** as a descendant.

Lest we forget, we still have not positively identified the parents of our Frankey Lea Jessee and I believe she descends from William and Mary Lea, a different Lea family in Caswell Co., NC.

Jim, are you aware of the alleged connection to Alex Haley through Thomas Lea of Caswell Co., NC. I'm trying to verify this connection. According to "Roots", Kunta Kinte was bought first by John Waller, then acquired by his brother Dr. William Waller. Kunte married and had a daughter Kizzy by Dr. Williams' slave cook Bell. Kizzy was later sold by Dr. William to Thomas Lea of Caswell Co. Alex Haley in his book says that Thomas Lea raped Kizzy and produced Chicken George. I seem to be related both to Dr. William Waller and to Thomas Lea.

According to your records and others, Thomas Lea was a descendant of Major Lea and Elizabeth Herndon. Others say that Thomas Lea was a result of a marriage between Major Lea and Betsy Slade. Are you able to shed any concrete documentation on the pedigree of Thomas Lea?

**ANSWER** Unfortunately, no, so all pedigree information in my database must be regarded as speculation.

## I. John Jessee, Jr.

**John Jessee, Jr.** (1775-1834) married **Mary "Polly" Armstrong** (1780-1840) and they had six children. This is the editor's line.

**ALTA JEAN FENNELL** [AltaAzzro@aol.com] wrote, 7/21/2003, with this note about the **2003 Jessee Family Reunion**. Alta and I are second cousins, once removed, sharing **John Tivis Jessee** who married **American Elizabeth Bickley**, my g-grandparents, all descendants of John Jessee, Jr. via son Joseph Jessee.

Hi Jim, I just wanted to share with you our first experience of a Jessee Family Reunion. We had a wonderful time and met so



Ephraim Kiser Jessee Home about 1890  
Can you help us identify these people?

many neat people. Everyone was really helpful and shared what information they had. We were able to get many needed documents copied at the courthouse and genealogy day was great. We were able to go to the different sites and although we didn't get into cemeteries we had hoped to, we still had the excitement of a child in our adventure. The food was delicious and we brought home a couple of treasures from the auction. What a memorable vacation for us! We certainly plan on going again and because you are a close cousin it would be nice if we could meet.

I got a certified marriage for John Tivis and America Bickley. The courthouse took the information that was in the marriage register and made one for me. All the information on it is exactly what is recorded in the marriage register. The original must have been lost or taken. I will send you a copy. Of course it is all typed in but verified as correct and solid information.

**DAN ADDISON** [Danaddison@aol.com] wrote, 10/13/2003, with information about the historic home of Ephraim Kiser Jessee, on Route 640, Russell Co.

In 1976 Russell County did a Heritage Tour of the oldest houses of the county. The "Ephuram Jessee" House is listed on route 640 between Mill Creek and Carterton. At that time my Grandmother owned the house which has now been sold numerous times. I have a very old picture of the house probably made in the late 1800's which shows some people outside the home. I also have a picture from the 1970's that I'd like to share with you if you think the name is really Ephraim Kiser Jessee. I personally think it's the same. Let me know what you think. [I agreed, and Dan provided the photo, below, and added this information.]

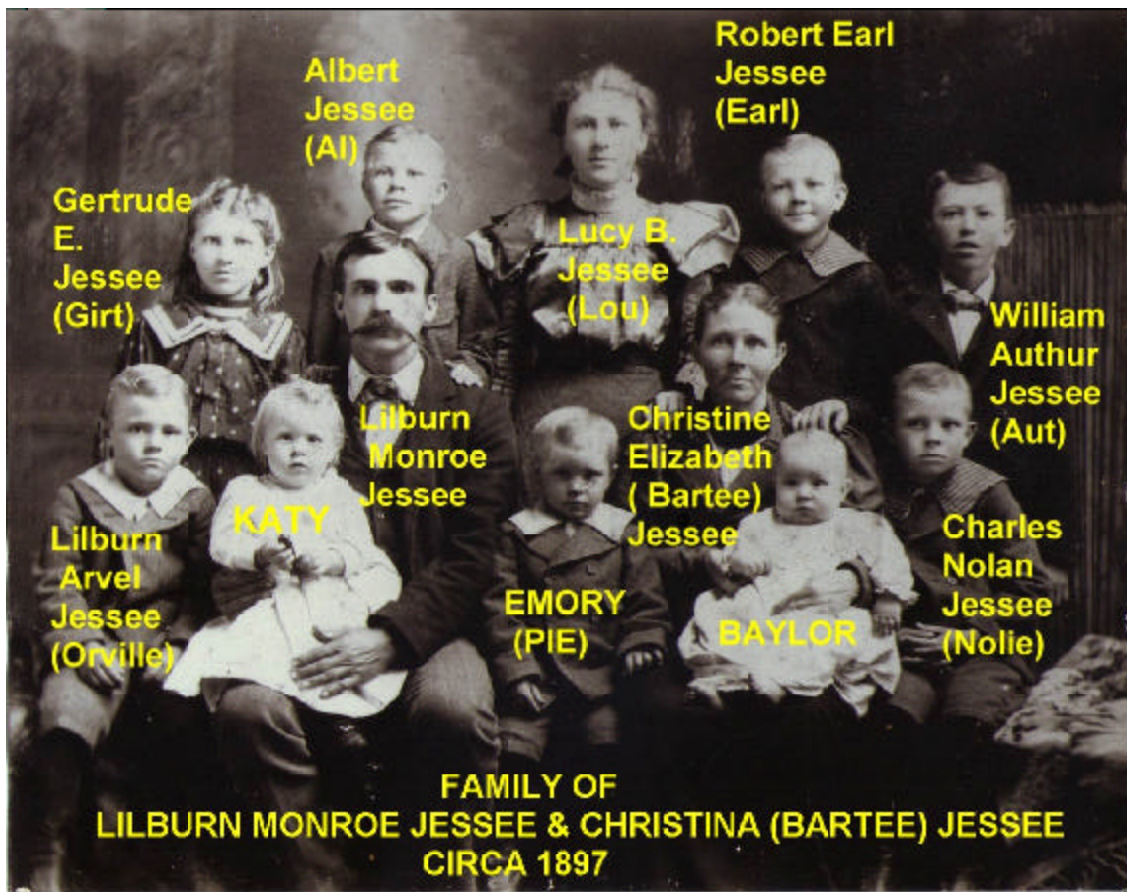
I believe my grandparents bought the place back in the 30's. Around 100 acres and quite a few outer buildings. I remember playing there when we vacationed there from Michigan. My dad grew up there. I am going to try to include the picture from the late 1800's just in case you haven't seen it and will hopefully be able to identify those in the picture. If you do please let me know. Have you been to the cemetery you mentioned? My uncle, Elmer Saddler used to live in the house directly before the stables. Now lives 2 houses down in the same direction. Do you know if there are grave stones there? Directly above my uncle's former house is a cemetery which is probably the one you are talking about. My grandmother's brother is buried there.

## II. Archer Jessee

**Archer Jessee** (1776-1862) married three times: **Nancy Browning** (1781-1826); **Rachel Herndon** (1790-1833); and **Mary Jane "Polly" Owens** (1803-1884) and had fifteen children.

**JANA JESSEE FITZWATER** (rayfitzwater@juno.com) wrote, 7/3/2003, with information about descendants of both **Archer Jessee** and **Rebecca Jessee Burk**. Her **John Trigg** or **Taz Jessee** was married to **Mary M. Burk**, daughter of **Rebecca Jessee** and **William Burk**.

My name is Jana Lynn Jessee Fitzwater. I am from Mesquite, TX. My Father is James Jessee from West Texas and his father is Erbie Lee Jessee born 9/24/1915 - his father was John Wesley Jessee born 12-22-1888 to June 15-1948 in Sweetwater, Texas. His father was Conley T. Jessee born Sept. 1859 married to Lula E. Tims. His father was John T. Jessee born 1824[son of Vincent son of Archer] . This is where I stop. I need to know if anyone else has information to help me keep tracing this line to know birth dates and locations. Let me know if you can help.



