

JOSEPH ABBOTT and FAMILY
Son of Benjamin Abbott of Halifax County, Virginia

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

JOSEPH ABBOTT - b. Abt. 1774, Halifax Co., VA; d. 1818, Stokes Co., NC
Married 26 Dec 1796, Halifax Co., VA to Elizabeth Priddy (d/o George Priddy)
ELIZABETH PRIDDY - b. Abt. 1778, d. Abt. 1818, Stokes Co., NC

CHILDREN of JOSEPH ABBOTT and ELIZABETH PRIDDY include:
Nancy Abbott (m. Ezekiel Skelton), Benjamin Abbott (m. Elizabeth Wood), Mary J. Abbott
(m. Samuel Shackelford), Joseph Abbott Jr. (m. name not found), Elisha Abbott (m. name
not found), Peggy Abbott (m. Peter Smith), Levina Abbott (m. William B. Priddy)

JOSEPH ABBOTT, third son of Benjamin and Ann Abbott, was born in Halifax County, VA
abt. 1774. He is enumerated in his father's household in the Halifax personal property tax
lists as a white male age 16 or older beginning in 1791 (1790 list missing), and Joseph first
appears by name at age 21 on 21 Aug 1795. He is listed the same day as his father and his
older brothers Elisha and Armistead, who, like Joseph, were not yet married.

Contrary to repetitive online files with numerous errors, none of this Abbott family was born
in "Maresville," as no town of that name ever existed in Halifax County. Also, none of this
family ever lived or married in Stafford County, VA, another repeated error online. Joseph's
parents lived first at Difficult Creek east of today's Crystal Hill, VA, where Joseph's older
siblings were born. By the time Joseph was born, the family was living abt. 10 miles west at
the Banister River a mile or two upriver from where the town of "Meadsville" (later called
Meadville) was established in 1798.

The year Joseph Abbott turned 21, his father, Benjamin Abbott, sold Joseph part of the land
where they lived on the south side of Banister River at Bye Creek. The part to Joseph was
adjacent to the part of Benjamin's land he deeded to Joseph's oldest brother, Elisha Abbott,
in 1783.

Date: 23 Apr 1795
From: BENJAMIN ABBOTT
To: JOSEPH ABBOTT Jr [son of Benjamin Abbott]
For: For: £50
Description: 115 acres on the South side of Banister River
Bounds: Banister River, James McCraw Jr., ELISHA ABBOTT
Signed: Benj'a Abbott [usual mark is omitted]
Witnesses: None
Recorded: 27 Apr 1795 - Acknowledged in court by Benjamin Abbott
[Source: Halifax Deed Book 16, p. 361. LVA Reel 7. Abstract by J. Horsley. Comments in
brackets added.]

Note:

The "Jr." added here to Benjamin's son Joseph Abbott's name means "the younger" to distinguish him from Benjamin's brother Joseph Abbott (b. c1750) who was the older or "Sr." Joseph Abbott in the county at that time. (Benjamin's father Joseph Abbott was then deceased.)

A year later, Benjamin sold to his son (and Joseph's brother) Armistead Abbott nearby land on the north side of the Banister. As we shall see, this is the land where Joseph settled and first raised his family.

Date: 16 May 1796

From: BENJAMIN ABBOTT

To: ARMISTEAD ABBOT[sic]

For: £100

Description: 100 acres on the south [sic; should be north] side of Banister River, being the same land the said Abbott bought of William Peiremon [spelled Pearman and specified as north side of the river in deed to Benjamin Abbott dated 9 Feb 1788 (HDB14:286)]

Bounds: Banister River, Fowles [also sp. Fowlas], Epperson, Reade [also sp. Reed], and Easley - "Beginning at Fowless corner on the Bank of s'd River thence up the river as it meanders to Eppersons corner on the bank of the River thence longest [along] Eppersons loyn [line] Northward to corner in Reades loyn [line] thence along Reades loyn Eastwardly to corner in Easleys loyn from thence along Easleys loyn southeastward to corner in Fowless line thence along said loyn to the Beginning"

Signed: Benjamin (B) Abbot[sic] (his mark)

Witnesses: William Good [sic; William GOODWIN, husband of Nancy Abbott], ELISHA ABBOT[sic], JACOB ABBOT[sic]

Recorded: 27 Jun 1796 - Proved in court by the oaths of the witnesses.

