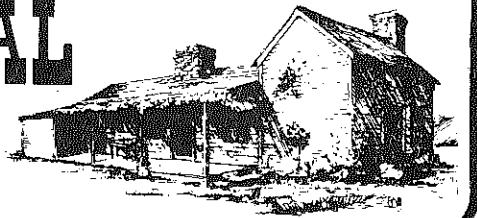


JAMES FARM JOURNAL

Newsletter of
"FRIENDS OF THE JAMES FARM"



VOLUME 1 • NUMBER 1

SEPTEMBER — 1982

James Family Reunion

The Friends of the James Farm sponsored the first reunion of the James family at the Farm June 19th. It couldn't have been more successful! More than 200 relatives from 22 states attended. They enjoyed themselves so much that the reunion will be an annual affair of the Board of the Friends.

The weather was perfect; in the mid-70's, bright and pleasant. (We had feared continuation of torrential rains that had inundated the area for weeks — in fact, only a few days previous, flash floods had closed roads leading to the Farm!) The rolling fields of the farm were a lovely green and birds were everywhere.

Edward J. Bauman, Presiding Judge of the Clay County Administrative Court, told how he led the movement so Clay County could acquire the Farm in 1978.

Visitors were taken on guided tours of the cabin and its restoration explained to them.

Several prominent writers told of experiences in researching their books on the Jameses. For instance, William Settle, Jr., whose book "Jesse James Was His Name" is the only documented biography, told how he came to write the book (it began as a college paper and was a second choice due to the absence of a teacher) and related some of his experiences during research, including trying to track down the story of Jesse helping the widow with money to pay off the mortgage and relieving the banker of it afterwards.

Margaret Baldwin, whose book "Wanted: Frank and Jesse James", has recently been published, was entertaining as she related that story with relish.

Martin McGrane, of Pierre of South Dakota, showed us a copy of the new edition of his "History of the James Farm". All of them willingly autographed copies of their books.

Wade Hampton Millar, known as the best of mountain dulcimer players, gave a concert which included a version of "The Ballad of Jesse James". Millar autographed copies of his new album.

A limited edition of the Jesse James centennial belt buckle was placed on sale as were special mail covers cancelled on the centennial of the death and burial of Jesse James.

Relatives renewed old acquaintances and met others for the first time. The nearest living relatives to Jesse were Lawrence Barr, a grandson, and James Ross, a great-grandson. Descendants of Susan James Parmer, Frank and Jesse's sister; of Fannie Samuel, their half sister; of Thomas Martin James and John R. James, their uncles, were present, as were many cousins from other lines such as the Woodsons, Coles, Lindsays, etc.

Mr. Ross related how his grandmother, Mrs. Jesse E. James, took three of the best known imposters of Jesse James to court — and won every time. He also explained that though Twentieth Century Fox studios purchased the film rights to a biography of Jesse James his mother had written, they proceeded to completely rewrite it for the movie "Jesse James", starring Tyrone Power and Henry Fonda. After seeing it, she remarked that the only similarities between Powers and her grandfather were they both were named Jesse James and "both rode a horse!"

Three Kansas City TV stations sent teams and their coverage was used on national news programs as was a story by the Associated Press. Several local papers also ran articles. "Dixie," the magazine of the New Orleans Times-Picayune, featured the reunion in a 6 page illustrated article on July 25.

The Hoenix VI Corporation of Kirkwood, Missouri, had filmed extensively for a documentary to be released later.

You can be sure there will be a reunion in 1983!

Historic Claybrook House

Diagonally across the road from the James Farm is a white frame house of truly magnificent proportions. It was built in a modified Greek Revival style in 1858 by George Claybrook, a Virginian. Claybrook owned hundreds of acres of land, a sawmill, a brick kiln and prize-winning fruit orchards. Unfortunately, he lost his plantation after the Civil War when economic conditions made its operation unprofitable.

The next owners, the Robert Chanslor family, lived there for 30 years. When the James cabin was attacked by detectives January 26, 1875 resulting in the death of Archie Peyton Samuel, 8-year-old half-brother of Frank and Jesse James, and loss of the right hand of their mother, Mrs. Zerelda Samuel, by an explosion, Dr. Rice, who was at the Chanslor house rushed to render medical assistance. Later that year, when Daniel Askew, owner of the farm east of the Jameses was killed (many authorities believed Frank and Jesse shot him because he had employed a Pinkerton detective in disguise) Mr. Chanslor sat on the Coroner's jury (Askew had visited him just prior to his murder).

In 1899, Mary James, Jesse's daughter, married Henry Barr, who owned the Claybrook House. Of her 4 children born there, three boys grew to manhood.

In 1976, the last owner, Mrs. Eileen Kelly, donated the house, together with a fund for its restoration, to Clay County. It is now being restored to its former grandeur.

Needed there is furniture of the 1870's or earlier, floor coverings, draperies, china, household items of all kinds. Gifts will be gratefully acknowledged.

James Historic Sites Wanted

We are compiling a listing of historic sites associated with the Jameses. These include any buildings or sites with which Frank and Jesse, or their family or the "James-Younger" gang may have had a connection. Included will be houses, banks, hotels, farms, caves, etc. If you know of any, please send the information to the Farm. We intend publishing facts about them in the next issue of the Journal.

Frank James Jail Cell Restored

The Jackson County Historical Society in Independence, Mo., is having a cell in the restored Jail and Marshall's House furnished the way it was when Frank James was kept there in late 1882 awaiting trial. He lived well: Brussels carpet on the floor, fine furniture, with pictures on the wall supplied by well wishers. It will contrast mightily with the severities of the other cells.