DEBORAH ALLEN [dallen@pine-net.com] wrote, 10/11/2003, with this information and photo of **Lilburn Monroe Jesse & Christine Elizabeth (Bartee) Jesse**-circa 1897. Lilburn is a descendant of Archer Jessee.

RE: the attached photos

This is the best I can do on the names as of this date. I still have more research to do. I referred to the photo frame backing which had the nicknames in pencil according to the position of the persons in the picture.

This photo was taken soon after the birth of Baylor Jessee in 1897. Baylor is sitting in his mother's lap.

Lilburn and Christina were marked Mama and Dad, so I am assuming at this point that it is daughter, Grace (Jessee) Cromwell's handwriting. One boy is marked as "Pie". By looking at the order of the children's birth and comparing it to the small children in the photo, it appears that Emory is the one that they refer to as "Pie". There is a large 16X20 photo of a small boy still in the home of Betty (Cromwell) Allen (deceased) that I hope to copy. It is marked "Pie" and appears to be the same child wearing the same clothes that is in this Jessee family photo who is also marked "Pie".

I have the children of Lilburn and Christina (Bartee) Jessee in this order.

Lucy B. (Lou) Jessee  
 William Arthur (Aut) Jessee  
 Gertrude E. (Gertie) Jessee  
 Robert Earl (Earl) Jesse  
 Albert Jessee  
 Charles Nolan (Nolie) Jessee  
 Lilburn Arvel (Orville) Jessee  
 Emory (Pie) Jessee  
 Katy Jessee  
 Baylor Jessee

Rose J. Jessee

Grace Lee Jessee b. 6 July 1901 Paris, Texas Lamar County d. 17 December 1990 on Saturday @ 12:00 P.M. at Idabel, Oklahoma, McCurtain County. Buried: Ft. Towson Cemetery Ft Towson OK Choctaw County

Grace Lee Jessee married Robert Wise Cromwell (1897-1984) in March 1920 Hugo OK Choctaw County. Robert Wise Cromwell in his lifetime tried his hand as an amateur magician, butcher, boxer, and barber. Grace was a homemaker. She had four children, Dorothy Cleo Cromwell (died at 17 days old), Robert Wise Cromwell, JR.(Nickname-Sugarman) became mentally disabled from a childhood illness and never married. He died 11 Sept 2001), Delores Rose Cromwell (still living) m. Willie Glenn Glaze, and Betty Jo Cromwell.

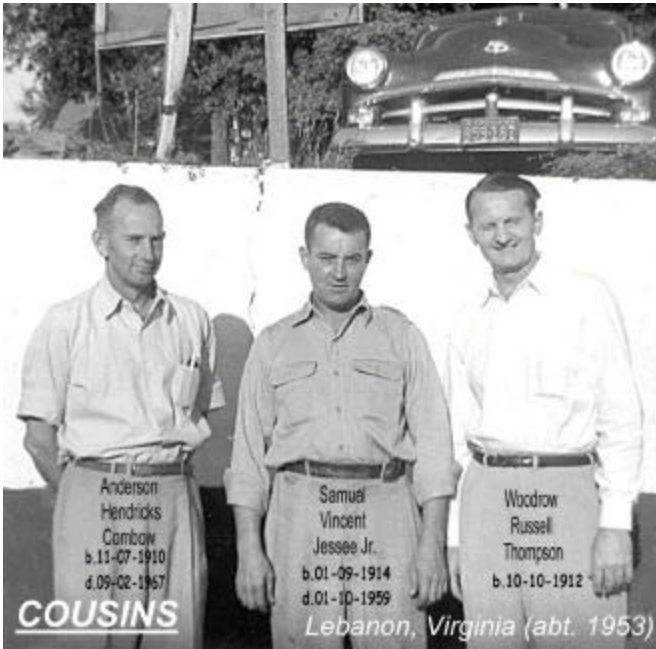
My information was taken from conversations with Betty Jo (Cromwell) Allen, daughter of Robert Wise Cromwell and Grace Lee (Jessee) Cromwell. I married the son of Raymond Douglas Allen and Betty Jo (Cromwell) Allen (1929-2002).

I also have a photo of a Bible page on which Grace Lee (Jessee) Cromwell wrote the names of father, mother, brothers and sisters.

She wrote this in a Bible book that was given to me at the birth of my daughter, Brittany Renee Allen in abt May 1974. It was written on Grace's first visit to see her great-granddaughter and it was also the first time for me to meet her. On this she indicates James Bartee as the father of Christine Bartee. She listed her father's and mother's names, their birth dates and her siblings. I notice that she calls one of them Allen Jesse and I am assuming that she is referring to Albert Jessee (if Albert is his name). On the photo back, Albert is noted as "AL".

If anyone has any additional information as far as documenting their complete names with a source, I would appreciate any help.





This photo may be of interest to the readers of the Jesse Newsletters. Also if anyone has info or stories about these three or their families I would certainly hope that they will share them with me. Charlie.

**CHARLIE THOMPSON** [thompso@daktel.com] sent, 8/23/2003, these photos featuring five generations of descendants of Archer Jessee and some additional cousins. See photos above.

### III William Jessee

William Jessee (1779-1841) married **Mary "Polly" Vermillion** (1785-1879), and they had fourteen children. This family moved to Lee Co., VA.

### IV. Lea Jessee

**Lea Jessee** (1781-1852) married **Barbara Gose** (1788-1862), da. of **Stephen Gose and Barbara Catron (Ketron) Gose**, and they had ten children. This family moved to Missouri, and includes among descendants, Archer Catron Jessee, the first Jessee to migrate to California before the gold rush.

### V. David Jessee

**Reverend David Jessee** (1783-1856) married **Catherine "Katie" Banner** (1788-1860) and had thirteen children. See also the discussion under Rebecca Jessee Burk below.

**KAYE PETERS** [mailto:kayepeters@alltel.net] wrote, 8/4/2003, with this sad news regarding **Virginia Karen Jessee Tauscher**, the daughter of **Col. Howard Gilmer Jessee, of Jessee Enterprises, Hondo, TX.** Howard was particularly generous to me in the early years of this newsletter, helping me with



### Five Archer Jessee Descendant Generations

(Photograph made on Kali's birthday, July 18, 2003-- Left to Right) Evan Jace Ulrich, 10 days old, in the arms of his g-g-grandfather Woodrow Russell Thompson.

Woodrow is the son of Balfred Harvey Thompson and Louisa Ellen Jessee. Woodrow's paternal grand parents are Charles Henry Thompson and Phoebe Fuller. Woodrow's maternal grandparents are Vincent Jessee Jr. and Virginia Ann Gilmer.

Kali Nichole Ulrich, mother of Evan Jace. Kali is the daughter of C. Michael Huffman and Theresa Ann Thompson. Kali's paternal grandparents are Clyde Huffman and Maxie Montgomery. Kali's maternal grandparents are Charlie Douglas Thompson and Mary Estelle Story.

Theresa Ann Huffman, mother of Kali Nichole. Theresa is the daughter of Charlie Douglas Thompson and Mary Estelle Story. Theresa's paternal grandparents are Woodrow Russell Thompson and Irene Faye Farmer. Theresa's maternal grandparents are David Lee Story and Virginia Jane Rittinger.

Charlie Douglas Thompson, father of Theresa Ann.

Charlie's is the son Woodrow Russell Thompson and Irene Faye Farmer and his paternal grandparents Balfred Harvey Thompson and Louisa Ellen Jessee. Charlie's maternal grandparents are Charles Glenn Farmer and Clara Ethel Covey.

postage and printing, sending me a wealth of genealogy materials, and calling me every Sunday to straighten me out about our Frankey Lea. He was a dear man. We included his obituary and a tribute in 1997 Newsletters.

