



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

The James Farm is part of Clay County Missouri's Historic Sites Department. As such it doesn't always have funding available when artifacts become available.

The Friends have used many different ways to raise funds. Presently our two main sources of income are our three shoots per year and our membership dues.

Over the years we have tried to give the Farm or museum at least one gift each year. In the past we have purchased archival cabinets, carpeting, restoration projects, letter collection, to name but a few.

Since our last newsletter, the daughter of a local collector offered us a here-to-fore unknown picture of Dr Samuel and a copy of a known picture of Zerelda, both of which have James family notations hand written around the edges. Also included is a folding medical instrument kit and a mortar and pestle as well as a needle for doing stitches that belonged to Dr Samuel and a scrapbook of James family newspaper clippings.

Beth Beckett, the director of the Farm, has found conformation of the authenticity of these artifacts and has already put them on display in the museum. Keep a look out for further details in forthcoming Journals.

As our members, you have all helped add these items to our museum. Thank you.

Our next board meeting will be held on 17 May where we will discuss our next shoot and our annual meeting.



BY BRYAN IVLOW

SPRING AT THE FARM!

Safe to say, Spring came considerably late to the Farm! It’s a great opportunity though to take a look at the old homestead in what appears to still be the bleak midwinter!



Photos by Jesse James Birthplace staff members.

This Issue

- Page 1 – President’s Message
Spring at the Farm
- Page 2 – Sow The Farm In
Flowers
- Page 6 – April Shoot Report
- Page 7 – Jesse James –
Preacher?
- Page 10 – The Life and Trials of
Thomas Aylesbury

The Friends of the James Farm

Executive Officers

President
Bryan Ivlow

Vice President
Kevin Makel

Secretary
Vivie Tison

Treasurer
Vivie Tison

Website Management
Kevin Makel

Newsletter Editor
Michelle Pollard

Board Members

Pam Banner
Scott Cole
Harold Dellinger
Monte Griffey
Marty McGrane
Paul Weller

Ex-Officio

Beth Beckett

Honorary Board Members

Betty Barr
Michelle Pollard
David Smith

www.jessejames.org



Friends of the James Farm
c/o The Jesse James Birthplace
21216 Jesse James Farm Road
Kearney, Missouri
64060

SOW THE FARM IN FLOWERS

*March 2018 marked the fortieth anniversary of
Clay county's acquisition of the James Farm.*

In March 1978, historians and restoration experts may have been the first non-James-descendants to 'move in' since 1845, but they were certainly not the first adventurers there. Neither were they the first to wonder at the peacefulness of the old place, nor the first to contemplate giving tours.

Behind the more brightly painted and more recently built part of the house was a long, shambling, clapboard shack, worn by the weather and yet slightly in its half ruins. A rose bush and a clinging vine there softened the sharp contrast of yesterday and today. Mrs Samuel stepped upon the porch and opened a creaking door.¹

Mrs Samuel, mother of the James brothers, started giving tours of the old homestead shortly after Jesse's death in 1882. The old homestead then consisted of the 1822 cabin, built by Jacob Groomer, and the two-story extension on the east side, added by Robert Gilmer.²

There are many articles and photos showing the steady stream of visitors to the Farm who were shown round by the formidable Mrs Samuel. They willingly listened to her stories – tales of her brave boys, the Pinkerton bomb, the highs and lows of life as a mother to outlaws. Soon, the oldest part of the cabin started to show signs of its age, but it was the white extension that was deemed surplus to requirements and removed, intended to be sent on tour with the old Ford home. Perhaps missing the extra rooms, Mrs Samuel ordered a replacement in the early 1890s that can be seen at the residence today.

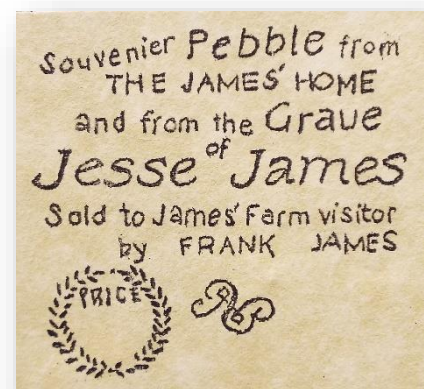
In her new parlor, Mrs Samuel allowed visitors to attach ribbons to a large photo of Jesse. In the kitchen, she allowed them to write their names on the mantel over the fireplace and, in the yard, she allowed photography... all at a price. Allegedly, she also sold pebbles from Jesse's grave, replenishing them daily from the creek that ran alongside the property. Mary Clemmons, Mrs Samuel's maid, was interviewed in 1979 and asked if she had ever seen this sale of pebbles from the grave.

