

JAMES FARM JOURNAL

Newsletter of
"FRIENDS OF THE JAMES FARM"



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EDITOR — Milt Perry

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A Christmas Story

On November 27, 1985, the Nevada (Missouri) *Daily Mail* (a small city about 70 miles south of Kansas City) ran an article that is of interest to us.

It seems that Clark Griffith grew up on a farm near there. He remembered that often he would take care of four fine horses in his father's barn, the property of acquaintances of his dad, who often came to visit. Young Clark would walk the tired animals to the barn while the riders refreshed themselves in Clear Creek before going up to the house. Often, the riders would stay for a meal and a visit, then ride on.

"We were so poor we were lucky to have something on the table," Clark told his nephew years later, "but we always had a little something on the stove."

The visitors never failed to bring food with them, either killed on the way, or purchased, so they would not be a hardship on the family of five children and the parents.

For grooming and feeding the horses Clark was always paid in gold. One of the men, who appeared to be the leader, was always pleasant and jovial and loved to tell stories to Clark and his brothers and sisters.

And Christmas, they were remembered.

Years later, when he had become famous as the owner of the Washington Senators baseball team and a friend of numerous presidents, Clark Griffith remembered the visitors' Christmas gestures. Clark's father was killed in a hunting accident and times became even harder. But on Christmas they would always find a beautiful tree, and a present of gold coins, something even the smallest could enjoy, something that made their lives a bit brighter.

These four men, Clark Griffith was proud to relate to all his important friends, were Jesse James, his brother Frank, and Cole and James Younger.

Friends of the James Farm

Minutes of Annual Meeting

September 20, 1986 — Minutes of the last meeting read and approved. Treasurer's report 8/31/86: Balance \$6,979.92, copy in file. Report of Nomination Committee was approved.

Elected are as follows: President, Martin McGrane; Vice President, Jack Wymore; Secretary-Treasurer, Milt Perry; Honorary Vice President, Bill Settle; Board, Class of 1989, George Warfel and Phillip Steele; Class of 1988, James C. Edwards, Marie McWhirter, Vacancy; Honorary Board Member, Mrs. Milton Greevy.

Milt Perry discussed the material he and George Warfel are collecting on photographs of Jesse James. Since many fake and spurious photos of him appear, it was felt by the Board that we should publish documented photos of him. There are about a dozen, including those of his body. During the investigation, we have discovered (so far) three that are unfamiliar with most scholars. Two of them are in private hands and one was published more than a century ago. The latest one is owned by a lady in Illinois with whom we are in communication. It shows both Frank and Jesse and was taken in the early 1870's, we believe. To alleviate the cost of publication, we may publish the results of our study, one photo at a time either printed by us or in another publication; and they can be collected into a single book later. At present, we are reading information on the famous picture of Jesse as a guerrilla for publication.

Bill Settle requested that he not be continued as Vice President due to pressures of other things. He was therefore elected as Honorary Vice President. The President will write letters to the town of Winston, Missouri, suggesting they try and preserve the train station there. He will suggest that a marker

(Continued on back page)

1987 Reunion

The James and Allied Families Reunion will be held next July in conjunction with the annual meeting of the National Organization for Outlaw and Lawman History, July 23-25, 1987. We will be putting together programs to interest history-minded people and those interested in genealogy.

We, especially, urge family members to plan to attend for several reasons: Not only will there be programs you will enjoy, but we want input from you. Please tell us if you want to present a program about your family and how it ties in with the rest of the family. We plan to have the authors of family histories there who will speak on their research.

We plan to have sessions that will interest you, in addition to the all-day tour of the historic sites about the James and Youngers in the Kansas City area.

Photographs of Jesse

As noted in the minutes of the last meeting, we are now working on a publication of the photographs of Jesse James. There are a number of pictures thought to be of Jesse, but are not. We feel the best way to work with this is for us to publish the collection of photographs that can be positively identified as those of Jesse. So far, we have about a dozen, including those taken of his body. Instead of publishing them all in a book, which will take a good long time, we plan on publishing them one at a time. After all of them have been published we can gather them into a single publication.