It is with deep sorrow that I send this obit. This is the daughter of Howard Jessee, son of Gilmer Jessee. Karen was a cousin of mine. She never lost her sense of humor, nor her will to live, but the battle was long and hard. She suffered so much, maybe it made it a little easier to let her go. She did not have any children, but you have never seen so many friends. And the friends had been with her through the long fight with cancer. It really spoke to me about what kind of person she was, what kind of friend she had been.

**JOHNSON CITY - Mrs. Karen Jessee Tauscher, 49**, was called home to be with the Lord on Wednesday (June 18, 2003) at the Johnson City Medical Center Hospital after a courageous battle with cancer.

Mrs. Tauscher was a native of Hondo, Tex., and was a resident of Johnson City for the past 31 years. She was the daughter of the late Howard Gilmer and Gladys Bohlen Jessee.

Karen graduated from Hondo High School where she was a member of the high school band. She graduated from East



Tennessee State University with a B.A. in business administration. She was a member of the Gamma Sigma Sigma sorority.

She was employed as an accountant, bookkeeper and office manager with Gardner Paint Services of Johnson City for the past 21 years.

Karen was a member of Munsey Memorial United Methodist Church.

Survivors include her husband of 25 years, Robert Edward Tauscher; one brother, Michael E. Jessee and wife Mary, Lebanon, Va.; one brother-in-law, Steve Tauscher and wife Cindy, Bristol; one nephew, Brandon M. Jessee and wife Beth, Ringgold, Ga.; two nieces, Sarah Jessee Ehlert and husband Brandon, Belton, Tex., and Angela Tauscher, Bristol; two great-nieces, Isabella Gibson and Madison Ehlert, both of Belton, Tex.; two aunts, Thelma S. Jessee, Lebanon, Va., and Carolyn Jessee Cooper, Kingsport and Lebanon. She is also survived by several cousins and a host of good friends.

Calling hours will be from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday at Appalachian Funeral Home, Johnson City.

A service to celebrate Karen's life will be held at 8 p.m. Friday in the East Chapel of the funeral home with Dr. Garland Thayer officiating. Mr. O.J. Gardner will give the eulogy.

Grave side committal services will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday in Monte Vista Burial Park. Those planning to attend are to meet at the cemetery by 9:50 a.m. Saturday.

Pallbearers will be Eddie Garrett, Don Boggs, Marty Tauscher, E. B. Tolliver, Rodney Condiff and James Johnson.

Friends who wish may make memorial contributions to the American Cancer Society, 508 Princeton Rd., Suite 102, Johnson City, Tenn. 37601 or to the charity of their choice.

Condolences may be made online at [www.appalachianfuneralhome.com](http://www.appalachianfuneralhome.com).

**KAYE PETERS** [Kaye Peters@alltel.net] wrote, 10/20/2003, with the obituary for Howard's sister, **Thelma S. Jessee**. It's been a hard year for that family.

Jim, Here is Thelma Jessee's obit. She died on Sunday. She was a very special lady to hundreds of people and we will all miss her very much. Did you ever get to meet her. I know you would have enjoyed it; she could sit for hours and recall most anyone you asked about. People from all over the US called her and asked about their families. Her mind stayed razor sharp right until the end.

Thelma S. Jessee, 93, Lebanon, Va.

LEBANON, Va. - Miss Thelma S. Jessee, 93, died Sunday (Oct. 19, 2003) after a lengthy illness.

Her parents were the late Gilmer and Gertrude Baker Jessee. A native of Russell County, Thelma was a farm owner and cattle producer in the upper Moccasin Valley.

She was a member of the Oak Grove United Methodist Church and was active in church and community affairs until her illness confined her to the home.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her brother, Howard G. Jessee; a sister, Jeannette Jessee Mays; and two nieces, Jeane M. Bivins, and Virginia Karen Tauscher.

Surviving are a sister, Carolyn Jessee Cooper, Kingsport; a nephew, Michael E. Jessee, Lebanon; a niece, Peggy Mays Dean, Kingsport; two great-nephews, Jeffrey S. Bivins and Michael Jessee; three great-nieces, Lisa Godsey, Debi Seaver and Sarah Ehlert; two great-great nephews, Will Godsey, and Lucas Michael Jessee; six great-great nieces, Ashley and Jessica Godsey, Kathleen and Caraline Bivins, Isabella Gibson and Madison Ehlert.

Thelma is also survived by cousins by the dozens, many of whom called her "Aunt Thelma," and a host of friends; also a special "sister," Ella Boothe.

Calling hours are from 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at Combs Funeral Service, Lebanon, Va.

The service celebrating Thelma's life will be held at 8 p.m. Tuesday in the funeral home chapel with the Rev. Jim Lyttle and the Rev. Leonard Smith, former pastors of her church, officiating.

Grave side services and burial will be at 12 noon Wednesday in the Russell Memorial Cemetery in Lebanon. Those attending should meet at the funeral home by 11:30 a.m. to go in procession to the cemetery.

Casket bearers will be: Roger Jessee, Jerry Fields, Kenneth O. Fields, Jim Wooten, Jerry Boothe, and Ryan Delp.

Honorary Casket bearers will be: Robert Jessee, Maynard Jessee, William George Jessee, Greg Jessee, Howard Bivins, and Robert E. Tauscher.

## VI. Elizabeth Jessee Gose

**Elizabeth Jessee Gose** (1785-1827) married **George Gose** (1786-1861), son of **Stephen Gose and Barbara Catron (Ketron) Gose**, and they had twelve children. See the Gose Family discussion under Lea Jessee above, as well as additional information under Rebecca Jessee Burk below.

## VII. Mary "Polly" Jessee Kiser

**Mary "Polly" Jessee** (1787-1836) married **Abednego Kiser** (1784-1814), who died in the War of 1812. They had four children and are the ancestors of many a Kiser from Russell Co. She later married James Chafin, whose abuse may have caused her death.

**VIVIAN BALES**(Marion, IN), Mary "Polly" Jessee Kiser's gggg-granddaughter, is a faithful contributor to this newsletter. She constantly works at ferreting out little bits and pieces of information she gathered over a lifetime, and sends them my way. I attempt to keep up with her by keying her information into the database. She often provides some good advice, memories, stories, and insights into her own colorful life. I am happy to report that Vivian, who is now 90 and in increasingly fragile health, still writes regularly, and sends along the flotsam and jetsam of her genealogy research. I do appreciate her faithful hard work.

Vivian has a particular interest in learning about and getting to know the **Jesse/Jessee families of New Ross and New Castle, near Crawfordsville, Indiana**. We welcome help from anyone with information or connections there. She wants us to bring them into the family fold.

## VIII. Frances Jessee Stone

**Frances Jessee** (1789-1860) married **William Stone** (1789-1860), son of **Jeremiah Stone**. They had ten children. This family is believed to have moved to Missouri, and we know so little about these descendants that any tidbit is big news.

I met two new Frances Jessee Stone descendants at the Jessee family reunion, and have had several contacts with Stone descendants from Missouri. I hope we have more to report here in future newsletters.

## IX. Sarah Jessee Vermillion

Sarah "Sallie" Jessee (1790-1851) married **Wilson Vermillion** son of **Jessee Vermillion, Sr.** and **Mary "Polly" Scott**. They had three children.

## X. Boedicia Jessee Gose

Boedicia "Dicey/Dicy" Jessee married **Stephen Gose Jr.** (1792-bef. 1842), son of **Stephen Gose** and **Barbara Catron (Ketron) Gose**. They had eight children. This family moved to Iowa.

See the Gose Family discussion under Lea Jessee, who married Barbara Gose, and Rebecca Jessee Gose above, as well as additional information under Rebecca Jessee Burk below.