"Heck no!" came the reply.

"You never saw her do that?"

"No, she never sold anything off the grave. She put every flower she got a hold of on it."³ In fact, Dr Samuel was heard to say that there were so many flowers on Jesse's grave, he could most likely sow the farm in flowers.

"I am a great lover of flowers," Mrs Samuel would say, "I am much in the garden tending to the beds."⁴



This card might prove it was Frank who sold pebbles, not Mrs Samuel.

One day, while she was busy in the garden and wasn't ready to talk to the visitors, she sent Frank instead. She recalled the event later –

Of course, he was joking – he loves a joke, when he said, 'The first thing is the register and the next thing is your pocketbooks.' One man from Chicago was in the party, and his hair fairly stood on end. He had walked into the trap and was being held up by the James boys. His wife relieved the bad situation by telling him that Frank meant only the admission fee.⁵

Mrs Samuel passed away on a train while returning from a visit to see Frank at his home in Oklahoma on 10 February 1911 and shortly thereafter Frank returned to the Farm to continue the family business. His mother had trained him well, although he imposed a few more rules in her absence. Kodaks were barred, for example, and one room remained out of bounds, so his wife could relax away from the prying eyes of the visitors. Although the home had no running water, Frank installed a telephone in the parlor and offered guests a walk out to the grave of his favorite horse, Dan. Time and age eventually forced Frank to move Dan's gravestone closer and closer to the house until its current resting place at the front gate!

After Frank's death in 1915, his wife, Annie remained at the home until her death in 1944. Then, it was the turn of their son, Robert Franklin James.

James biographer, Homer Croy, visited the Farm at a time when Bob James and his wife, Mae, were residents only during the summer months, their winter's being spent in Excelsior Springs. "I enter and begin to look around," Croy wrote in his book, *Jesse James Was My Neighbor*. "In the living room of the 'new part' of the house are two things that seem the very epitome of the character of Jesse James. There they are, side-by-side on the table; his Bible and his revolver. He was always hesitating between them."⁶

It was Robert James who added the kitchen section of the home and also a small golf course. He considered himself a 'second growth celebrity' and, as his health declined, he left the tours to his wife. Robert James died on 18 November 1959 and, although the Farm was still owned by Frank James' daughter-in-law, Mae James, she was then living in a nursing home while her nephews, the four sons of Jesse and Zee's only daughter, Mary, gave tours of the old homestead.

"At the gate, the visitor usually meets one of two grandsons of Jesse James," wrote a reporter of the Kansas City Star Magazine in 1971. "On Sundays, both grandsons, Lawrence H. Barr, 68, and Forster R. Barr, 66, team up to conduct tours."⁷

At that time, it was the family's intention to remain the owners of the Farm for as long as possible but by then, the oldest part of the cabin was in serious need of restoration.



Forster Barr on the porch, c. 1970

The Barr brothers point out to visitors that the dilapidated west wing, the old log part of the James home, is closed. They explain it is not safe. But they let visitors take turns viewing the room over a padlocked Dutch door... Round metal supports have recently been placed in the old part of the house to support the sagging wood roof.⁸

Rollie B. Baldwin, Mae James' attorney, estimated that the cost to restore the old cabin would be approximately \$50,000 and a plan was suggested to sell square feet of the property to lucky purchasers, who would receive a deed-type certificate to raise funds.

Photos of the Jesse James Birthplace



Before the extension was removed, 1880s



The Farm, 1899



The 1822 cabin, 1978



The James Farm, 2015



The Eastlake edition, 2018

For whatever reason, that plan did not come to fruition and, in March 1978, Clay County purchased the James Farm from Jesse's grandsons. Under the watchful eye of historic preservation specialists and driven by Ed Bauman, Clay County Commissioner and Milton F. Perry, Clay County's first historic sites director, restoration began. A quick assessment noted that the cabin was in danger of collapsing and had been propped up to prevent it. "To restore it, the roof was removed and the log walls exposed by the removal of the board sheathing inside and out." During the restoration, many items were discovered including items of cutlery, currency and several bullets, "testifying to the violent history of the house."⁹

Marty McGrane, author of the guide book about the Farm and one of its early supporters, remembers his first visit. "I was greeted by a cat. No guards, nobody selling tickets, no one peddling souvenirs... just a cat." In time, he was met by another ambassador of the James story, David Smith.

