

ELIZABETH M. ABBOTT and FAMILY
 Daughter of Moody Abbott and Martha W. Lindsey of Halifax County, Virginia

Research Report by Joan Horsley
 Based on research as of Sept 2013
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 See notes at the end of the report

ELIZABETH M. ABBOTT, daughter of Moody Abbott and Martha W. Lindsey
 Born: Abt. 1828, Halifax County, VA; Died: Bet. 1880-1900, Rockingham County, NC
 Married first: 30 Jan 1843, Halifax County, VA to Jesse T. Robertson
 (Married second: 1872, Rockingham County, NC to Jonathan G. Watkins, d. 1872-1880)

JESSE THOMAS ROBERTSON, son of Christopher Robertson and his first wife (unknown)
 Born: Abt. 1816, Halifax County, VA; Died: Bet. 1870-1880, Rockingham County, NC

CHILDREN of ELIZABETH M. ABBOTT and JESSE T. ROBERTSON
 William W. Robertson, Christopher Moody Robertson (m. Emma Lee Anderson), Martha
 "Mattie" Frances Robertson (m. Richard Thomas Fitzgerald), Thomas D. Robertson (m.
 Henrietta Dallas)

ELIZABETH M. ABBOTT was born in Halifax County, VA abt. 1828, the only child of Moody Abbott and Martha W. Lindsey, who married in 1826. Martha died either in childbirth or within two years after, as she is deceased by the 1830 census. Moody never remarried but raised his daughter surrounded by seven of his siblings and/or their families. His older sisters Elizabeth Abbott and Martha Abbott, both unmarried, lived with their unmarried brother John Abbott probably on part of Moody's appreciable land, and they apparently became like mothers to the young Elizabeth. Elizabeth was the ultimate legatee of the valuable estates of the two sisters, as well as sole heir of Moody's estate. (See report on Elizabeth and Martha Abbott for details.) In all three legacies, the greatest part of their wealth was in slaves, who were emancipated shortly after Moody's death 1862.

Elizabeth M. Abbott married Jesse Thomas Robertson (b. c1816) in Halifax Co, VA by bond of 30 Jan 1843. Her father, Moody Abbott, was Jesse's bondsman. [Halifax Marriage Bond Register] Elizabeth was only abt. 15 years old, but apparently Moody's formal consent has not survived. Jesse was then abt. age 27.

"Jesse T. Robertson," as he is named on the marriage bond and his father's will, was a son of Christopher Robertson, whose 1857 Halifax will names Jesse among Christopher's four children "by my first wife" (not named). [HWB25:479] The will proves that Jesse's sister was Eliza A. Robertson (b. c1814), who married Wesley M. Abbott in 1834. Wesley was Elizabeth's cousin, a son of Moody Abbott's brother William Abbott, and by her marriage, Wesley became her brother-in-law as well. Also named in Christopher Robertson's will as children by his first wife are Pleasant C. Robertson and William W. Robertson, the latter being the name of Elizabeth and Jesse's first child.

Elizabeth and Jesse's other two sons are named Christopher Moody Robertson, each of their fathers' names, and Thomas D. Robertson, named after his father, Jesse T., who, according to the following deed also went by "Thomas":

Date: 9 Jun 1843
 From: Moody Abbott
 To: Elizabeth M. Robertson
 For: the natural love and affection I bear for my daughter Elizabeth M. wife of Thomas Robertson [ie, Jesse T. Robertson]
 Description: 200 acres to be cut off the tract on which I now reside commencing at Jas. P. Roberts line
 Signed: Moody Abbott
 Witnesses: None
 Recorded 9 Jun 1843
 [Source: Halifax Deed Book 48, p. 557. LVA Reel 23. Abstract by J. Horsley. Comments in brackets added.]

 This land was just southeast of today's Crystal Hill, VA in north-central Halifax, part of the land where Elizabeth was born and raised, as was her father. (I have found no record of what became of this land or the rest of Moody's land he owned at his death.)

Between 1846, when their first child was born, and 1850, Elizabeth and Jesse moved about 60 miles southwest over the state line to Rockingham County, NC, where they lived the rest of their lives.