## XI. James Jessee

**James Jessee** (1794-aft 1846) married **Jane Burk** (1795-aft. 1846), d. of **Fleming Burk, Sr.** and **Rebecca Miller**. They had four children. See also discussion under Rebecca Jessee Burk below.

**IRIS LAMBERT HALL**, a descendant of James Jessee, is a regular contributor who shares a lifetime of research, and more than a bit of wisdom. She is in increasingly difficult health, but keeps in touch.

**JANEEN SWIFT PETERS** wrote, 6/27/2003, with information on the descendants of **Fleming Burke Jessee** and granddaughter, **Trenaria Ellen Jessee**.

I am married to the grandson of Trenaria Ellen Jessee, who was the daughter of Fleming Burke Jessee, Jr. Trenaria is the daughter who stayed behind in Virginia after her father was remarried to Alpha and they moved to Washington State. Trenaria then lived with her Uncle's family, Jim Jessee. To tell you more, I am the genealogist of our immediate family along with 2 of my husband's sisters, and I am working on proof so that my husband can join SAR under his ancestor, John Jessee.

Trenaria was called Ella, and she is buried along with her husband, Joseph Henry Peters, at the edge of Pennington Gap, VA. She died in 1958 and he died in 1964. We bought headstones for the graves in about 1991, but the cemetery was so overgrown the last visit down there, we could not see the stones. It is a very small cemetery. It is called Riverview Cemetery, Lee County, and is at the edge of the River and Alt. Hwy. 58. We live in Indiana.

We have a photo of the Jim Jessee family, and it was nearly all boys from what I hear.

In my search I have found quite a few proofs, some dates of which I will mail you another time. I found the Browning family, and there is a book on the Burks at our library which I have not had time to read. I am the Registrar of our local DAR chapter, so a good deal of time is spent helping other women, and I work the Jessees in whenever I can. I am glad to see on your website that Russell Co. has a DAR chapter.

My husband and 4 of his 5 sisters are still living, so I am not willing to publish their names, but I feel it is important that you know about Trenaria. And Trenaria still has a daughter living. Her 2 sons are dead. My sister-in-law has sent for Trenaria Ellen's death cert. from the State of VA. I called Jonesville, Lee Co.,

Courthouse, and they said I had to get it from the state, so my sister-in-law took on that.

## XII. Rebecca Jessee Burk

**Rebecca Jessee** (1796-1860) married **William Burk** (1797-1850), son of **Fleming Burk, Sr.** and **Rebecca Miller**. They had ten children.

**KATHRYN BURKE GREEVER, JACK HOCKETT, IMOGENE BURKE VERBAL, and RUE BURKE STEVENSON** have published *Some Descendants of John Burk, 1656-1699, Middlesex Co., Virginia*, available from the Iberian Publishing Co., 548 Cedar Creek Drive, Athens, GA 30605-3408, for a price of \$34.95 softback, \$44.95 hardback, plus \$4.00 shipping and handling. Order on-line at [www.iberian.com](http://www.iberian.com). All royalties go to the Russell Co. Historical Society and Russell Co. Library Family History Room.

This 502-page book details, among many others, the descendants of **Fleming Burk, Sr.** Four of his children married Jessees, two children and two grandchildren of John and Frankey Lea Jessee. Jane Burk married James Jessee, William Burk married Rebecca Jessee, Fleming Burk, Jr. married Nancy Ann Jessee, daughter of David Jessee, and Robert Burk married Anna Gose, daughter of Elizabeth Jessee and George Gose. They have added much information for each of these lines. Their notations and documentation of sources are tremendous. A simply great effort.

This book includes over 1000 descendants of Rebecca Jessee and William Burk, none of whom have been keyed into a genealogy database, other than those small portions in the Jessee Database. It is a daunting chore and we need help! I would like to work with any volunteers who would be willing to help key this information into an appropriate genealogy database.

See **JANA JESSEE FITZWATER** contribution under Archer Jessee

## XIII. Jane Jessee Fuller

Jane Jessee (1797-1869) married **Henry Fuller** (1792-1872), son of **Abraham Fuller** and **Mary Sargent**. They had ten children. This family moved to Illinois.

While I have a scant amount of descendants' information, I do not correspond with any descendant of Jane Jessee Fuller. This is a family that needs much research.

## XIV. George Lea Jessee

**George Lea Jessee** (1798-1882) married **Elizabeth "Betsy" Counts** (1799-1880), da. of **John Counts, Jr.** "of Glade Hollow" and **Margaret "Peggy" Kelly**. George and Betsy had fourteen children.

Many George Lea Jessee descendants are subscribers and have contributed very much information to the database. It is one of our best researched and recorded branches of the family.

**Among the George Lea Jessee descendants, is one very lucky JOY ANN JESSEE, who some 47 years ago married MICHAEL BRETT MALONE.** Mike Malone has done more for Jessee family research, the annual family reunions, and the foundation of the Jessee Historical Foundation than any other "in-law" I know. Mike's love and support for his wife in all her many endeavors is an inspiration to all of us. But I think he genuinely loved Russell Co. and the Jessee family, and he worked his heart out for us. Mike requested that he be buried in Russell Co. with the Jessee family. The grave side VFW services conducted by Joseph Harold Jessee, Sr. were heart warming and memorable. Here is Mike's obituary.

**MICHAEL BRETT MALONE SR.**, March 28, 1940 - November 30, 2003, born in Springfield, MA and resident of South Florida for 50 years. He was preceded in death by his parents, Walter and Ruby Malone. Survivors include his wife of 47 years, Joy Ann, beloved daughter Deborah Ann (Dr. Owen) Hartness of TN and son Michael Brett Malone, Jr. (C.J. Savage) of FL, six wonderful grandchildren: Jessica, Brian, Alex, and Cullan Hartness of TN and Jason and Alan Malone of FL, mother-in-law Doris Jessee, sister-in-law Betty Maxwell, nieces Victoria, Shania and Savannah DeRusha, Jillian Maxwell, nephews Jack and Trevor Maxwell, sister Marianne Harper, and many cherished loving family members and friends. He served four years in the U.S. Air Force. He received his degrees in Police Science and Criminology from Miami-Dade Community College, Public Administration from St. Thomas University, and Miami Police Academy University of Miami. His professional and dedicated police career spanned a period of 36 years. He served 7 years as patrol officer, detective/investigator, and captain with the City of Hialeah and 29 years as Assistant Police Chief with the Dade County Public School Police Department. He loved the mountains, family genealogy, gospel music, his banjo, and personal computer. He was a member of the First Baptist Church of Hollywood, FL, served a term as deacon, and truly loved the Lord. Family will receive friends December 4, 2003 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Family Tribute Center, 2895 Davie Road, Davie, FL. Rev. B. McCord will conduct the funeral services at 7:00 p.m. Memorial donations in his memory may be sent to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of America. So. Florida Chapter, 3325 Hollywood Blvd., #400, Hollywood, FL 33021. Burial at the Temple Hill Memorial Cemetery in Castlewood, VA. A truly gentle man to be remembered always with deepest love in our hearts and souls. To visit this Guest Book Online, go to [www.herald.com/obituaries](http://www.herald.com/obituaries).

Published in the Miami Herald on 12/3/2003.

## XV. Martin Jessee

Martin Jessee (1801-1879) married first **Virginia Jane Price** (1801-1853), da. of **David and Jane Price**, and they had eleven children. He married second **Mary Jane Darnell** (1834-1907), and they had seven children. Martin, with a total of 18 children, may have the most Jessee descendants in America.

**ELLEN ROSE** [jebr23069@yahoo.com] wrote, 8/3/2003, with this information about an "**Old letter written by David A. Jessee, dated Feb 14th, 1862.**" I believe this is David Jessee, born 1835, son of Martin Jessee and Jane Price. I would welcome some proof of that.

Dear James Jessee,

I do not belong to the Jessee family, but I have something that might interest you or other family members.

