

The Cumberland County (New Jersey) Jays

...confirming DNA and how they relate

Presented at the 2016 JFA Reunion, this paper represents the most current research position as developed by the JFA Research Committee based on the latest DNA testing. I would like to thank Guy Perry for his research help in preparing this report...it was invaluable.

Background

During the 20th century many specific Jay surnamed individuals were noted as recorded in early southern New Jersey (NJ) government documents. The earliest of which, a John Jay, can be found in Salem County (Co.) in 1708. Cassius Milton Jay used this individual as the key linchpin character in his hypothesis (now proven incorrect and invalid) tying his ancestor, William Jay (m. Mary Vestal) to the Thomas Joy family of Hingham, Massachusetts. This John Jay is listed as individual #1001 in the 1963 published Jay Family Index (JFI); however, his ancestry is incorrect and his listed children cannot be proven.

While John Jay of Alloways Creek, Salem Co. NJ did exist (we have nicknamed him "Cattlemark John")...only scant information remains...not enough to develop any semblance of a life story. He is assumed to be captured by the following data points: ¹

- 1708, May John Jay of Salem Co. NJ attests two different deeds for Jacob Spicer
- 1708, June Cattlemark of John Jay recorded in Salem Co. NJ
- 1711, Apr John Jay involved in the estate of Charles Oakford and wife Margaret
- 1715, Jan John Jay [Jey] received payments from the estate of William Hall
- 1737, Jan John Jay's note listed in the inventory of Richard Hudson

From that period (early 1700s) forward, additional data points show identifiable Jay surnamed males and families residing in Cumberland Co. (Cumberland was created out of Salem in 1748) to about 1830. This span covers approximately 4-5 generations.

Unfortunately, New Jersey's earliest federal census schedules (1790-1820) have not survived which makes it extremely difficult to sort-out the specific Jay families who lived there during the period. Additionally, for the most part, these families were not land owners. This fact also impedes the ability to trace their comings and goings.

With that stated, the generations of male Jays in Cumberland (& Salem) Co. NJ can be roughly listed as follows: ²

No Headline (Advertisement)
Date: 1825-07-16; Paper: Washington Whig

Creditors take Notice.

That we have applied to the Judges of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas in and for the County of Cumberland, and they have appointed Tuesday the 19th day of July next, at 10 o'clock A. M. at the Court House in Bridgeton to hear what can be said or alleged for or against our liberation from arrest or confinement as Insolvent Debtors.

ABIJAH BLEW,
JOSEPH JAY,
his
WILLIAM CONOVER,
mark
BENJAMIN BLIZARD,
EBENEZER SEELEY Jr.
DANIEL CARRALL,
STEPHEN JONES.

June 11th, 1825. 33

Generation 1

John Jay of Alloways Creek, Salem Co. NJ (Cattlemark John)

Generation 2

John Jay (perhaps but not necessarily the same individual as directly below)
Jonathan Jay (perhaps but not necessarily the individual noted directly above)

Generation 3³

John Jay
Reuben Jay
Jacob Jay

Generation 4⁴

John Jay (Jr. of John, migrated to Ohio ca1817)
Wilson Jay (War of 1812 participant, died Ft. Washington NY 1816)
James Jay (reference in name only in documents, final demise unknown)
David Jay (War of 1812 veteran, died in PA between 1815-1820)
*Martin W. Jay (War of 1812 pensioner, migrated to Ohio ca1817)
Jonathan Jay (reference in name only in documents, final demise unknown)
Joseph Jay (reference in name only in newspaper, final demise unknown)

Generation 5

Reuben English Jay (son of David above) b1808⁵
Martin W. Jay Jr. (son of Martin W. Jay above) b1817⁶
*Rev. Lorenzo Dow Jay (son of John Jay Jr. above) b1814⁷
other male descendants of **Generation 4**

Recent DNA Testing

First and foremost, it should be stated that living male surnamed Jay descendants, suitable for Y-DNA testing, from this group are quite scarce...perhaps as few as five (5) individuals. Finding and securing DNA donors from this family has been extremely difficult.