Teste: G. Carrington CHC [Clerk of Halifax Court]

[Source: Halifax Deed Book 16, p. 606-607. LVA Reel 7. Abstract by J. Horsley. Comments in brackets added.]

The same year, by bond dated 26 Dec 1796, Joseph Abbott married Elizabeth Priddy. Her father, George Priddy, gave his formal consent, indicating Elizabeth was still under 21 years old. (Thus, Elizabeth probably was born 1776-1778.). Joseph's bond was secured by his brother-in-law William Goodwin, who married Joseph's older sister Nancy Abbott in 1789. No minister's return for Joseph and Elizabeth has survived. [Halifax Marriage Bond Register. LVA Reel 82] Five months after Joseph and Elizabeth married, Joseph's brother Armistead Abbott married Elizabeth's sister Frances Priddy.

Joseph's father, Benjamin Abbott, died between May 1796 - May 1797, and Joseph's mother, Ann, apparently had died within the previous ten years. Later deeds and personal property tax districts show that shortly after their father's death, Joseph and his brother Armistead exchanged the lands each had been deeded from their father.

Between spring 1797 and spring 1798, Joseph Abbott moved to Armistead's land from their father on the north side of the Banister, as shown by Joseph's change from South to North District in the yearly personal property tax lists. Armistead remained on the other side of the Banister in the South District, where Joseph's land from their father was located. Their respective deeds to each other were written in December 1800:

Date: 2 Dec 1800

From: Armistead Abbott and Frances Abbott his wife

To: JOSEPH ABBOTT

For: £100

Description: 100 acres, "it being the same land deeded from Benjamin Abbott to Armistead Abbott as will more fully appear by deed recorded in Halifax Court"

Bounds: Banister River, Fowles, Austin Martin, Richard Walne, and Epperson.

Signed: Armistead (x) Abbott (his mark)

Witnesses: Epas Sydnor, Hawkins Landrum, Anthony Sydnor

Release of dower: None

Recorded: 22 Dec 1800

[Source: Halifax Deed Book 18, p. 480-481. LVA Reel 8. Abstract by J. Horsley. Comments in brackets added.]

Date: 4 Dec 1800

From: JOSEPH ABBOTT and ELIZABETH ABBOTT his wife

To: Armistead Abbott

For: £140

Description: 115 acres, "it being the same land deeded by Benjamin Abbott to said Joseph Abbott as will more fully appear by deed recorded in Halifax Court" [dated 23 Apr 1795, HDB16:361]

Bounds: None

Signed: Joseph Abbott

Witnesses: Epa's Sydnor, George Priddy Jun'r [Frances and Elizabeth's brother], Elizabeth (x) Abbott (her mark) [Joseph and Armistead's sister]

Release of dower: None

Recorded: 27 Feb 1804

[Source: Halifax Deed Book 20, p. 97-98. LVA Reel 9. Abstract by J. Horsley. Comments in brackets added.]

Living some miles east of Joseph and Elizabeth but also in the North District tax area of Halifax was Joseph Abbott (Jr.), born abt. 1750, son of Joseph Abbott (Sr.) and brother of Benjamin Abbott. (Their father, Joseph Sr., died bet. 1787-1788.) Between 1798 and 1803, after which Benjamin's son Joseph left Halifax, the North District personal property taxes designate Joseph's son Joseph as "Joseph Abbott Sr." and designate Benjamin's son Joseph as "Joseph Abbott Jr." As in the 1795 deed above, this use of "Sr." and "Jr." means older and younger, the standard way all county records identified an older and younger man of the same name living in the same area at the same time. However, to complicate matters even further, land taxes (which were compiled differently from personal property taxes) name the actual Joseph Sr.'s son Joseph Jr. as "Joseph Abbott Jr." and name Benjamin's son Joseph as simply "Joseph Abbott." (Abbott land taxes to 1800, the last year checked, have numerous errors, including a persistent double entry for Joseph's 115 acres from his father Benjamin.)