Together, we slowly canvassed each room in the old house, and when I expressed mild astonishment that old black dresses in one bedroom looked authentic enough to have been worn by Frank's widow, Annie, Dave said, "They were."¹⁰

Marley Brant, author and one of the first Friends of the James Farm, remembers her first trip to the Farm also.

I was in Missouri on vacation from California and exited I-35 at Kearney on a whim. I had no idea where I was going but somehow found my way to the Farm. I pulled up in the dirt and a young woman told me I wasn't supposed to be there, that they were working on restoring the building and weren't open to the public yet. For some reason I asked her if this was Jesse James' farm. I have no idea why I asked that. She said, 'Yes' and I asked what exactly they were doing. She called over Dave Smith to tell me about the restoration. I started asking questions and Dave said that the curator was the person to talk to but he had gone out of town for the weekend. I was disappointed because I was just passing through. I thanked Dave and was beginning to pull out when Milt Perry drove up. Dave stopped me to introduce me to Milt, who said something told him he should check in at the Farm before he left town. Milt and I sat on lawn chairs in the yard talking for about three hours. I knew very little about Jesse so had all kinds of questions. This conversation at the Farm launched my obsession with the James-Younger Gang and my ten years of research for my first book, *The Outlaw Youngers: A Confederate Brotherhood*.¹¹

In October 1978, Jesse's original grave was discovered, excavated and several items of interest, including wisps of hair, bone, personal items and a .38 calibre bullet were discovered.¹² By the summer of 1979, visitors were once again welcomed to look around the old home of the James family. "As if in appreciation, an unexpected movement began," Marty McGrane remembers. "Visitors asked, 'How can we help?'" As a direct result, in 1980, The Friends of the James Farm was organized with the first James Farm Journal being sent out to members in September 1982.

“There were some great people in that initial group of Friends,” Brant remembers, “including Milt, Dr. Bill Settle (a lovely man), Jack Wymore, Ed Bauman, Lawrence, Thelma and Betty Barr, George Warfel, Wilbur Zink, Ted Yeatman, Jeannie Ralston, Dave Smith, Marty McGrane...I can't remember who all. It was a fascinating group of people who were really hungry for the opportunity to sort the facts from the fiction. We wrote each other constantly and got together as often as we could, sharing new discoveries, experiences and laughter at some of the stories we heard and the characters we met. It was really a magical time.”

Visitors today see what all those who have come before them have created and, as always, those visitors come with varying degrees of knowledge and interest. Some see the sign on the road and pull in out of curiosity. Others come as part of an organised group. Many are drawn in by the Research Library and the expertise offered by the staff. Jeff Thoele spent his last visit looking at the photographs of Jesse James in the Research Library with the help of Liz Murphy.

I was trying to determine which photos of Jesse are recognized by the Farm and James Family. Liz explained that the photos of Jesse that are recognized by the Farm/James family are displayed in the museum and the James Cabin. We then proceeded to examine the photos spread throughout the buildings. One by one I checked the photos off my list. Every pic that was on my list was displayed. As a matter of fact, there was one picture displayed that I did not have on my list – the one of Jesse sitting on his horse, Stonewall.

Still more are on a mission – fulfilling the wishes of a relative who never made it there - or arrive with intentions of selling the story - reporters and movie makers. Others are drawn to the old place as an everlasting memorial. James family member, John Larance, usually makes two trips a year to the farm but one cold morning in March of 2017 he was part of a unique and impromptu event. “The museum had just opened for the day,” he recalls, “and the young man approaching the counter asked if there was any events today.” The answer was a premature, no. Pulling out his cell phone, the young man made a phone call and troops of people and flags poured into the farm on what was Confederate Flag Day. “Many tours and discussion took place,” Larance said. “A thankfulness for the boy's service was felt. People as far as Virginia showed up. ‘Bill Anderson’ was even in attendance! Learned a lot that day.”¹³

The Jesse James Birthplace and the Friends of the James Farm have always had clear goals that remain true today. Why not come pay us a visit?

Sources

1. Liberty Tribune, dated only 1909.
2. *History of the James Farm* by Phil Stewart
3. Liz Murphy interview with Mary Clemmons, 1979, Research Library, Jesse James Birthplace.
4. The Washington Post, 18 July 1909.
5. Ibid.
6. *Jesse James Was My Neighbor*, Homer Croy, p258.
7. Kansas City Star Magazine, 3 October 1971.
8. Ibid.
9. *Jesse James In The County of Clay*, Jack Ventimiglia, published by FOTJF, p111.
10. Guidebook details
11. Communication with Marley Brant, 9 April 2018.
12. *An Historic Analysis of Remains Found in Jesse James' Casket*, by Milton F. Perry.
13. With many thanks to all those who contacted us about their experiences via Facebook.