In 2012 the JFA tested a documented descendant of the *Rev. Lorenzo Dow Jay 1814-1886. His Y-DNA marker sequence matched that of two other identified colonial Jay lines; however, the Rev. Jay's father was unproven at the time of the test. His historical statements and obituary⁸ did lead us to believe he descended from the Cumberland Co. Jay group. Since that time JFA researcher Guy Perry has pieced together a compelling evidentiary documentary that can be accepted as factual...the Rev. Lorenzo Dow Jay b1814 was the son of Cumberland born John Jay (Jr.) and his second wife, Rhoda Westcott.⁹

In order to have a higher confidence level in our research, the JFA continued to look for another more 'proven' Cumberland Jay descendant to confirm the 2012 test result. In 2015 we were contacted by Ruth Tolmasoff, a descendant of *Martin W. Jay bca1785, a confirmed Cumberland Co. Jay. She arranged a DNA test for a confirmed male descendant of Martin W. Jay's great grandson Julius Jay. The JFA paid for this test and the results are identical to the Rev. Lorenzo D. Jay's marker sequence.

Who are they related to?

Most importantly, the ancestors of the donors are certainly closely **related to each other**. We don't specifically know how... but Martin W. Jay bca1785 was probably a 1st cousin once-removed to the Rev. Lorenzo Dow Jay b1814. They both are Cumberland Co. (NJ) Jays and related by a common ancestor.

Their Y-DNA sequence also **matches that of Joseph Jay b1753**, Revolutionary War Patriot, who was born in Burlington Co. NJ. His Revolutionary War pension application and affidavit details his life and residences in New Jersey in great detail. Based on tax and voter records of Burlington Co., it is assumed that this Joseph Jay had a father named Joseph also.



Their Y-DNA sequence also **matches that of William Jay b1711 (m Mary Vestal)**, who migrated from the Virginia frontier to North Carolina and died in District 96 South Carolina. While William Jay is first documented in 1734 patenting land in the Great Neck of Virginia, it can be confirmed that other prominent Burlington Co. NJ citizens did the same. Quaker Robert Worthington migrated out of southwestern NJ to western Virginia and gained grants near William Jay in the same year. While we do not know the origins of William Jay, this DNA match (along with the previous match of Joseph Jay b1753) certainly provides much evidence of New Jersey ties.

Who is not related to this group?

Most individuals carrying the Jay surname are usually interested in any potential relationship to the esteemed Founding Father and 1st Chief Justice John Jay. With these test results it can be conclusively stated that the Cumberland Co. NJ Jay family ARE NOT related to nor do they descend from the Chief Justice.

A new View and Summary

The JFA DNA Study has now matched three (3) specific colonial Jay families. It can now be unequivocally stated that the family and descendants of **William Jay bca1711, Joseph Jay b1753** and those **Jays emanating out of Salem/Cumberland Co. NJ** are related by a common ancestor. The New Jersey connection is a tantalizing factor also.

History tells us that southwestern New Jersey and the Delaware River basin was settled early by Quakers and those associated with Quakers. Cattlemark John can certainly be documented associating with

Quakers as early as 1711.¹⁰ The JFA research committee assumes all documented Cumberland Co. Jays probably descend from Cattlemark John.

William Jay bca1711 (m. Mary Vestal) and Joseph Jay b1753, COULD descend directly from Cattlemark John but that cannot be proven. They COULD as easily be related by a common ancestor back in the British Isles from generations earlier...at this point we just don't know.

What we do know is they are all related....and that's more that we could ever prove in the past.

Respectfully submitted,



Vince King
March 2018

¹ It is assumed by the JFA Research Committee that the John Jay references from 1708-1737 are the same individual.

² Jay Family Association Research Committee Members have generally referred to these individuals and their descendants as the "Cumberland Co. (NJ) Jays". It is assumed that the entire group is related and most probably all descend from Cattlemark John.

³ It is assumed the males of Generation 3 are related and most likely brothers. If they are not brothers they are 1st cousins.

⁴ Reasoned assumptions can be made regarding the relationships between Generation 3 and Generation 4...i.e. who were the fathers of each; however, to-date none can be specifically proven.

⁵ JFI #4169, ancestry incorrect

⁶ Descendant of Martin W. Jay Jr's grandson, Julius, is a DNA donor and was tested in 2015.

