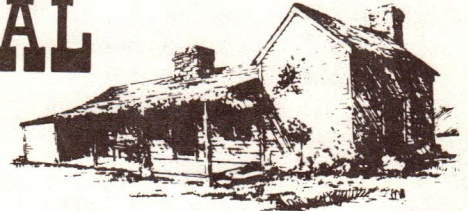


# JAMES FARM JOURNAL

Newsletter of  
"FRIENDS OF THE JAMES FARM"



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EDITOR - MILT PERRY

MARCH - 1989

## News About our 1989 Annual Meeting

This is the 50th anniversary of the release of the film, "*Jesse James*", starring Tyrone Power, Henry Fonda and a host of stars. Though it may not have been the most historically accurate Jesse James film, it is certainly the most memorable. (Indeed, Jo Francis James, one of Jesse's granddaughters who had supplied historical background for the film, which the studio ignored, commented that she thought the only similarities were the name Jesse James and they both rode a horse.) Still it is a landmark.

Our meeting this year will feature the making of the film and a spectacular showing of it at a beautifully restored 1930's movie "palace," August 5.

The meeting will begin with dedication of a new marker on Jesse James' grave in Kearney, Missouri. The marker is a Civil War monument provided by the U.S. Veteran's Administration, and it will be dedicated the afternoon of Friday, August 4.

This will be followed by the second annual Gala at Claybrook House, the restored home of Mary James Barr, daughter of Jesse James, across from the James Farm. Afterwards, ticket holders will attend the opening night of the highly acclaimed drama, "*The Life and Times of Jesse James*," at the James Farm.

Saturday, August 5th will feature a day-long historical program in the beautiful Clay County Commission Room of the newly restored Clay County Courthouse in Liberty, between Kearney and Kansas City. This program will have programs by Larry Bradley, author of *The Making of a Legend*, a book about the film, and several persons who played roles in the film as it was being made in the Missouri Ozarks with discussions about their experiences. Reactions of the James family to the film will be provided by the family. We will also discuss new geneological discoveries,

and have a preview showing of a new video documentary of Jesse James, by American Heritage Productions. At this same time will be convened the first meeting of Jesse James Museum Association, which will discuss how best to portray him in exhibits.

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### Meeting to feature showing of film, "Jesse James".

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Besides Bradley, several other authors will be present to autograph copies of their books which can be purchased there. These will include Judge James R. Ross, great grandson of Jesse, whose new book, *I, Jesse James* will be available. You can also purchase the video.

The film will be shown that night at the restored Granada Theatre in downtown Kansas City, Kansas, and be preceded by a cocktail hour and our banquet, at which will be pre-

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## Book Review

*Wanted!* by Arthur Winfield Knight  
(Trout Creek Press, Parkdale, OR)  
1988.

Among the storied figures in literature are highwaymen, those dashing, romantic persons whose daring exploits have become the stuff of folklore, legends, plays, novels, songs and poems. In England, they celebrate the doings of Robin Hood, Jack Sheppard and Dick Turpin; here, it is Frank and Jesse James, Cole Younger, Black Bart, Joaquin Murieta, Billy the Kid and Belle Starr. Arthur Winfield Knight has these and more in this booklet, and each poem is a fitting tribute. They flow smoothly and grab your attention with the opening lines and hold it until the last, which is nailed down, with hammer-like intensity. Indeed, Knight is able to put in the last line the essence of the whole piece: Jesse says, "We'll never stop running," and Frank: "I never should have given up my gun," and Zerelda James' plaintive, "I've spent a lifetime pretending."

But Knight does not deal only with the outlaws, for here are such people as Bat Masterson and Wyatt Earp, Judge Roy Bean and Big Nose Kate and Buffalo Bill.

It is a book collectors of James and poetry lovers alike will want and enjoy.

*Wanted* can be obtained from the author: P. O. Box 439, California, PA 15419.