Today I was going through some old family history files, and I came across a copy of a letter written by David A. Jessee, dated Feb. 14th 1862 to Mr. Stephen Banner. Across the top of the letter he wrote "Army of the North West Camp near Winchester, Virginia."

I am descended from Peter E. Byer (my Great-grandfather) who was also in the Civil War. Several years ago I was going through some old papers that belonged to him that were at the old Byer home place in Allegheny County, VA, and I remember seeing this letter then. I made a copy of it, and remember tucking it away in a file folder to look at another time. At that time I didn't know how to get in touch with the Jessee family, but today I decided to try to make contact.

If you are interested in this copy of the old letter, I look forward to hearing from you. I will be glad to send it to you if you send me your address. Hopefully you can place it with the proper family. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Ellen B. Rose  
Hanover, VA

I thanked her and gladly received a copy of the letter. I asked for some help transcribing it and **BJ. Clouston** volunteered to do it. Here is the letter.

**Army of the North West camp neare (sic) Winchester, Virginia  
Feb. 14th 1862**

**Mr. Stephan Banner**

Dear friend, having leasure (sic) time afforded me to day I thought I would employ it in writing you a letter. I have nothing of importance to write more than I am well & all the Castlewoods boys that is here except James Cook. He is and has bin (sic) sick for some time & don't improve any. The doctor says he has the euralia (sic). I am uneasy about him I suppose. Peter Wampler has got home by this time. He doubtless has give you all the ware (sic) nuse (sic) from this portion of the army & nothing has transpired since he left here. We are still encamped neare (sic) Winchester & we thought we would remain here until we entered upon our Spring campaign but I heare (sic) it talked to day that we will leave here in a day or two for Manassas Junction & probably to East Tennessee. This is only reported. I don't know how true it is but I would not be surprised if it isn't true. We have just got our tent fited (sic) up so we can be comfortable. We have built a chimney to it & have got a good straw bead (sic) & living fine. We have plenty to eat, a great many out of our Regt are reinlistin (sic) for two years. They get a bounty of fifty dollars & a furlough for thirty days to stay at home & a reasonable time to go & come in & transportation furnished them there & back. There is so many agoing (sic) home on these grounds that it will leave our army quiet (sic) small. The spirit of re-enlisting is up high among the solgiers (sic) & I am of the opinion that the larger portion of the volunteers now in the field will re-inlist. The President has made a requisition on Virginia for her quota of troops which is sixty eight thousand eight hundred & all the volunteers now in the field who fail to re-inlist will be subject to a draft with the Malitia (sic) before they have the chance to go home. There is some thirty six thousand of the above named



number will have to be raised out of the Malitia (sic) provided all the troops now in the field reinlist. So it will be work draftin (sic) Malitia (sic) in a few days for I expect the last man has volunteered who intend to from the Malitia (sic) & Virginia quota will have to be raised by a draft. It appears like the yankes (sic) are a coming in upon us from ever direction & will smash us up whither (sic) or no. The late nuse (sic) from the south show that they have bin (sic) very successful on the cost (sic). They have taken Fort Henry & are playing the devil with us in that portion of the confederate states. They have all so taken Ronoke (sic) Islan (sic) & Wise's whole command except some twenty five & killing Capt O Jennings Wise. He was a brave solgier (sic) and in him the south loses one of her nobles (sic) sons. Our late reverses & disasters look very disheartening at this time but I hope these darke (sic) clouds will soon disperce & that a brilliant victory will soon be achieved from where we have met with these reverses by the noble sones (sic) of the south & that we may yet be successful in establishing our independence from under the tyrannical government of old Abe Lincoln, from present indications & the movements of the Northern army there will be some hard fighting in a short time. I would like to come home and see you all but there is no chance to come unless I reinlist and that I don't think I will do. I think I will run the risk of a draft. We have various rumors here from Gen Marshal's army. Some say they are fauling (sic) back to Abingdon & the salt workes (sic) & leave our county to the mercy of the Yankeys (sic). If they do this it will be farewell to old Russell. They will plunder it, destroy & burn every thing before them. I wish you would take the trouble to write to me & give me a true statement of affairs in that portion of the county. I have wrote about all I know. Give my respects to all the family. I would like to see you all but the Lord only know when I ever will be permitted to see you, probably never. I understand that Jackson is coming to see us. If he comes I would be glad to see you come with him. A.M. Lee & all the boys send their love & respects to you & family. Write soon direct to Winchester, Virginia.

Your friend & well-wisher,  
David A Jessee

## MISSING LINKS, PROBLEMS AND OTHER CONUNDRUMS

Please help us solve these riddles.

**ROBERT KEITH** [Rlkwk777@aol.com] wrote, 12/1/2003, with this letter and photo that he asked to be included in the Jessee Family Newsletter. I hope we can give him some assistance.

Hi. My name is Robert Lynn Keith. I am searching for my birth-parents, siblings, or any family members. I don't have much information about my background, except that there is a strong possibility that my last name might be Jessie. I'm not sure of the correct spelling of the name Jessie, since I have discovered that there are several ways to spell it.

I was born March 10, 1959 in Blount Co, TN. Through the years I've heard the city of Maryville mentioned, but I'm not sure how it connects. I may have been given up at birth, as I can remember living in several foster homes. I do not remember having a permanent home. My adopted parents got me from an orphanage, or children's home when I was 4 and a half, and the adoption went through when I was 5. The adoption took place in Springfield, TN. at the Robertson Co. courthouse. I was raised on a farm in Cross Plains, TN.

As a child, my hair was fiery-red. It is now a dark auburn red. I have a very thick, copper colored beard. My eyes are hazel green. I stand 5'11" tall. My weight averages between 255 to 275 lbs. I've been an outdoors man all of my life. I love hunting, fishing,



Robert Keith, 1997



Robert Keith would like to find his Jessie/Jesse/Jessee Kin

trapping, and collecting guns and knives. I'm not much of an indoors-person at all. Crowds make me nervous. I'm also an avid reader. I usually read 3 to 4 books per week. Louis L'Amour is my favorite, but I also love a good thriller such as Stephen King or Dean Koontz. I'm a very laid back, easy going person. It usually takes a lot to get me angry. My wife also says that I'm very handy around the house. I can pretty much fix anything.

If anyone has ANY information, please call me (collect) at 1-615-643-5942; or e-mail me at rkwk777@aol.com. I'm a very happily married man, and I want to re-connect with my natural family, if possible. I was raised as an only child, so if I have any brothers or sisters I want to get to know them before we get too old to appreciate each other. And I would love to see what it feels like to actually LOOK like someone.

## CORRESPONDENCE

The following are only a few of the many communications I am fortunate to receive. These, in particular, give color to our work, address problems, provide new information, corrections, or updates, and both answer and ask new "missing links" questions.

**BILL AND TOY SUTHERLAND** sent this letter with information about *Volume 2 - John Counts of Glade Hollow*, being distributed at the **2003 Rasnake and Counts reunions**. The printer estimates that Volume 2 will be delivered around October 15, 2003. Orders will be mailed as promptly as possible. Please allow two weeks for delivery.

### JOHN COUNTS OF GLADE HOLLOW

The following two books are Volume 1 and Volume 2 on the descendants of John Counts of Glade Hollow, Russell County, Virginia. Among the families included in Volume 1 and Volume 2 are the following numbers of direct descendants of - John Counts 16,000+ - William Grizzel 5,000+ - Jacob Rasnick 4,000+ - Charles Keyser 2,000+.