Membership is Due, Folks!

We take this opportunity to remind you that membership fees are due. To continue supporting the Jesse James Birthplace please complete the form on the back of this issue and return to the Friends of the James Farm.

Please note a change of address – all correspondence to the Friends should be addressed as follows:

**FRIENDS OF THE JAMES FARM
C/O JESSE JAMES BIRTHPLACE
21216 JESSE JAMES FARM ROAD
KEARNEY, MISSOURI, 64060**

Thank you to those who have already renewed membership. We look forward to sharing more news, articles and Reunion details with you during the coming year.

FRIENDS OF THE JAMES FARM SHOOT

7 April 2018



The April Shoot participants on the porch of the old cabin.

The shoot started very cold. The official Kansas City temperature was 16 degrees above zero but when the sun came out, it seemed to warm up quickly. The head Clay County Ranger was our range master and when we started shooting things moved along quickly.

We had twenty-two shooters, with Caleb Blackwell entering both the cap and ball and the cartridge classifications. Considering the number of awards Caleb won, he was the day's shooting star. Scott Cole brought a great selection of donuts and totalled the scores, laying out the scores in a manner that was easy to read, while Vivie Tison registered the shooters and collected the money. She reports that we grossed \$575 - the best we have done in quite a while. Paul Weller handled shooter questions and sorted problems and with seven new shooters there were a number of questions. Thank you to the three spectators who volunteered to score targets. Altogether things went very well.

Our next shoot is 16 June. See you all there!



BY BRYAN IVLOW

THE CAP & BALL WINNERS OF THE GENERAL SHOOT:

- First place: Glen Matthews
- Second place: Dustin Davidson
- Third place: Caleb Blackwell

THE CAP & BALL WINNERS OF THE SPECIAL TARGET:

- First place tie: Caleb Blackwell and Joe Roe
- Second place tie: Dustin Davidson and Paul Weller
- Third place: Glen Matthews

THE CARTRIDGE REVOLVER WINNERS OF THE GENERAL SHOOT:

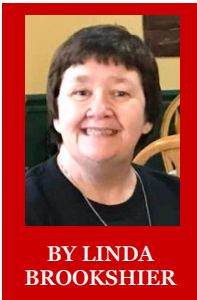
- First place: Andrew Anderson
- Second place: Terry Barr
- Third place: Caleb Blackwell

THE CARTRIDGE REVOLVER WINNERS OF THE SPECIAL TARGET:

- First place: Terry Barr
- Second place: Caleb Blackwell
- Third place: Andrew Anderson



JESSE JAMES - Preacher?



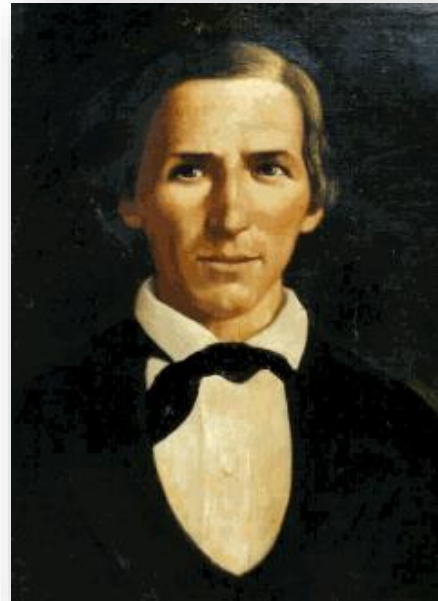
At this Easter Time, our thoughts are focused not only on the Easter Bunny, Easter egg hunts, and delicious family dinners, but also on the True meaning of Easter: The Risen Christ. You might wonder just how Jesus and Jesse James could be included in the same article. Well, wonder no more!

Frank and Jesse James were sons of the very well-respected Rev. Robert James. The Reverend James, born near Big Whippoorwill Creek at Licksillet, Logan County Kentucky on July 17, 1818, was an 1843 honors graduate of Georgetown College in Georgetown, Kentucky, with a Bachelor of Arts degree. Upon completing his education, he returned to his wife, Zerelda, and young son, Alexander Franklin "Frank" James in Centerville which later became Kearney, Missouri.