(Arthur's wife, Kit, is also a poet, see her poem "Sixty One Hundred Dollars," in this issue.) - Milt Perry

# St. Catherine's Academy

Russ Thomason recently sent us material about St. Catherine's, the Catholic school attended by Zerelda Cole, who became the mother of Frank and Jesse James, before she married Robert S. James, December 28, 1841.

Named for St. Catherine's of Sienna, the school was begun near White Sulphur, Scott County, Kentucky, in April, 1823 by Mother Catherine Spaulding. The little school lasted for ten years after which it was moved to Lexington, where property on Limestone Street was purchased from James Logue on May 4, 1834. It consisted of a lot measuring 120 x 600 feet on which was the Logue house, supposedly the first brick house in Lexington. It had 8 rooms and became the school. On the ground floor was a parlor, music room and dining rooms for both the female students and the sisters who taught them. Upstairs was a chapel and dormitories. In 1837, St. Peter's church was erected nearby.

It was to this little school that Zerelda E. Cole's uncle and guardian, James M. Lindsay, sent her. She was not Catholic herself, but after the second marriage of her mother, Sally Lindsay Cole, to Robert Thomason, whom Zerelda is reported not to have liked, and their move to Clay County, Missouri, she went to live with her

uncle. It was during the summer of 1841 that she met Robert James.

The convent was in Lexington, not Georgetown, as many writers have assumed. Unfortunately, many of their older records have been destroyed and they have as yet, found no records of Zerelda's school days.

At the James Farm is a sampler she embroidered as a student there.

## Frank James Death Certificate

Recently, Carl Barr sent us a copy of Frank James' death certificate which indicates he died February 18, 1915, not February 15, as some writers have asserted. It also tells us he

was exactly 72 years, 1 month and 8 days old, establishing his birth as being on January 10, 1843. Frank died of "Apoplexy Cerebral" at the James Farm. His full name was, of course, Alexander Franklin James.

## Annual Meeting —

(Continued from Page One)  
sented more artifacts for our museum.

It will surely be a memorable event which you won't want to miss! The fee's will be modest: the conference is free; the Gala is \$20.00 a person, and the film showing and banquet is also \$20.00 a person.

We will send you notice in due time.

### Yes, I wish to join the Friends of the James Farm

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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- Student ..... \$ 15.00 per year
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## Sixty-One Thousand Dollars

I've always admired people who are enthusiastic about their job or anything else. If I had the power to bestow one gift, it would be passion. People need a real interest in something outside themselves. Doesn't matter how meaningless. The joy and heart of the matter will be conveyed. Sharron Johnson was cheerful and enthusiastic in her black and white spectator pumps as she led the tour of Clay County Savings Bank in Liberty, Missouri. It was the first bank robbed by Frank and Jesse James. It was also the first daylight bank robbery in America. History was made on February 13, 1886. The cashiers, William Bird and his father, were ordered to empty the vault's shelves into a cotton wheat sack. The bandits closed the vault door on the clerks, and one of the outlaws said, "Birds like you deserve to be caged." Apparently, everybody knew everybody. The loot totaled close to 61 grand. The band of ten escaped across the Missouri River. A snowstorm hid their tracks. One book said the James boys turned to robbing banks because they were former guerrillas and when the Civil War ended they were bored. More likely, there was still so much upheaval, lawlessness, stealing, killing and violence going on that no one could settle down. And they were bored. Now, over one hundred years later, the bank has been renamed The Jesse James bank Museum. Clay County has made an industry out of Jesse. And why is it wrong to see history preserved? At least now Jesse is bringing money into Clay County.

— Kit Knight

(Reprint from *Russian River News*, December 1-7, 1988, Guerneville, CA)

For sale at the Farm are unique 1989 calendars which feature excellent James photographs and significant dates in James history. The calendars are \$7.00, postage included.

Notes — Carl Barr has sent us a clipping from a Houston, Texas, paper that informs us the first baby born there in 1989 was named for Jesse James.