#### (7) SOME DESCENDANTS OF JOHN COUNTS OF GLADE HOLLOW (Southwest Virginia)-1722-1977.

**Researched by Judge E J Sutherland.** Originally published in 1978, the 420 page 6.5 x 9 inch hardback volume includes the families of Artrip, Carter, Colley, Counts, Deel, Dyer, Edwards, Grizzel (Grizzle), Jessee, Keyser (Kiser), Long, Mattocks (Mattox), Owens, Rasnake (Rasnick), Skeen, Smith, Stinson, Sutherland, Willard, Yates and many others. Price \$45 plus \$3 for mailing-total \$48.(VATAX \$2.03)

#### (8) SOME DESCENDANTS OF JOHN COUNTS OF GLADE HOLLOW (Southwest Virginia) VOLUME 2 — 1722-2003 (Supplement)

Published in 2003 the 173 photo, 850 page, 8 ½ x 11 inch hardback supplements Volume 1 (Item 7) following the format of the Volume 1; but includes only persons in Volume 1 on which new information is available and as much of Volume 1 as is needed for continuity in parentage. Includes the families of Addington, Adkins, Amburgey, Anderson, Arrington, Artrip, Baker, Ball, Barton, Belcher, Blankenship, Boggs, Bowman, Branham, Breeding, Brown, Carter, Childress, Colley, Combs, Compton, Crabtree, Damron, Davis, Deel, Dickenson, Dotson, Duty, Dye, Edwards, Evans, Fields, Fleming, French, Fuller, Garrett, Gibson, Gilliam, Grizzel(l), Hale, Hall, Hammons, Hay(es), Henderson, Henry, Hibbits, Horn(e), Hughes, Jessee, Johnson, Jones, Keel, Kins(z)er, Kiser, La Force, Lambert, Lee, Lewis, Long, Lyon(s), McCowan, McCoy, Martin, Meade, Miller, Minton, Moore, Mullins, Musick, Newberry, Oquinn, Osborne(e) Owens, Phillips, Powers, Pressley, Puckett, Quesinberry, Ramey, Rasnake (Rasnick), Rice, Riddle, Robinson, Roe, Rose, Salyers, Scott, Sexton, Silcox, Skeen(s), Smith, Stanley, Steph(v)ens, Street, Sutherland, Swindall, Sykes, Taylor, Tiller, Turner, Vest, Viers, Wagner, Wallace, White, Williams, Willis, Wilson, Wood, Wright, & Yates. Price \$60 plus \$5 mailing total \$65 (VATAX \$2.70).

#### SPECIAL PRICE DISCOUNTS

Pre-publication Orders Before October 15, 2003

(1) Purchase of VOLUME 2 (Item 8) will be discounted \$10.

(2) Purchase of VOLUMES 1 & 2 (Items 7 & 8) together will

be discounted an additional \$5.

**We will be happy to ship gift orders directly to the recipient and to include a note from you if you enclose such a note with your order.**

**Books may be ordered from William H. Sutherland, PO Box 547, St. Paul, VA 24283 (276 762 0542) (e-mail**

toybill@naxs.net). Virginia residents only must add 4.5% Sales Tax to list price-example (VATAX \$2.03).

**Please make checks payable to Sutherland Books. Please print your name, address, telephone number and email address plainly with your order.**

### OTHER SUTHERLAND BOOKS

Books may be ordered from William H. Sutherland, PO Box 547, St. Paul, VA 24283 (276 762 0542) (e-mail toybill@naxs.net). Virginia residents only must add 4.5% Sales Tax to list price-example (VATAX \$2.03). Please make checks payable to Sutherland Books.

#### Books by the late Judge Elihu Jasper Sutherland

Each a labor of love as he brings alive history and memories ... his own memories as well as those of many early settlers of Southwest Virginia.

**(1) Meet Virginia's Baby** - A Pictorial History of Dickenson County - the official document of the 1955 Diamond Jubilee of Virginia's "Baby County." A warm, human interest account in words and pictures of the hardy pioneers and their offspring who hewed out this "Diamond in the Wilderness" from the rough ridges and bottom lands, this handsomely bound 9.6 x 12 inch volume of 320 pages is the family album of Dickenson County. Latest Reprint. \$45 plus \$5 for mail - total \$50.(VATAX \$2.03)

**(2) Pioneer Recollections** - collected by the late Judge Sutherland over more than 50 years, beginning in 1915. Many of the narrators of these recollections were actual participants in, or eye-witnesses of, the events they tell about, or they had talked to persons who were closely connected with some of the events or happenings. The 1995 edition contains 45 added pages making a total of 564 pages, with hard back cover, \$55.00 plus \$5.00 cost of mailing-total \$60. (VATAX \$2.48)

**(3) Pioneer Recollections Additions** - The 45 added pages have been printed separately for those who have the first edition at a cost of \$5.50 plus \$1.50 for mail-total \$7.00.(VATAX \$0.25)

**(4) SOME SANDY BASIN CHARACTERS** - warmly admiring, short biographies of nine of the earliest settlers of the Sandy Basin - bringing alive memories of our great-grandparents from the individualistic Jesse Austin to tragedy-stalked Baron de Tubeuf of Sugar Hill (near St Paul, Wise County) these sketches bring you face-to-face with some of your own forefathers and introduce you to the rugged life they lived in the primitive fastness of a new raw land. Other characters in this 246 page 5.5 x 8.5 inch hard-back book are: Frank Monroe Beverly (Poet of the Cumberlands) Richard "Fighting Dick" Colley, Elijah Shelby Counts, Winfield Scott Grizzle, Helen Timmons Henderson, Richard D. B. Sutherland and William Sutherland. Latest reprint. \$20 plus \$3 mail-\$23.(VATAX \$0.90)

**(5) Sandlick Primitive Baptist Church** - The First Hundred Years - This history of the oldest religious assembly in Dickenson County records its organization as an arm of Reeds Valley Church in Russell County on Feb. 25, 1837, with names of members, pastors, clerks and deacons the first 100 years. In his FOREWORD, Judge Sutherland states: "Some of my earliest and happiest memories have to do with going to meeting at Sandlick Baptist Church. As a tiny lad I often went there .... on the fourth Saturday or Sunday in the month. I rode the seven long miles perched on a sheepskin cushion behind my father or mother on "Old Suz," the family mule. Later, as I grew older, I frequently walked the distance ..." Latest reprint, this 5.5 x 8.5 inch, 48 page, soft covered booklet sells for \$5.00 plus \$1.50 for mailing - total \$6.50. (VATAX \$0.22)

#### Collected And Compiled By Hetty Swindall Sutherland

**(6) Swindall And Austin Families Of Virginia And North Carolina 1622-1995.** Published in 1995, the 416-page, 8 ½ X 11 hard-covered volume has over 200 photos and includes the related families of Abdon, Addington, Alexander, Allen, Bently, Beverly, Bolling, Bullock, Brown, Calloway, Childress, Clore, Craft,

Corporon, Countiss, Curtwright, Davis, Dotson, Elliott, Elsbery, Enochs, Fleming, Fletcher, Graham, Grizzle, Hamilton, Hash, Hayden, Heaberlin, Hibbitts, Hillman, Holohan, Hopkins, Hubbard, Hughes, Johnson, Keene, Killen, Landreth, Leavene, McFall, Martin, Mathews, Maxey, Mullins, Noel, Phipps, Potter, Powers, Rector, Renfro, Rife, Rose, Rouse, Shortt, Smith, Stallard, Stephens, Tipps, Vance, Vanover, Watkins, Whitt, Yeager and many others. \$55.00 plus \$5.00 cost of mailing for a total of \$60.00. (VATAX \$2.48)

**CHARLIE THOMPSON** [thompso@daktel.com] sent, 9/25/2003, these heartfelt sentiments that he got off the Internet.

**Senior citizens are constantly being criticized for every conceivable deficiency of the modern world, real or imaginary.** We know we take responsibility for all we have done and do not blame others.

HOWEVER, upon reflection, we would like to point out that it was NOT the senior citizens who took:

The melody out of music,  
The pride out of appearance,  
The courtesy out of driving,  
The romance out of love,  
The commitment out of marriage,  
The responsibility out of parenthood,  
The togetherness out of the family,  
The learning out of education,  
The service out of patriotism,  
The Golden Rule from rulers  
The civility out of behavior,  
The refinement out of language,  
The dedication out of employment,  
The prudence out of spending,  
The ambition out of achievement, or,  
God out of government and school.