Benjamin Abbott's son Joseph Abbott last appears on the yearly Halifax personal property tax lists on 5 May 1803. Seven months later, on 27 Dec 1803, Joseph and Elizabeth sold the 100 acres where they lived the previous 5-6 years to their neighbor Richard Epperson:

Date: 27 Dec 1803

From: JOSEPH ABBOTT and ELIZABETH ABBOTT his wife

To: Richard Epperson

For: £60

Description: 100 acres on [north side of] Banister River, whereon the s'd Abbott now lives

Bounds: Banister River, Fowlas, Martin, Waln, s'd Epperson

Signed: Josph[sic] Abbott, Elizabeth (x) Abbott (her mark)

Witnesses: Dudley Glass, Richard M___[?], Thomas Ragland, Phil Hawkins

Release of Dower: Since Elizabeth Abbott, wife of Joseph Abbott, "could not conveniently travel to our Court," Justices Dudley Glass and William Jennings were commissioned 28

Dec 1803 to examine her "separate and apart" from her husband as required by law to obtain her formal release of dower, which they obtained 30 Dec 1803. [HDB20:150-151]

Halifax Court - 25 Jun 1804 - This deed was proved by two [of the required three] witnesses and ordered to be certified and the release of dower was ordered recorded.

Recorded: 28 Oct 1805 - The deed was fully proved in Halifax Court by the oath of the third witness and "O'R" [ordered recorded].

[Source: Halifax Deed Book 20, p. 151-152. LVA Reel 9. Abstract by J. Horsley. Comments in brackets added.]

Note:

Unsourced online files say Joseph and Elizabeth's daughter Mary Jane was born 3 Dec 1803, which could be one reason that Elizabeth "could not conveniently travel" to the Court session. (If this birth date is correct, obviously Mary Jane Abbott was born in Halifax County, VA, not in Stokes County, NC, as online files say.)

Joseph and Elizabeth Abbott left Halifax in early 1804. They moved their family to Stokes County, NC, at the VA/NC border about three counties further west than Halifax on the other side of the state line. Joseph was the first of his siblings to leave Halifax, although all but Elisha moved away (or in a few cases may have died) by 1820. On the surface, it seems odd that Joseph would choose to leave, especially at this time. Not only were Joseph's siblings still in Halifax, but he already owned land there (which he apparently never did in Stokes), and he had more taxable property than average. In the several years prior to leaving, Joseph was taxed for a slave over age 16 and two horses (although the slave is missing in his last Halifax tax list in May 1803).

The answer to their moving at this time to this destination seems to be his wife Elizabeth Priddy's family. Her parents and most of her siblings moved to Stokes the same year as Joseph and Elizabeth, and her father, George Priddy, apparently had earlier connections in that area through his wife's family.

The 1810 US Census records Joseph Abbott's household in Stokes:

1810 - Stokes Co, NC - Meadows District

Joseph Abbott

Males: 4(under 10), 1(26-44); Females: 3(under 10), 1(10-15), 1(26-44) - 2 slaves

According to this census, Joseph's home was located in the Meadows District. Meadows, NC is in central Stokes County 3-4 miles south of today's courthouse town of Danbury and abt. 2 miles northeast of today's Hanging Rock State Park. Meadows was only 10 miles north of Salem (today's Winston-Salem, NC) with its long-established Moravian communities

that extended into Stokes County. Also, Salem was on the route of the Great Wagon Road from the Northeast to Georgia. The town was a regional commercial center and easily accessed from Meadows, so whatever their initial reason for choosing Stokes County over other more common migration destinations from Halifax, it seems a good choice.