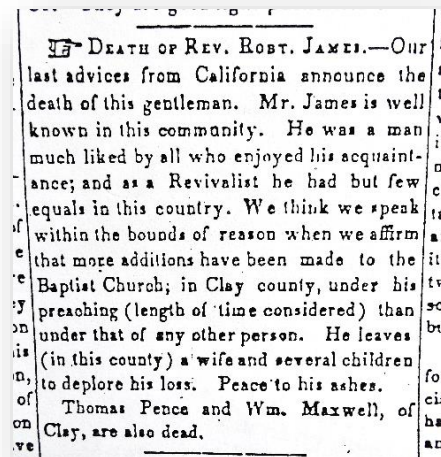
The Reverend James was noted for his Evangelical style of preaching. He not only founded three local churches but also was one of the founders of William Jewell College, a Southern Baptist College founded in 1849, in Liberty, Missouri. As a "Revivalist", many Southern Baptist souls were won over to the Lord!

Although understandably popular and extremely capable, all was not smooth sailing for Reverend James. He was raising a southern family, had brought his knowledge of hemp farming from his native Kentucky and was using slave labor to work that land. He also used slave labor to rebuild the New Hope Baptist Church near Kearney. This caused some friction but it seems hostilities amounted to nothing more than that. In fact, life was going well for Robert and Zerelda James' family - until the summer of 1850. By then, they had not only two little boys - seven year old Frank and two and a half year old Jesse - but also a baby girl named Susan. Another son, Robert, had died while still an infant. Gold Fever was at a peak and Robert decided to head to the California gold mines to prospect and preach to the miners. Tragedy struck on August 18, 1850 when he succumbed to cholera in the Hangtown Gold Camp in what is now Placerville, California.

As a tour guide at the Jesse James Birthplace in Kearney, Missouri, I am often asked about how different life – and history - would have been had Robert James lived. Of course, we will never know the answer to that question. We do know that when the Reverend James passed, he left behind two little boys, a baby daughter and his young wife. Laws being the way they were at the time, his wife, Zerelda, inherited nothing and everything went to the children. There was no will for the 32-year-old Robert James and Zerelda was forced to watch many of her belongings auctioned off to settle Robert's estate.



Reverend Robert Sallee James
1818 - 1850



This notice appeared in the Liberty Tribune, 25 October 1850



New Hope Baptist Church
Rebuilt and reorganised by Rev. Robert James

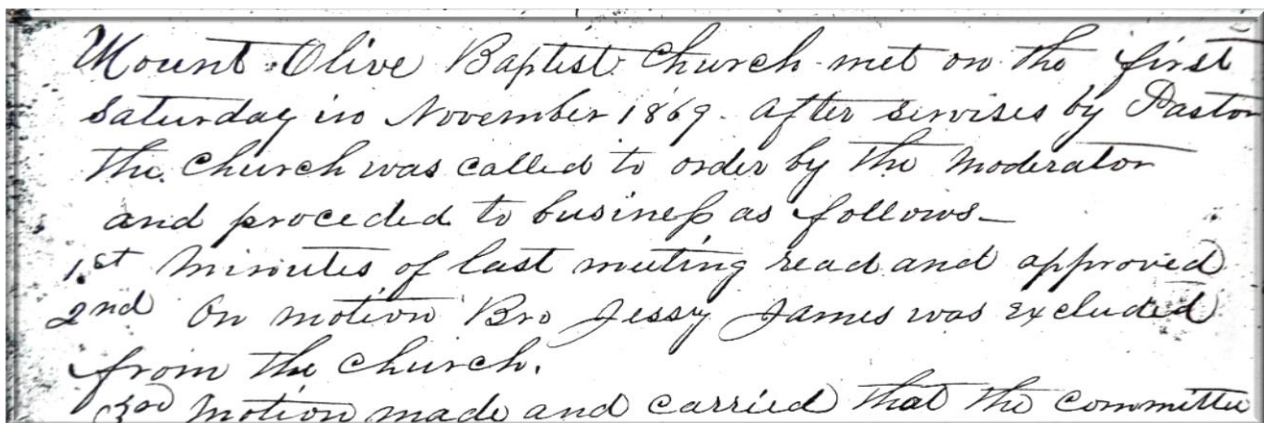
Long before the first shot was fired at Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, the Border warfare between Missouri and Kansas had been going strong, throwing the James Boys' family into the center of this turmoil. Adding to the mix of uncertainty at that time was Zerelda James' marriage to the much older but very wealthy Benjamin Sims. This was a disaster as he hated her children and they hated him to the point that they were not even allowed to live with their mother and step-father. While in the process of a divorce (which was very unusual for that time), Fate stepped in and Mr. Sims died after falling off his horse.