And we certainly are NOT the ones who eliminated patience and tolerance from personal relationships and interactions with others!!

We do understand the meaning of patriotism, and remember those who have fought and died for our country.

Does anyone under the age of 50 know the lyrics to the Star Spangled Banner?

What about the last verse of My Country 'tis of Thee?  
"Our father's God to thee,  
Author of liberty,  
To Thee we sing.  
Long may our land be bright,  
With freedom's Holy light.  
Protect us by Thy might,  
Great God our King."

Just look at the Seniors with tears in their eyes and pride in their hearts as they stand at attention with their hand over their hearts!

**PATRICIA DEAN "MORNINGSTAR" RIGGAN** wrote, 7/5/2003, about recent events in her life which prevented her from following up on **her dream to own and restore Jessee's Mill**. She shared the following essay which well expresses her love and vision for Jessee's Mill that many of us share.

## Jessee's Mill

June 2000, Norlina, NC

I'm in love with a mill, which some people would say is better than being married to it (a mortgage and all that). I'm willing to commit but the suitor eludes me.

The affair began when I journeyed to Lebanon, VA, to research Mary Polly Morning Star Jessee. Finding Jessee's Mill was just a "ride in the country" looking for Reed's Valley, the place I knew Mary Polly had died in 1836. I wanted to know her better. For me that meant putting my feet on some of the earth where she had walked.

While on Rt. 645 someone I stopped and talked with suggested I see Jessee's Mill. In a sea of green, I spied the grey weathered boards, and I was smitten. In five minutes I made 40 some photographs and then proceeded across the footbridge. Was it the mill or the waterfall and creek? I can't seem to separate the two, the mill and the water, but suddenly I was in a dream...

Close at hand were old men

Spitting tobacco on the  
ground and telling tales  
about fishin' and women.

The wheel was moving. I  
heard the splash of water  
and saw children — one with  
a fishing pole — the others  
in a game of chase. Women  
were there, too, with baskets —  
wagons and horses — a  
time long gone.

...I believe the ground, the old mill, the stones in the creek, and the trees whispered to me that they wanted a caretaker. Then days later while visiting my children in Santa Fe, I awoke from a dream hearing, "Buy Jessee's Mill."

I did try but circumstances of life interfered — a partner with leukemia. The contact ended before it began.

The mill should run again. We live in a fast-moving world. We need a reminder that the times weren't always fast.

Emmett Buckles, 94 years young of Lebanon, VA, explained it to me best when he said he used to fish at Jessee's Mill when he was a young boy. He wished his grandchildren and great-grandchildren and others could see the mill as he saw it — to remember the times that have changed so we can have a better tomorrow.

For several weeks this spring I have camped over at Jessee's Mill. I positioned my car so I could see and hear the waterfall flowing from Mill Creek.

The sound of the water soothed and spoke to me.

Some things have changed while others remain the same. See you at Jessee's Mill. The love affair continues.

Patricia Dean Riggan



Jim

This is my first cousin - The son of Russell & Billie Gose Kiser of Mansfield, Ohio.

(Rusty) did get his tractor. He appeared on The Jay Leno, Regis Philbin shows plus many others & also appeared on several Budlite commercials.

Thanks for the very interesting Lessee newsletter.

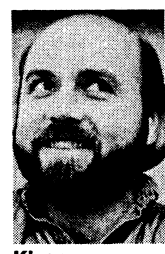
I'm planning on traveling to Kentucky next week for research.

These are the children of Stephen & Mary Dulceni Kipson Gosal

1. Minnie M. - (young) (2. <sup>husb</sup> Hank) (3. Hamblen)
2. Victoria M. - H.H. (step) Elliott
3. Myrtle M. Jim Erin?
4. Lolella M. William Carroll
5. William M. Barbara Porter
6. Chris M. Beulah Burton & Nellie Carroll (his niece)
7. Charles M. Loann?
8. George M. - Ethel Connally
9. Brother never married

# \$57,000 find tempts man, who returns it to owner

COLUMBUS (AP) — Tens of thousands of dollars went flying on an interstate highway after the rear door of an armored truck flung open, turning rush hour into a "giant Easter egg hunt," police said.



Kiser

An estimated \$62,000 was turned in later, including \$57,000 from one man, said Police Sgt. Mike Dailey.

Several citations were issued to people who blocked traffic up to 30 minutes on Interstate 71 as they scurried to pick up some of the cash Wednesday morning, said Dailey.

"There were at least 100 people trying to scoop up the money," said Robert Kern, deputy police chief.

The man who turned in the \$57,000, Melvin Kiser, an Ohio Bell technician, said he was three vehicles behind the Metropolitan Armored Car Inc. truck when its rear door swung open and dark blue plastic bags hit the pavement.

The bags were struck by passing cars, sending \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100 bills flying everywhere.

"Grab some while you can," Kiser heard someone say. Kiser picked up one of the bags and left.

Kiser, 31, who makes \$40,000 a year at his job and recently bought a farm, immediately saw visions of a new tractor in his mind.

"I can't say I wasn't tempted in keeping it. I'm kind of lucky to have a good job ... or I might have been tempted to keep it," he said.

Kiser said he carried the money around in his truck for about two hours and called his girlfriend before handing it over to police.

A receipt found in the bag indicated it once held \$395,000.

These are the children of William & Barbara Porter Gose  
 Garnett M. James Earl Ross  
 Gary - M. Marge Cotton  
 Stephen M. Christine?  
 Billie M. Russell Kiser  
 Jack M. Janie?  
 Opal M. Peyton Denton (2) Glass  
 Minnie M. Ralph Carpenter  
 Bea died in infancy

I have 1 brother  
 William Bishop Endicott  
 1 sister  
 Bonnie Jean Wilson Ross

James D. "Jim" Ross, a Gose and John Jessee, Jr. Descendant, sent along this interesting article and information.



David Martin Jessee, about 1895

**MITCHELL JESSIE** [Mmgjessie@cs.com] sent, 12/29/2003, the photo above and this invitation to visit his Website. David Martin Jessee is the son of George Lea Jessee, the son of Elder David Jessee, son of John and Frankey Lea Jessee. George Lea Jessee married Elizabeth “Eliza” Kiser, the daughter of Elder Elihu Kiser, the son of Abednego Kiser and Mary “Polly” Jessee, a daughter of John and Frankey. I believe it was Mitchell’s father that may have changed the spelling of the Jessee surname to Jessie. Please visit Mitch’s Website, it is well done and very interesting. He is a talented musician, much in the family tradition.

Please see the attached jpg file of my great grandfather, David Martin Jessee’s family taken around 1895 in Carter County, KY. Also, please check out my Web page at [www.mitchelljessie.com](http://www.mitchelljessie.com). If you go to my family section, I have all of my grandfathers noted including John Jessee, the pioneer.

From Mitch’s Website I picked up one of his favorite family quotations from our very own **Betty Campbell Yates**, which Mitch has featured.

“A common thread that seems to dominate the Jessee family lies in its talent, its gregarious nature, and its high expectations of self. *It was not surprising to learn that John Jessee, Sr. was a musician, since musical ability has abounded in many descendants of that man.* It was not surprising to learn that John



Mitchell Jessie and wife Gwen.  
They have three boys, Lukas, Adam, and Dylan

Sr’s sons and grandsons had been politicians, since so many later Jessees have held numerous political positions. Most people who are descended from the Jessee clan seem to feel a sense of pride in their ancestry.”-- Betty Campbell Yates.

## RESOURCES ON THE INTERNET

The Internet is a revolutionary and remarkable resource for genealogists. From time to time I will provide here pertinent information regarding Web resources and other links of interest to the Jesse(e) family. I invite you to provide me with addresses for Web pages developed by family members and other resources of interest, too.