 1850 - Rockingham Co, NC - Eastern District
 Robertson, J T - 34 - Real Est: \$1,400 - VA [Jesse T. Robertson]
 E M - 22 - VA [Elizabeth M. Abbott Robertson]
 Wm W - 4 - VA [William W. Robertson]

 1857: Jesse's father, Christopher Robertson, wrote his will 15 Jul 1857, proved in Halifax Court 26 Oct 1857. The will devised three tracts of land jointly to Jesse and his three full siblings. In 1858, Jesse and Elizabeth sold his share to Elizabeth's cousin and Jesse's brother-in-law Wesley M. Abbott, also a legatee by right of his wife, Eliza Ann Robertson.

 Date: 7 Apr 1858
 From: Jesse T. Robertson & Elizabeth wife of Rockingham Co., NC
 To: Wesley M. Abbott of Halifax
 For: \$650
 Description: All our interest in three tracts of land in Halifax Co. which we inherited by the will of Christopher Robertson dec'd
 Bounds: First tract: 289 acres, called the Winns Creek Tract, bounded by William Bailey, Pleasant C. Robertson [brother of Jesse], Edward J. Owen [grandson of Hatcher Owen & Mary Abbott, sister of Moody and William Abbott], "and others"
 Second tract: 135 acres, called the Carlton [Carleton] Tract, bounded by Richard Logan, James S. Easley, "and others"
 Third tract: 20.5 acres, called the Epps Tract, bounded by James Young, Joseph C. Terry, and Banister River
 Signed: Jesse T. Robertson, Elizabeth M. Robertson
 Release of Dower by Elizabeth M. Robertson, wife of Jesse T. Robertson
 Recorded: *6 Apr 1858 - Halifax Clerk's Office - Acknowledged by Jesse T. Robertson & Elizabeth M. Robertson
 *Note: The deed is dated 7 Apr but the record date is 6 Apr. The pen stroke makes some mentions of Jesse's middle initial look like "F," but in other places it is written clearly as "T,"

which is correct. [Source: Halifax Deed Book 57, p. 480-482. LVA Reel 27. Abstract by J. Horsley. Comments in brackets added.]

Note:

The primary tract at Winns Creek was just S-SW of the land Moody deeded to Elizabeth.

1860 - Rockingham Co, NC - Northern Division - PO: Mayfield
 Roberson[sic], Jessie T - 43 - Farmer - Real Est: \$9,000, Pers Est: \$14, 000 - VA
 Elizabeth - 32 - VA
 William - 14 - VA
 Christopher - 7 - NC
 Martha - 5 - NC
 Thomas - 2 - NC
 Infant - 15 days old - male - NC [did not survive]

Note:

According to the age spread between sons William and Christopher, Elizabeth apparently lost several children between them. As noted, the newborn here also did not survive. The eldest son, William, was not found after this census nor in online marriage records and apparently died before 1870, as did his father, Jesse.

1862: Elizabeth's father Moody Abbott died intestate in Halifax County, VA in 1862, and J. T. Robertson was granted administration of the estate. Jesse submitted the final estate accounts of Moody Abbott, dec'd, on 22 Feb 1864 in Halifax Court. [HWB28:421]

Jesse Thomas Robertson died between Feb 1864 and the 1870 census.

1869: Elizabeth and Jesse's daughter "Martha F. Robertson" married 7 Nov 1869 to "R. T. Fitzgerald" [Source: "North Carolina, Marriages, 1759-1979," index, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/F8CN-T9M>), citing GS Film number 518423]

Martha is called Mattie in the 1870 and 1920 census. Online abstracts of birth, marriage, and death records for their children list his full name as Richard Thomas Fitzgerald.