## I, Jesse James

The long awaited publication of *I, Jesse James* by the outlaw's great-grandson, James R. Ross, has been announced by the publisher, Dragon Books. According to the announcement it is "the first full account of the Missouri outlaw by a member of the family." Ross "has skillfully combined the oral tradition of his family," the result of which "is a book that is controversial."

Among the cast of characters are Jesse, "the fun loving brother," and Frank, "always sombre and thoughtful," Cole Younger, Zerelda James Samuel, Major John N. Edwards and others.

The book will be illustrated with more than 50 photographs. It is 304 pages long, hardbound in gold-blocked red leatherette.

When published it will be available from our book store for \$29.95, plus \$3.00 shipping and handling.

## James Farm Sales Items

### Books

- (1) *Jesse James Was His Name* by Dr. William Settle ..... \$9.00
- (2) *Background of a Bandit* by Joan Beamis and William E. Pullen ..... \$6.00
- (3) *Goodbye Jesse James* (collection of newspaper articles) ..... \$5.00
- (4) *40 Years of History at the James Farm* by Martin McCrane ..... \$5.00
- (5) *Foscoe Gun Battle* by Wilbur Zink \$3.50
- (6) *Younger Genealogy* by Marley Brant \$6.00
- (7) *From the Pen of a Noble Robber..* \$4.50 (The Letters of Jesse Woodson James)
- (8) *Jesse and Frank James: The Family History* ..... \$8.00

### Posters

- (1) Missouri Wanted Posters ..... \$1.00
- (2) Kentucky Wanted Posters ..... \$1.00
- (3) Minnesota Wanted Posters ..... \$1.00

### Postcards

- (1) Old Grave Site
- (2) New Grave Site
- (3) 1885 — Family Members in James

### Yard

- (4) Frank Standing By Gate
  - (5) James Farm, (front view)
  - (6) James Farm, (cabin view)
  - (7) Jesse's Home, St. Joseph
  - (8) Jesse's Wedding Portrait
  - (9) Cabin (before restoration)
  - (10) Liberty Bank Museum (Interior)
  - (11) Liberty Bank Museum (Exterior)
- 3 for \$1.00**

### Misc.

- (1) T-Shirts Adult Size ..... \$8.00
- (2) T-Shirts Children Size ..... \$7.00
- (3) Genealogy Chart ..... \$2.50

All prices listed above include postage. Please make checks or money orders to "James Farm Fund". Friends of the James Farm members will receive 10% discount on all sales items.

## Book Review

*Jesse James My Father,*  
by Jesse James, Jr.

(Reprint of the 1899 edition by Triton Press, Provo, Utah)

This is the first book published by a member of the James family that provides a historical account of some of the activities of Jesse James. His son, Jesse Edwards James (called "Jesse, Jr.") published it in 1899. His reasons he said were twofold: "to bring in some money for the support of my mother," and "to correct the false impressions ... about ... my father." We don't know about the former, but the latter was somewhat achieved by this book. Unfortunately for history, Jesse's widow never wrote such a book and young Jesse was only 7 years old when his father was killed so he had only the memory of a child of his father. The real history of Jesse is somewhat weak and one wonders what constraints Jesse, Jr., was under. In other words, what was it he *didn't* tell? After all, his uncle Frank, was alive and active, and though acquitted of murder and robbery in Missouri, there was surely the possibility he could be accused of another murder or robbery if the evidence could be found. Cole Younger was in prison and had steadfastly refused to reveal who killed the cashier at Northfield. (Later, it is reported, that on his deathbed he claimed it was "the man who rode the dun horse," in other word, Frank James.) So it is no wonder that Jesse, Jr., added nothing to the outlawry of his father and comrades.

However, there was another reason he wrote the book: to seek exoneration by the public for a train robbery he was accused of and tried for. On September 23, 1898, a Missouri Pacific train was robbed in east Kansas City and he was arrested and tried for it. He was acquitted as, he proudly said, on the first ballot by the jury. On reading the accusations and testimony one will agree he was innocent and that the accuser, who was undoubtedly one of the robbers, accused him as part of a deal with the police, the Pinkertons and the railroad, that would allow him to go free. The authorities were under extreme pressure to solve a plague of train robberies and Jesse, Jr's., theory that he was selected because of his name and weak acquaintance with one or two of the robbers, does bear fruit.