Happiness was restored to the family on September 25, 1855, when Zerelda Cole James Sims married Dr. Reuben Samuel, a marriage that would last for 52 years until his death on March 1, 1908. The boys lovingly referred to him as "Pappy". Together, Reuben and Zerelda had four children and continued to work the James Farm with the help of the family's slaves.

To say that young Jesse had a turbulent life would be an understatement. Added to these early upheavals was his brother going off to war, watching his step-father being hanged from a coffee bean tree in their front yard in 1863, as well as he, himself, being whipped and beaten by local Union soldiers (neighbor boys actually) while out working in the fields. These are just a few of the events Jesse experienced in his young life.

So, how does all of this relate to the title of this article - *Jesse James - Preacher*? Well, throughout his life, Jesse was known to easily quote the Bible and was often in church on Sundays (either under his own name or under the alias of either Thomas Howard or John Davis Howard). Jesse had strong faith in God. After his return from the Civil War, Jesse James attempted to live his life as I know he felt his father would have wanted... by attending church and living the life of a Christian man. Dr. Price, a local minister, remembered that, in 1866, and while still recovering from a gunshot wound to his chest, Jesse attended prayer meetings and prayed fervently and out loud for his sins while never saying what those sins might have been. Jesse had been a Confederate irregular during the war, fighting with the likes of Quantrill and 'Bloody Bill' Anderson. Life at the time of the Reconstruction period in Missouri was not conducive to such an easy transition as former Confederates could no longer preach, teach, or hold office.

Jesse was baptised in 1867 and although records show he was 'excluded' from the Mount Olive Baptist Church in 1869, it was his decision to leave, perhaps to move to his father's old church at New Hope (his sister changed to their congregation). The minutes of the Mount Olive Church show that, in September 1869, two men were chosen to go to the James Farm to find out Jesse's reason for wanting to leave the church. At the October meeting it was realized that these men had, for some reason, neglected this duty and Joseph Flood was added to committee. The minutes for November [below] note Jesse's exclusion from their books.



The reason for Jesse wishing his name removed from the Mount Olive register is often cited as being due to his belief that he was 'no longer worthy'. The well-documented continuation of his faith suggests this sentiment was either reported falsely or was overcome.

Along with the young man's anger at what had happened to not only his family but the entire way of life he had known...to quote the classic Margaret Mitchell book, it was very much "Gone with the Wind"... made him resort to a lifestyle that would eventually cut his own life short. This is in no way attempting to excuse his decision, but maybe to just explain it.



Frank James' trunk at the Jesse James Birthplace.

At Jesse's funeral, the beloved hymn "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" was sung as that was his favorite hymn. It has long been suggested that had the Civil War not come along, Jesse would have likely become a Baptist minister like his father.

Frank, on the other hand, would have likely become a teacher as he loved Shakespeare and Literature and had inherited his father's large book collection. While Frank had requested no religious ceremony at his funeral, it was not due to lack of Faith in God. As Judge John F. Phillips said at his funeral, Frank felt it wasn't necessary to join a church... he felt his sins were forgiven and his soul was saved.

So, had the Civil War not come along and had Frank and Jesse's father, the Reverend Robert James, not gone to the gold fields of California, thus losing his life and ending the influence of a loving father upon his sons, would their lives have turned out differently? If so, then perhaps, rather than reading about the notorious outlaw Jesse James, we would be reading about a man from Missouri that became a well-respected and beloved Southern Baptist minister like his father before him – a man who just happened to have an older brother, Alexander Franklin, the great Shakespearean scholar and educator.

I guess we will just never know.

LINDA EMLEY - Protector and Champion of Ray County History

It is with great sadness that we announce that Linda Emley, the site director of Ray County Museum & Genealogical Society passed away suddenly on Thursday, March 8 at the museum, which was also her home. Linda, as many of you know, worked tirelessly on local history, especially the guerrilla warfare that took place in the area, and she was especially fond of Capt. William T. (Bloody Bill) Anderson. She was also responsible for getting some of the historic markers placed in the city of Richmond and other outlying areas marking the Battle of Albany where Anderson was killed in 1864.

This photo of Linda was taken during a trip to St. Joseph, Mo., in 2012. A group of us James historians had driven to St. Joe to visit the house where Jesse was killed and the site where the house once stood. Linda was standing, watching the rest of the gals look at the site and marker that is placed there. She loved history – *Liz Johnson*



The Jesse James Birthplace has received a donation from the James Country Mercantile in Liberty, Missouri, in honor of Linda Emley.