1870 - Oregonville Township, Rockingham Co, NC - PO: Ruffin
 Robertson, Elizabeth - 41 - Keeping house - Real Est: \$6,500, Pers Est: \$700 - VA
 Christopher M - 17 - Farm laborer - NC
 Thomas D - 12 - At home - NC
 Fitzgerald, R T - 32 - Farmer - married Nov 1869 - b. NC [Richard Thomas Fitzgerald]
 Mattie F - 15 - At home - married Nov 1869 - b. NC [nee Martha Robertson]

1872: Elizabeth M. Abbott Robertson, named as E. M. Robertson, married Jonathan G. Watkins in Rockingham County in 1872 (no month/day given).
 [Source: "North Carolina, Marriages, 1759-1979," index, FamilySearch, citing FHL microfilm 518423]

He may be the John G. Watkins, b. c1815, who is married and living in Rockingham in 1860. Elizabeth's second husband, J. G. Watkins, died before 1880, when she is listed as widowed and living with her two sons and an Abbott cousin:

1880 - Oregonville, Rockingham Co, NC
 Robertson, Christopher - 27 - Farmer
 WATKINS, ELIZABETH - 50 - mother - widowed - VA

Robertson, Thos. - 23 - brother - Farmer
 Abbott, Georgia - 25 - cousin - Teaching school
 Murphy, Fannie - 22 - laborer - Cook
 Maggie - 1 - child [of Fannie]

Also several farm laborers

Note:

Georgia Abbott is the daughter of Elizabeth's cousin Joseph M. Abbott (b. c1824) who had grown up with Elizabeth. Joseph's father was Elizabeth's uncle Richard Abbott whose family lived next to Elizabeth all her life until Richard left Halifax just after her marriage. Richard's son Joseph M. Abbott and family moved to Rockingham Co, NC abt. 1852. Joseph's daughter Georgia Abbott was a school teacher. In 1880, Georgia is listed as age 29 with her family in Wentworth Township, Rockingham Co.; however, this has to be the same woman with the Robertsons listed as Christopher's cousin. (There is no other Georgia Abbott anywhere in the area in the 1870 census.) Double entries often occurred when a person normally lived in one place and were temporarily living elsewhere at the time of the census.

Elizabeth's cousin Richard M. Abbott (Joseph M. Abbott's brother) was living in Oregonville in 1870, as was Elizabeth's family. He moved his family the next year to southern Pittsylvania County, VA, just across the state line. Elizabeth's son Christopher likely met his wife, Emma Anderson of Pittsylvania County, though shared associations with Richard and his family after they moved. (See notes for Christopher for more details.)

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By the 1900 census, Elizabeth M. Abbott Robertson Watkins is deceased.

Her daughter Martha F. Fitzgerald and family are living in Ruffin Township, Rockingham Co, NC.

Her sons Thomas and Christopher are both married and listed next to each other also in Ruffin.

Thomas D. Robertson married Henrietta Dallas on 27 Dec 1899 in Rockingham Co, NC. [Source: "North Carolina, Marriages, 1759-1979," index, FamilySearch, citing FHL microfilm 518424]

Christopher Robertson is listed in the 1900 census as married to wife Emma for 20 years with 4 children. The Rockingham Co. birth record for George Anderson Robertson 21 Aug 1904 lists his parents as Christopher Moody Robertson and Emma Lee Anderson. [Source: "North Carolina, Birth Index, 1800-2000," index, FamilySearch]

Christopher and Emma were living in Danville, VA (Pittsylvania County) in 1910 but not found thereafter.

Martha "Mattie" F. Robertson Fitzgerald died 18 Sep 1923 in Ruffin, NC, where her husband Richard T. Fitzgerald died 11 Jun 1918. They are buried in Ruffin Community Cemetery, Ruffin, Rockingham Co, NC.

[Death dates from grave markers. Photos at www.FindAGrave.com, Memorial #29364667 & #29364656, resp.]

Thomas D. Robertson died in Wentworth Township, Rockingham Co, NC on 6 Oct 1930. [Source: "North Carolina, Deaths, 1931-1994," index, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/FP88-9N7>)]

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This is a fairly complete report that Joan Horsley was working on when she died. There were no notes included in the text that indicated any facts or other lines of inquiry she wanted to pursue. Any correspondence that would have been directed to my late wife should be sent to JHGenResearch-Abbott@yahoo.com

If you use any information from this report, please include the documentation as given here and cite this paper as:

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