You can help us. I would like for you to send us photocopies of any photographs you might know about of Jesse James. Don't worry whether you think we might have them already. We might have a different version of a copy of it and they interest us, too, for we find that they have been published in several different ways: as prints on cart-de-visites, engravings in books, newspapers and magazines, and the pictures themselves were altered, cropped or retouched.

At the time of Jesse's death, we discovered that some publications retouched pictures of his body to look like he was alive by opening his eyes! It is not our intention to do anything but publish and document actual pictures of Jesse. We aren't interested in exposing any that may be fakes or to try and dispute the opinions of others. We simply feel it is time to collect and document actual photos that were taken between his birth in 1847 and his death in 1882.

We have also found out that the authorities in St. Joseph, Missouri, let any photographer there who wanted to take pictures of the body so they could be sent over the land and prove Jesse was dead. Thus far we have not been able to account for all the photos of the body that seem to have been taken. Information such as the name of the photographer, type of picture and size are most important. Milt Perry (Editor) and George Warfel, distinguished artist and member of the Friends Board, who has been studying Jesse's features for 40 years, are working on this project. Please help!!!

1987 Annual Meeting

In 1987, the Friends will be part of a national meeting to which people with interests similar to ours will gather in Kansas City, Missouri, July 23-26. We invited the National Organization of the Study of Outlaw and Lawman History (NOLA) to meet here and they have accepted. They also voted to meet with us and the Friends of the Youngers. The Kansas City area of the Westerners have also expressed interest in becoming a part of this meeting.

We have made arrangements for members to attend simply by paying the registration fee of \$50.00. This will admit you to all the historical sessions (and we can promise you there will be some fascinating ones by nationally known authors), tours, and admittance to the sales area where you will be able to purchase books, artifacts, art works and other things of interest.

The hotel has not yet been selected. We are now interviewing them. Kansas City has a lot of them. We want to find one which will give us sensible room rates we can afford and that will be centrally located. There will be a banquet Saturday night, July 25, which if past ones are any indication, you won't want to miss! (Last year a "mock wedding" of two members of NOLA turned out to be the real thing! Only the Bride, Groom and Preacher knew it was for real!)

One of the features of the meeting will be a tour of historic sites connected with the Jameses and Youngers, and ending at the James Farm. If the play "The Life and Times of Jesse James" will be produced as we expect, it will include attending a performance after a barbeque supper.

Other articles here will give you information about how you can participate if you want to present an historical or genealogical paper and if you are a relative of any of our outlaws or lawmen of that time.

The meeting will bring together nationally recognized speakers, many of whom have written books that will be for sale there and who will autograph them for you. There has never been a meeting of this kind, and if it turns out like the planners hope it will, we will receive national publicity.

Jesse James and Civil Rights

Jesse James was indeed a complex character. An outlaw, used to robbing banks and trains, he had a sense of justice that is, to say the least, interesting. The following is a story related by his son, Jesse James, Jr., that probably was told many times in the family:

While Jesse was visiting ex-Confederate General Jo Shelby near Kansas City, a young black boy, who lived on the Shelby farm was chased by a mob to the house.

"My father [wrote Jesse's son] had taken one of General Shelby's shot guns and was out beyond in a pasture hunting quail when he saw the mob ride up to the gate. He very naturally supposed that the mob had discovered that he was there and had come after him. He went on a run for the stable to get his horse, but before he reached there he saw the mob riding away with the negro boy.

"General Shelby was not at home, but his wife was there, and she was most distraught when she saw the mob capture her negro boy and ride away with him. My father declared that he would go and rescue the boy. She begged him not to do it. But he felt duty bound, as the guest of his friend General Shelby, to protect his servants in his absence, so he saddled his horse and went on a gallop after the mob. There were more than a dozen men in the

(Continued on back page)