He succeeded in rescuing his name; he married a beautiful woman a year later, raised a family, put himself through law school and became a good lawyer. He later retired to California.

It is indeed a book anyone interested in or studying about Jesse James will want, and Triton Press has done a good service in making it available at this modest price.

(This book can be purchased from our book store for \$7.00, including postage.)

COLE

John Cole -1757  
 Susannah -1761

William Hynes 1714-  
 Hannah 1721-1804

Richard Cole, Sr. 1729-1814  
 Ann Hubbard 1730-1795

John Cole 1752-1844  
 Nancy (Anna) Hynes 1756-1834

Richard Cole, Jr. 1763-1839  
 Sally Yates 1763-1836

John Cole, Jr. 1789-1860  
 Semily Larrance 1808-

James Cole 1804-1827  
 Sally Lindsey

John James  
 Mary Poor

John L. Cole 1829-1881  
 Nancy Elizabeth Martin 1839-1898

Zerelda Cole 1825-1911  
 Robert S. James 1818-1851

Sarah Minnie Cole 1869-1949  
 James Henry Blalock 1864-1945

Jesse Woodson James 1847-1882

Leura Edna Blalock 1901-  
 Roy Hunter Brakebill 1900-1930

Clovis H. Brakebill 1920-  
 Helen M. Krippaehne 1921-

Roy F. Brakebill 1922-  
 Katherine P. Wilson 1918-

Betty Jo Brakebill 1924-  
 Allen R. Smith 1946-

Diana L. Brakebill 1949-  
 Dennis M. Morris 1948-

Jeanne L. Brakebill 1951-  
 James Gerald Martin 1946-

Allen R. Smith, Jr. 1945-  
 Kristina K. Roehlk 1946-

Scott Hunter Morris 1975-  
 Christina M. Morris 1977-

Michelle J. Martin 1982-1982  
 Julie K. Martin 1983-

Stacy Kristina Smith 1967-  
 Lance Allen Smith 1970-

This information about a branch of the Cole family was submitted by Clovis H. Brakebill. Do you have information about your family and its relationship to the Jameses you would like to send to us?

**Jesse James and the Mt. Olive Baptist Church**

We know that Jesse James was a member of the Mt. Olive baptist Church in Kearney, Missouri, but when he joined is unknown. He was baptized in Clear Creek, midway between the town and the James Farm. Unfortunately, floods have washed away the baptism hole in the creek bed.

His father, Rev. Robert S. James, preached at New Hope Baptist Church north of the Farm, and founded both Providence and Mt. Pisgah churches, which are active today. Yet, Jesse joined the church in Kearney.

Carl Barr recently gave us copies of church records relating to Jesse's withdrawal. The story is also partially covered by the Kansas City Star, April 11, 1974.

It seems that at the meeting of church body on the first Saturday of November, 1967, Jesse James was listed as being "excluded," meaning his name was to be stricken from the records, along with several other persons including Belle Cole, probably a relative. However, his name was still carried on the rolls in September, 1869, for at that meeting "on motion Bro. H. S. Major and Alex Henderson were appointed to visit Br. Jessy (sic) James and ascertain his reasons for wishing his name with drawn from our church book."

A month later, "References called for concerning the committee appointed to visit Bro James. Committee not being prepared to report were continued and Bro Flood added ..."

On the first Saturday of November, 1869: "on motion Bro Jessy (sic) James was excluded from the church." This is far from clear!

In November, 1869, we know he was implicated in several bank robberies in Missouri and Kentucky, but his name had not been brought out in connection with them and he was not being sought by the authorities. Nor is it clear why his name was to be removed in 1867, but was still on the books 2 years later when he seems to have asked it be withdrawn.