THE LIFE AND TRIALS OF THOMAS AYLESBURY

It could have been said that Thomas Aylesbury had everything he wanted.

Born in Pittsville, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania on 20 March 1836 to Robert and Dorothy Aylesbury, Thomas found his trade in carpentry. He married Harriet Hill, a native of England who had emigrated with her family to Pennsylvania, in 1856. Over the coming years, they were blessed with ten children; Charles, Ella, Ida, Thomas, Mary, Harry, Ethel, Stella, Winifred and Benjamin.

In 1860, Thomas took a construction job in Kewanee, Illinois before seeking employment with the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railway Company, spending five years in the car department and three years as foreman of their coach building department.

On May 1, 1872, he started working for the Kansas City, St. Joseph & Council Bluffs Railway Company, making a name for himself as a capable and entirely reliable employee. By 1880, the city directory was listing Thomas Aylesbury as a railroad carpenter.

He was a member of the Master Car Builders' Association of the United States and Canada, was on the committee for automatic freight train brakes, worked hard alongside other prominent residents of St Joseph to improve the water systems there and served two terms as the people's choice for councilman of St Joseph's Fifth Ward. "Mr Aylesbury is a new man," a reporter declared during the elections in 1876, "an intelligent mechanic, who never in his life sought any office. He is the representative of the working men in the city and will be triumphantly elected." The newspaper believed that with Aylesbury and fellow candidate P. H. Early as Republican candidates in the council, "the interests of the taxpayers will be in safe hands."

Then, in February 1880, everything changed.

At that time, Councilman Aylesbury was living in St Joseph, Missouri, in a little white house that stood way up high on a hill – 1318 Lafayette Street. It was a home that commanded spectacular views across the city all the way to the Missouri river, but it was also a home that would remind Thomas Aylesbury of nothing but sadness.

On 19 February 1880, the St Joseph Gazette reported the news that "Mamie and Estelle, daughters of Thomas Aylesbury, Councilman from the Fifth Ward, died of diphtheria yesterday." It was a terrible tragedy and the newspaper reporter was sure that, "the many friends of the family will sympathise with them in this double sorrow." Unfortunately for the family though, the heart ache did not rest there. Forced to attend the funeral of his daughters alone due to the same illness having struck his wife, Thomas Aylesbury was informed of the death of a third child, youngest son, Harry, during the ceremony. "A more sorrowful visitation," the newspaper concluded, "can hardly be imagined."