**MICHAEL A. DYE** has created **The Russell County Page** of the VAGenWeb division of the USGenWeb Project. This is an award-winning site, and a terrific resource for all families whose sojourn in America included time in Russell Co., VA. Michael has been instrumental in assembling a vital online depository of Russell Co. records, indexes and abstracts, genealogical data, historical maps, local history, and lore. We thank you. You can join the Russell Co. List Server. This is a must see site for Jessee researchers at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~varussel/>.

**JOY MALONE** [drjoym@bellsouth.net] wrote, 10/21/2003, regarding this Website about **Dante with photos**. Some of the contributors of the photos have Websites or emails and may have more photos, [www.peopleincorp.org/OldPhotos.htm](http://www.peopleincorp.org/OldPhotos.htm). This is a Community Action Agency/Community Development Corporation, with offices in Abingdon, Clintwood, Grundy, and Lebanon, Virginia, with this note.

Many of these photographs were contributed since the publication of "Memories From Dante: The Life of a Coal Town" and so do not appear in the book. If you have names, dates, or other information to add, or would like to contribute a picture, contact Kathy Shearer at [kshearer@peopleinc.net](mailto:kshearer@peopleinc.net).

**MITCHELL JESSIE** (mitchell@mitchelljessie.com) wrote, 11/23/2003, with notice for another Jessee Web page - Come Check It Out.. .

Hi, I'm Mitchell Jessie from Dayton, Ohio. My family comes from Carter County, KY. We are descended from the pioneers John and Frankey Lea Jessee. They ended up in Russell County, VA. My gg grandfather moved to Carter County, KY to escape the horrors of the Civil War in Virginia. Please check out my Web page and go to the family page.... Let me know you stopped by....  
<http://www.mitchelljessie.com>

**BARBARA LAMARCHE** (searcher\_22@hotmail.com) sent, 12/10/2003, information for this great site which is an animated map illustrating the history of the formation of the United States.

<http://www.animatedatlas.com/movie.html>

This 10-minute movie (w/sound) shows the growth of the U.S. from 1789 on. You may watch portions covering specific time periods OR the whole 10-minute presentation. Takes a little time to load, but worth the wait.

## THE FAMILY DATABASE

The Jessee Family Genealogy Database is on the Web at the RootsWeb World Connect Project. RootsWeb is the foremost volunteer-based non-profit genealogy resource on the Internet. Please go to: <http://worldconnect.genealogy.rootsweb.com>

This World Connect Website provides an index to multiple genealogy databases, provides excellent display and print options for pedigree and descendants charts, and allows people to download GEDCOM files. It is public and easy to use. Do a search for one of your favorite ancestors. Look for data records submitted by "jimjessee," and if you select one it will take you to our database. You can also navigate to the database directly from our Jessee Genealogy Service home page.

**Please go to: [www.jessee.org](http://www.jessee.org)**

Our database is now over 42,000 records. I do mean "our" database, as it is made up of the tens of thousands of hours of your research, the results of which you have generously and kindly shared with me over the years. I still have concerns about the downside of this computer revolution, the Internet, and the ethics of genealogy research, but still conclude that greater good is done by making our work public. However, I am using the filters provided by the World Connect project to delete information on living persons.

I know that by the standards of some, I have violated best if not ethical practice, by making so much unverified information so public. It is already clear that errors in this database, even when later corrected, show up all over the Internet in other people's work. Others, many unknown to me, have used this database as an authoritative source. Beware, it is not!

I very much regret it when I see known errors, which appeared in this database in earlier years and have since been corrected, show up in other's genealogy, and quoting me as the source! I shudder at the fact that I know there are many unknown errors in the database, along with ignorant speculations, fantasy and plain lies.

Nevertheless, I have had so much expressed gratitude from dozens, if not hundreds, of people who have been helped in their research by our database, that I persevere. I certainly do welcome corrections, updates, additions, and documentation of information, and you who are receiving this newsletter have been very generous in that regard. You might be surprised how many take and give back nothing.

Some feel the need to wag their finger at me, too, just to make sure I know how important it is to get this right. I do get down when I have been given a good scold, but perk up when the next inquiry is made. I think there is no greater gift than to help people learn where they come from. I cannot "not help" someone on this quest. Please forgive me for the rest.



## OUR PURPOSE

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 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 e-mail, calls, 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 wish to enter all data provided me into the JESSEE FAMILY DATABASE discussed above. In return for information shared, I will share charts or GEDCOM data files with you on request.

I am afraid I am now accumulating more information than I can key into the database on my own. After 25 years of working intensively at a keyboard, I have developed a permanent disability, a bulging disk, which makes any prolonged time typing very painful. My computer time has been significantly limited and, in particular, my regular data entry routine has all but stopped. While I continue to plink at it, I am not denting the perhaps 3000-4000 records piled high and waiting to be keyed in. I will need help with data entry into the database in the future if it is to grow.

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, preferably in the form of a GEDCOM file you will allow me to integrate into the database. I will filter out living individuals in the version of the database that is made public. Please feel free to correct any errors found. I wish to have a correct and trustworthy database as a resource for the family.

While limited in my ability to type, I will continue the newsletter, although I would welcome help. I am finding new ways to capture materials and avoid typing. I welcome the submission of pedigree and descendants charts, letters, manuscripts, electronic or scanned images of source documents and photos in JPG or TIF formats (600 dpi TIF files are best), as well as any word-processor or text files.

## HOW TO HELP

I am operating on subscriptions and donations and don't even break even on out-of-pocket costs. The labor is all volunteer. I provide the newsletter free to anyone who has asked for it, provided me information, or has expressed interest and cannot afford to subscribe. I am providing the newsletter free to several historical and genealogical organizations and libraries. You are welcome to provide addresses of others that may be interested in our effort. I am looking for those willing to exchange information or represent their branch of the family or area of the country.

I am sometimes disappointed to find that less than 25% of readers actually subscribe or donate anything. *I do need help, even if it is simply informing me to stop sending you the newsletter if it has become junk mail.* I am steadily reducing my mailing to include those who have subscribed, provided donations, helped in some other way, are sponsored by someone else, or are a family treasure. If you are getting this newsletter, you are at least a family treasure. If I drop you in error, just let me know. Please inform me of address changes as returned and re-posted mail costs me, too.

## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

**I am asking for a minimum subscription of \$10 a year for two issues of the newsletter.** I need and appreciate your additional donations in defraying the considerable cost of research, printing, and postage of the newsletter and other materials I send without charge to inquirers. Additional donations also support those who can't afford to pay.

## NEWSLETTER REPRINTS

At the request of many, I have now collected Jessee Family Newsletters into separate sets of reprints: #1-7, #8-9, #10-11, #12-13, #14-15, #16-17, #18-19, #20-21 (without some attachments that have become obsolete). You may request these for \$10 a set, or **\$60 for all back issues and a subscription to the current year**. Your additional donations to help me defray the costs of research, printing, copying, and postage are very much welcome.

## *The Jessee Family Newsletter*

**Edited and Published by  
James Wilson "Jim" Jessee  
1272 Hobart Street  
Chico, CA 95926-3702  
Telephone: 530-342-2652  
E-mail: Jim@Jessee.org**

**Website: www.jessee.org  
Webmaster: Earl Wilson Jessee  
E-mail: Earl@Jessee.org**

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1272 Hobart Street  
Chico, CA 95926-3702

James W. "Jim" Jessee, Editor  
jim@jessee.org  
www.jessee.org



A rendering of Jessee's Mill by Irene Jessee Perry.

**The mailing label above indicates the expiration date of your subscription.** It is based on your assumed interest, paid subscription, or previous donations. I have been determining the expiration date generously, providing you the first issue of the new subscription year free as a reminder to renew. I am hoping that those receiving this Winter 2004 Edition with a 1 Jan 2004 expiration date or the notation "expired" will renew for the entire calendar year 2004. Please inform me of any errors or corrections needed.

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