Joseph and Elizabeth's family were the only Abbots living in Stokes in 1810. Interestingly, one of Joseph's nieces whose parents and siblings all still lived in northern Halifax County, VA, married in Stokes County, NC in 1810. Elizabeth Abbott, eldest child of Joseph's brother Elisha Abbott and wife Lydia Clay, married William Hill in Stokes County by bond dated 7 Nov 1810. Although there were Hill families at that time in both Halifax and Stokes, the 1850 census gives William's birthplace as NC. Their reason for marrying in Stokes rather than in her place of residence, as was the custom, seems likely related to the difference in Virginia and North Carolina marriage laws. Elizabeth was 15-16 years old when she married, and William was about a year older. Virginia law required parental consent for anyone marrying under age 21, while North Carolina at the time permitted males as young as 14 and females as young as 12 to marry without any parents' consent. Whatever their reasons, Elizabeth's marrying and then settling where Joseph was living indicates Joseph and his Halifax siblings continued to stay in touch.

Joseph Abbott died in Stokes County, NC in 1818, and his wife Elizabeth Priddy Abbott died about the same time, according to documents in the records of the Estate of Joseph Abbott. [NC State Archives] The inventory of Joseph Abbott's estate is dated 15 Sep 1818. It was prepared by George Priddy Sr. (Elizabeth's father), who was granted administration of the estate. A bill submitted to the estate for payment included "To helping making two coffins for Joseph Abbott and his wife." That part of the bill was not dated but was included at the bottom of a bill for repair work done for Joseph dated Feb 1818 and certified by a Justice of the Peace on 27 Sep 1819, so Elizabeth died at least within that time frame. Since Joseph and Elizabeth were only in middle-age, they probably died from the same contagious disease without much time lapse between their deaths.

In mid-1819, Joseph's brother and Elizabeth's sister, Armistead and Frances Priddy Abbott, left Halifax County, VA and moved to Stokes County, NC. Armistead was prospering in Halifax (as he continued to do in Stokes), so perhaps he and Frances left when they did to be close to Joseph and Elizabeth's suddenly-orphaned children, most of whom were still minors at the time.

Joseph Abbott's estate file includes numerous documents pertaining to a case some of his children brought against their grandfather, George Priddy, the administrator of Joseph's estate. George wrote his will 1 May 1829 (proved in Stokes County Court of September 1830) and bequeathed to "the heirs of my daughter Elizabeth Abbitte" one dollar each. [SWB3:218]

Marriages for Children of Joseph Abbott & Elizabeth Priddy

Online files have mistaken the spouses of at least three children of Joseph and Elizabeth Priddy Abbott. Their son Joseph Abbott was not the one who married Alice/Ailcey Abbott, daughter of Elisha and Lydia Clay Abbott, on 6 Dec 1831 in Halifax County, VA. Alice's husband Joseph Abbott was a son of Elisha's uncle Leonard Abbott and wife Susanna Ferguson. (Alice's sister Annis Abbott married Joseph's brother Thomas F. Abbott in Halifax

in 1827.) Joseph and Elizabeth's son Joseph Abbott married in or near Stokes County, NC abt. 1823. He is listed in the 1830 census in Stokes with a wife and three children - a daughter age 5-9 and a son and a daughter under age 5.

Some online files also mistakenly list Joseph and Elizabeth's son Elisha Abbott as the one who married Susan Ann Clay. Susan A. Clay (b. c1835) married in Halifax County, VA on 15 Nov 1852 to Elisha Abbott (b. c1830), son of Annis Abbott and her husband Thomas F. Abbott (mentioned above). Joseph and Elizabeth's son Elisha Abbott married in or near Stokes County, NC abt. 1826. This Elisha Abbott is listed in the 1830 census in Stokes with a wife and a son and a daughter both under age 5.

There is also mistaken information in some online files regarding an alleged daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth said to be named Elizabeth Cinderella Abbott and supposed to have married Armistead and Frances Priddy Abbott's son Davis Abbott. However, later censuses show Davis Abbott's apparent widow Cinderella was born in South Carolina with parents born in South Carolina and Pennsylvania who obviously cannot be Joseph and Elizabeth Abbott.