⁷ Based on the preponderance of a substantial amount of evidence, it is assumed with confidence that the Rev. Lorenzo Dow Jay 1814-1886 is a son of John Jay, Jr. A descendant of the Rev. L.D. Jay is a DNA donor who was tested in 2012.

⁸ At his death, the Indiana Methodist Conference published the following death notice:

Rev. Lorenzo D. Jay was born in New Jersey, November 6, 1814. He was left an orphan in his early childhood. His mother died when he was four, and his father when he was six years old. Though bereft of his parents at so early an age, his remembrance of them was quite vivid. He remembered that on one occasion his mother called him to her, and, after singing a favorite hymn, fervently prayed that God would call her son to the ministry. Here his childish heart received an impression that was lasting. In 1820 he was taken to Ohio, where he found a home until he entered the ministry. He was converted, and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church at eighteen years of age, and soon afterward was licensed to preach. He

spent four years as a missionary in Kentucky. He was transferred to the Indiana Conference in 1859. In this Conference he served the following charges: Centerville, Livonia, Waverly, Stainford, and Hardinsburg, each two years. At the end of the term of service failing health compelled his superannuation. After three years' rest, he was made effective, and traveled the Taylorsville, Lynnville, Troy, and Oil Creek Circuits. Then he again took a superannuated relation, and made his home at Troy. He was married to Margaret Merrill, of Clermont County, Ohio, May 25, 1841. Four children were born of this union. He was held in high esteem by his ministerial brethren as a faithful minister of our Lord Jesus Christ. The people whom he served regarded him as a man of God. As a preacher, he was clear and forcible. His style was argumentative, and his discourses were enriched by abundant Biblical quotations. On the 1st day of September, 1886, he fell from a wagon and broke his leg, from the effects of which he died eleven days afterward. His sufferings were borne with great patience, and death found him ready. In great peace his spirit was yielded up to God on Sunday, September 12, 1886. Appropriate funeral services were held by Revs. H. J. Talbott, J. A. Ward, and J. Gharnes. He was buried in the cemetery at Troy, Indiana, and his grave was covered with flowers by the children of the Sunday school, of which he was the superintendent.

⁹ The death notice provided in the above footnote outlines basic information about the Rev. Jay, but gave no clues as to his parentage and scant clues about his origins. A search of Ohio records and genealogies from 1820-1850 revealed two female Jay marriages in the area...that of Sarah Jay to John Brooks and Hannah Jay to Brown Gillespie.

The Brooks-Jay genealogies reference 1848 Cumberland Co., NJ land deeds which identify Sarah Jay Brooks as the daughter of John Jay and Phebe Westcott of Cumberland Co., NJ. Additional Cumberland Co., NJ land deeds identify this same John Jay as married to Phebe Westcott before 1809 and then her sister Rhoda Westcott before 1817.

The property referenced was the inheritance of Phebe and Rhoda Westcott and identified in a division of the Daniel Westcott estate in 1793 in Cumberland Co., NJ. This division identified the children of Daniel Westcott as James Westcott and his seven sisters: Sarah, Priscilla, Hannah, Rachel, Elizabeth, Rhoda, and Phebe. John Jay married sisters Rhoda and Phebe.

The 1820 census of Ohio reveals that John Jay (with 2 sons under 10), James Westcott, and many other Cumberland Co., NJ families had migrated to Hamilton Co., OH by that time. Cumberland Co., NJ deed records confirm and a number of Ohio genealogies state that many families relocated from Cumberland Co., NJ to Hamilton Co., OH in 1817. James Westcott died in 1826 and left a will in Hamilton Co., OH. His will also refers to the land he purchased from John Jay in Cumberland Co., NJ.

Because John Jay was the only Jay in this specific area of Ohio at this time, it seems likely that the two males under 10 were son John Jay (mentioned as deceased in the 1848 deed) and Lorenzo D. Jay. This identification fits with Lorenzo's death notice information. As a result of this research and evidence, it seems clear that Rev. Lorenzo D. Jay was the son of John Jay and Rhoda Westcott of Cumberland Co., NJ. Lorenzo was born in Ohio in 1814 and the family migrated to Green township, Hamilton Co., OH in 1817.

¹⁰ Charles and Margaret Oakford were both practicing Friends in the Salem MM. John Jay, along with other Quakers, was involved in their estate settlement as noted earlier.