James Farm Restoration

This year the restoration of the James Farm has proceeded according to plan. The old smokehouse and board fence around the house have been completed. Old photos show the white picket front gate, which we found in the smokehouse. It has been restored and installed. Copies will be placed on the side entrances.

The smokehouse was originally a story and a half building. However, before the turn of the century it acquired its present configuration. Last summer, an archaeological dig around the foundation was conducted.

To the rear of the lot is the old "slave quarter" which was later used as a grainery and storage shed. It, too, is being restored to its original appearance. Sometime in the early 20th century, it was coated with clapboards, which helped preserve the original board and batten exterior, together with traces of red paint.

A Dog-Gone Story

After attending the James Reunion, Phyllis and Don Johnson of Indianapolis, visited the beautiful Country Club Plaza district of Kansas City. There, they saw a wire-haired terrier running in the street traffic. Afraid he would get hit, Mr. Johnson went into the street and picked up the dog. After failing to locate an agency that was open on the weekend to take the dog, they decided to carry him with them back to Indiana. There, the Johnsons contacted the Lost Dog Registry, a nationwide lost dog clearing house. It turned out that Asta's (that's his name) owner, Mrs. Kay Tenenbaum of Kansas City had missed the dog Friday afternoon and contacted the Registry. When the Johnsons reported him, Mrs. Tenenbaum was contacted.

The upshot of it all was that Asta is home now — returned by TWA jet to his owner. He travelled in an approved cage, full of shots to satisfy airline regulations.

Signs Of Our Times

The Best Western Motel in Adair, Iowa, is called the "Jesse James Motel" and it advertises in that chain's guide that it is located "near the site of the train robbery by Jesse James."

In Pineville, Missouri, where the movie "Jesse James" starring Tyrone Power and Henry Fonda was filmed in 1939 is a "Jesse James Liquor Store" (!) and in St. Joseph, Missouri, is another Jesse James Motel. At the adjacent (you guessed it) Jesse James Service Station they used to advertise their gas "For a Quick Getaway." And how about the "Jesse Jeans" advertised on TV, ("They Ought to be Outlawed") and lastly, the X-rated motion picture actress Jesse St. James? If you have contributions for this list, please send them to us for publication.

Cole Younger House Saved

At times Providence (and the Friends) steps in to save old houses.

For years, a lovely old house in the southern part of Lee's Summit, Missouri, 25 miles south of the James Farm stood empty and forlorn, even though it was once lived in by Cole Younger and family. Attempts to have previous owners restore it had failed and a demolition order was issued.

At this juncture, Marley Brant, of Los Angeles, member of the Friends Board, who is writing and producing a TV drama about Bob Younger, one of Cole's brothers, made known her interest in trying to save the house. Wilbur Zink,

our President, and a student of the Youngers, contacted the new owners and discovered the only reason the house hadn't been torn down was because the wrecker's truck had gotten stuck in front of it! The result was that Dick Woods, of Occidental Insurance, generously gave Marley the house if she would move it. She contracted with the wrecker to tear it down, after Milt numbered various parts and made many photos of the house.

Rustic wainscoating and chair rail was discovered under plasterboard in the parlor; beneath plasterboard ceilings was found original ceilings of wood planks. Though vandals had torn the parlor mantel apart, every piece was located and fitted together. The original staircase had been moved, but was still there, tucked behind a wall. Exterior clapboard, much of it walnut, and a good deal of the wide oak floors were saved, together with wooden pegged framing. Though Marley will have to hang these elements on a new frame, she will have the most important architectural elements of the old house when she gets ready to rebuild it.

A Cryptic Discovery

Among books in the library at the James Farm is "Thaddeus of Warsaw", by "Miss Mary Jane Porter", a tedious novel published in 1878. It has the name "James Riley," of Memphis, Tennessee, a prominent citizen and a confederate veteran, evidently a friend of Frank James.

Written in pencil on the fly leaf in Frank's handwriting is "Page 67". On that page is a letter written by one of the novel's characters to his mother, con-

taining the following: "I know I have disobeyed your commands, in ever having at any period of my life taken up arms without an indispensable necessity; and I have nothing to allege in my defense. I fell in the way of temptation, and yielded to it."

Could Frank have had this book delivered to his mother calling her attention to this passage? Frank did not surrender until 1882, but he had spent many months having second thoughts about his caper.

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1982 ANNUAL MEETING

FRIENDS OF THE JAMES FARM
Kearney, Missouri
Friday, September 17, 1982

- 1:00 P.M. Welcome
- 1:15 P.M. Business Meeting
- 2:00 P.M. "Frank James' Surrender" — Pat O'Brien, co-author: "Wanted: Frank and Jesse James"
- 3:00 P.M. "Trial of Frank James in Missouri" — N. David Smith, Historical Interpreter, Claybrook House
- 4:00 P.M. Tours of James Farm and Claybrook House, home of Mary James Barr, Jesse James' daughter.
- 5:00 P.M. United Rodeo Association of America Championship Finals Rodeo
- 8:00 P.M. Barbeque: James Farm

Registration Fee: \$12.00 Per Person
Due September 8, 1982

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY:

Individual	\$20.00 per year
Family	\$30.00 per year
Student	\$15.00 per year
Supporting	\$50.00 per year
Benefactor	\$100.00 or more per year
Corporate	\$100.00 or more per year

(MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO FRIENDS OF THE JAMES FARM)

RETURN TO:

"FRIENDS OF THE JAMES FARM"

Route 2 • Box 236
Kearney, Missouri 64060