Davis Abbott does not have a marriage record in Stokes County, but the 1830 census in Stokes shows he was married with two children under age 5. By 1840 he was living in Bradley County, TN (as was Joseph Abbott's son Benjamin Abbott). Davis Abbott died in Bradley County abt. 1841 leaving minor children named Elizabeth Abbott, William Abbott; Frances Abbott, Armistead Abbott; Theresa Abbott, and Joseph Abbott. [Estate File of Armistead Abbott, NC Archives] As of June 1842, all the above-named "orphans" of Davis Abbott except for his daughter Elizabeth Abbott are stated to be living out-of-state. The 1850 census for Polk County, TN (adjacent to Bradley) shows the last three of these children-- Armistead, Theresa, and Joseph Abbott, plus a younger one name Emily Abbott (b. c1842)-- are living with "Cinda R. Hamilton," then wife of Wyatt Hamilton and presumably the widow of Davis Abbott and mother of these Abbott children. In 1860, "Cindarella Hamilton" and husband Wyatt are living in Cape Girardeau County, MO and still have Armistead Abbott and Emily Abbott in their household (mistakenly listed with surname Hamilton). Theresa Abbott is living next to them listed as a widowed head-of-house named "Therese King" with children Martha and Wyatt King. Cinderella was not found in the 1870 census, but in 1880, she is listed in Iron County, MO as "L.[sic] Hamilton," the "grandmother" of head-of-house Wyatt King, with his widowed "mother" (Cinderella's daughter) "Thursday King" living with them. (In 1850, Theresa Abbott was listed as "Tharsy Abbott.")

In every census Cinderella is listed as born in South Carolina, and in 1880 her father is listed as born in South Carolina and mother born in Pennsylvania. Census data can have errors, but the combined evidence and the consistency of her birthplace seem clear that Cinderella could not be an Elizabeth Cinderella Abbott born in North Carolina with parents Joseph and Elizabeth Abbott who were both born in Virginia. (I have found no proof that Joseph and Elizabeth even had a daughter of that name.)

Stokes County marriage records include the following for children of Joseph and Elizabeth Abbott:

[Source: Frances T. Ingmire. Stokes County, North Carolina Marriage Records 1783-1868. (Signal Mountain, TN: Mountain Press, 2003)]

Nancy Abbott married 18 Aug 1815 to Ezekiel Skelton
 Benjamin Abbott married 19 Oct 1819 to Elizabeth Wood
 Mary J. Abbott married 3 Dec 1822 to Samuel Shackelford [sp. there Shackelford]
 Peggy Abbott married 15 Dec 1831 to Peter Smith

Possibly an Abbott widow:

Elizabeth Abbott married 14 Oct 1838 to Robert Tucker. [sp. there Abot]

Note:

In 1840, Robert Tucker is listed in Stokes County several households away from a George Priddy and William B. Priddy (who married abt. 1832 to Joseph and Elizabeth Abbott's daughter Levina Abbott). Robert's 1840 household had an eldest female, presumably wife Elizabeth, born 1801-1810, and 2 young females who could not be daughters by a marriage in 1838. He died bet. 1840-1850. In the 1850 census for Stokes County, the widowed Elizabeth Tucker, born abt. 1805 in NC, is listed as head-of-house that includes William P. Abbott (b. c1830, NC), Sarah J. Abbott (b. c1833, TN), and Benjamin Howard (b. c1831, TN).

No marriage record was found for Joseph and Elizabeth's daughter Levina Abbott. However, the proof her marriage to William B. Priddy comes from the 1850 census for Hart County, KY, and a Hart County birth record for a male child Priddy born 15 Sep 1854, son of William B. Priddy and Levina Abbott. [Abstract from "Kentucky, Births and Christenings, 1839-1960," FamilySearch.org] The 1850 census lists her as born abt. 1814 in NC and he born abt. 1809, VA, with their first four children born in NC, the eldest born abt. 1833. The family is listed in Stokes County, NC in the 1840 census. (Although some online files name her Levinia Abbott, I have found her recorded only with "a" not "ia" ending her name.)

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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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