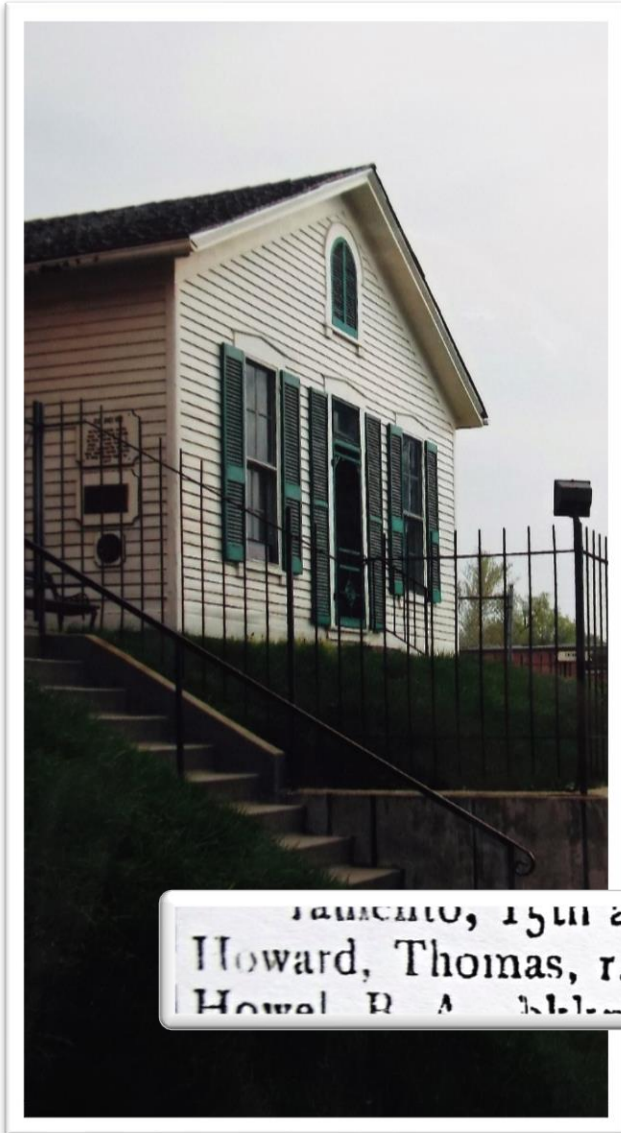


BY MICHELLE POLLARD

1	1	Aylesbury Tho ^d	W	7/24	Husband	1	Car Builder
		- Harriet	W	8/42	Wife	1	Keeping House
		- Charles	W	7/22	Son	1	Commercial Agt
		- Ella	W	7/19	Daughter	1	At Home
		- Ida	W	7/17		1	
		- Thomas	W	7/15	Son	1	School
		- Mary	W	7/12	Daughter	1	
		- Harry	W	7/8	Col	1	
		- Ethel	W	7/7 1/2	D	1	Home
		- Stella	W	7/5	D	1	

The desperately sad entry for the Aylesbury family in the 1880 census

Soon thereafter, on 6 March 1880, Aylesbury lost re-election to the city council by six votes and in May, the family decided to rent out the House on the Hill. The description in the local press read: Frame house, 7 rooms, Lafayette, bet. 13th and 14th; 2 cisterns, stable, &c... 15.00.



St. Joseph Daily Gazette - May 15, 1880
 Frame house, 7 rooms, Lafayette, bet.
 13th and 14th; 2 cisterns, stable, &c... 15 00

The house had witnessed much heart ache and it was time to leave all that behind. But, to coin a dramatic phrase – the end was not yet.

On Christmas Eve, 1881, the house, then owned by a Mrs Thallton, was rented for \$14 a month by 'Thomas Howard', his wife, Zee, their two children, 'Tim' and Mary, and 'Charley Johnson', a cousin. Mr Howard spent much of his time at home, enjoyed playing pool and didn't seem to have a job. In truth, of course, 'Mr Howard' was Jesse James and his cousin was Charley Ford.

On 3 April 1882, Jesse James became the fourth person to die at the House on the Hill, turning the home that had once been discarded as a reminder of the worst kind of memories into an overnight success as a morbid curiosity.

What once Thomas Aylesbury had spurned, his fellow citizens chipped off and kept.

Howard, Thomas, r. 13th, se. cor. Lafayette.

Jesse's entry in the 1882 St Joseph City Directory.

In the years that followed, the Aylesbury family moved on. Harriet survived her bout with illness and Thomas made a name for himself singing at various events as part of a local quartet. He continued his work on the railroad until the Mexico Missouri Message of 20 November 1902, under the headline 'Appointed General Foreman', announced that "William Baird, car inspector for the Burlington at Lincoln has been appointed general foreman of the company's car shops at St. Joseph, succeeding Thomas Aylesbury, resigned."

Thomas passed away on 23 May 1905, aged 69, and is buried at the Mount Mora Cemetery, St Joseph, Missouri.

Sources:

Biographical Sketch of Thomas Aylesbury, St. Joseph, Buchanan County, Mo., *History of Buchanan County, Missouri, Published 1881*, St. Joseph, Steam Printing Company, St. Joseph, Missouri.

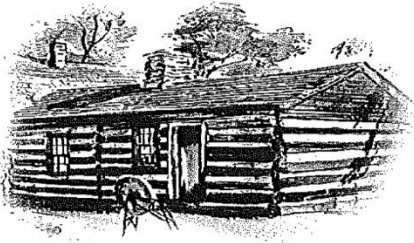
St Joseph Daily Morning Herald, 4 April 1876.

Burial Records at Mount Mora cemetery.

Find A Grave website.

Friends of the James Farm

c/o Jesse James Birthplace
21216 Jesse James Farm Road
Kearney, MO 64060
www.jessejames.org
816.736.8500



James homestead cabin —
Original art by Jim Hamil

Return Service Requested

YES, I want to renew my membership with the Friends of the James Farm or begin a new membership. I have checked my level of membership in the box and enclosed a check or money order for the amount indicated.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ Country: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Please mail membership form and payment to:

Friends of the James Farm
c/o Jesse James Birthplace
21216 Jesse James Farm Road
Kearney, MO 64060



You can also scan
QR Code to visit our
website.
www.jessejames.org

Membership Levels

(Mark One)

- Bushwhacker \$25
- Clay County Irregular . . . \$50
- Road Agent \$100
- Long Rider \$250
- Home Guard \$500

Is this a renewal? Yes No

Outside the continental U.S.,
please add \$5 to your membership
contribution.