

JESSE COBB

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Jesse Cobb (1727-1807) was a wealthy farmer, Revolutionary War officer and politician from Lenoir County, North Carolina. At the Battle of Alamance he served with Cornwallis and the King's forces, but had switched to status of Patriot by the time the Moore's Creek Bridge Battle became a matter of crucial American history. He was appointed captain of the North Carolina militia. He saw action in the Continental Army in New Jersey, New York and at Valley Forge. He later served in the North Carolina Assembly that drafted the N.C. constitution and enacted the bill for a state capitol. His brother-in-law and close friend was N.C. Governor Richard Caswell. He built the dwelling now known as Harmony Hall in Kinston, oldest town structure still standing from 1772. It housed offices of N.C. Secretary of State in 1781 and became the home of Gov. Caswell in 1782.

Other notables include Stephen Cobb (1735-1785), native of Bertie County, owner of 3,800 acres in Pitt, Edgecombe and Wayne counties, 2,120 acres and iron foundry in Nash and one of the commissioners named to build the courthouse in Wayne in 1784.

Howell Cobb (1815-1868), statesman and general officer in Confederate States of America, became representative in Congress from Georgia and served under President Buchanan. He resigned to serve the Confederacy, rose to rank of Major-General and became trustee of The University of Georgia after the Civil War ended.

Thomas R.R. Cobb (1823-1862) was prominent in leadership of Georgia in the Civil War, served as trustee of The University of Georgia, rose to brigadier-general in CSA at 39 and gave his life in the battle for Fredericksburg.

John Probert Cobb (1834-1923) Confederate citizen-soldier and native of Wayne County, N.C. was a son of William Donnell Cobb and a brother of Needham Bryan Cobb and Dr. William Harrison Cobb. He was graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1861, rose to rank of colonel in the Confederate Army, lost a leg and settled in Florida after the war. He was married to Sarah Whitfield and became active in politics in Florida.

Needham Bryan Cobb (1836-1905) was a native of Jones County who moved as an infant with his engineer father to Wayne County. He was an 1854 graduate of the University, earned a master's degree two years later and gave up a lucrative law practice to become a Baptist minister. He married Martha Louisa Cobb on Dec. 27, 1859, served with distinction in the 4th North Carolina Regiment as chaplain throughout the Pennsylvania campaign. He later received an honorary doctorate from Judson College, wrote many religious papers and poems.

Dr. Collier Cobb, Sr. (1862-1934), native of Mount Auburn and grandson of William Donnell Cobb, was a son of Needham Bryan Cobb. He studied at Wake Forest and the University of North Carolina, paying his college expenses with a N.C. map he made. He graduated from Harvard with honors in 1889, taught at a num-

ber of leading institutions in New England, but eventually returned to UNC at Chapel Hill to head the Geology Department. In 1906 he was elected president of the N.C. Academy of Science.

Irving S. Cobb (1876-1944) was a native of Paducah, Ky., and a renowned American humorist.

Tyrus Raymond Cobb (1886-1961), son of William H. Cobb of Narrows, Ga., made history with many records in baseball, a game he dominated for 12 years.

William H. Cobb II of Kinston is the son of Mamie Fishel and Herman Bryan Cobb and was born in Warren County. At age 4½ his family moved to Kinston which has always been his home. Other members of his immediate family are two sisters: Mrs. Elizabeth Cobb Phillips of Warsaw, N.C., Mrs. Janice Cobb Johnson of Goldsboro, N.C.

Cobb's wife is the former Eloise Teague of Newland, N.C. Her parents were Margaret Shearin and Robert T. Teague of Avery County. There are three sons born to William and Eloise T. Cobb — William H. Cobb III, Dr. H. Bryan Cobb and Robert F. Cobb.

The Cobb residence in Kinston is 1204 West Road.

— W.H. Cobb

THE W.H. COBB II FAMILY

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William Hervey Cobb II of Kinston traces his ancestry back to Anglo-Saxon England and some genealogists contend the name probably was among those encountered by Julius Caesar's Legions that invaded the British Isles in 54 B.C. The name Cobb (or Cobbs) has been prevalent throughout the British Isles for at least five centuries.

American branches of the Cobb family are traced from the arrival in the first Virginia colony of three free men (after the settlement of Jamestown) — Joseph, Ambrose and Nicholas Cobb. Joseph (born in Amsterdam in 1588) was the youngest son of Richard Cobb of Aberdeen, Scotland and Sibil Sheetz of Holland. An Oxford graduate, Richard Cobb, served Queen Elizabeth with Henry Champion's troop of 100 gentlemen upholding the Protestant cause in France and Holland.

In 1613 Joseph Cobb, now an English gentleman, debarked from the London Company's ship Treasurer at Elizabeth City County, Va., at the mouth of the James River. He and a few hundred colonists managed to escape starvation, disease and the tomahawk. Why Joseph Cobb booked passage to America in 1613 is still a mystery, because even the hunger for land and adventure that pulled the English to the new world shores, does not seem to have validity in his case until later. His first land grant came in 1637.

Despite many hardships, including disease and the hostile Indians, Joseph Cobb returned to England in 1623 to arrange for a wife and she (Elizabeth Flinton) reached Jamestown on the ship Bonnie Bess in 1623. Cobb's land grant of 400 acres was in the Isle of Wight County. He built a modest plantation (Goose Hill) on Pagan Creek. At 60 and in his last



Alfred Cheney, Sr.
September 7, 1865 — August 9, 1947.

Mr. Cheney was City Engineer in Kinston for many years and served as Street Superintendent, a post from which he was retired in 1944.

He died August 9, 1947, and was buried in Maplewood Cemetery.

Harriet Peebles Francks Cheney was born in Trenton, North Carolina, September 26, 1874. She was the granddaughter of Harriett Peebles — descendant of Jesse Cobb who built Harmony Hall in 1772.

Mrs. Cheney was loved by all who knew her. She was active in church and was a life time member of St. Mary's Episcopal Church Choir. She passed away November 9, 1946.

Mr. & Mrs. Cheney lived at Harmony Hall a number of years. They had nine children.

Louise Cheney Wood Bentley was born March 4, 1894 in Sharon, Mass. She now lives in Concord, Mass.

Paul Emerson Cheney was born July 13, 1897, in New Bern, North Carolina and died June 29, 1949 in Kinston, N.C.

Richard Cheney was born September 26, 1898 and died 1899 in New Bern, N.C.

Margaret Crawford Cheney was born February 27, 1900 and died 1906 in New Bern, N.C.

William Moody Cheney was born May 25, 1904 and died March 15, 1973, in Kinston, N.C.

Jennie Emerson Cheney McGee was born October 3, 1906, in Trenton, N.C. and died June 3, 1954, in Kinston.

Harriett Francks Cheney was born April 14, 1908, in Trenton, N.C. and lives in Kinston.

Gwendolyn Cheney Overby White was born July 29, 1912, Kinston, N.C. and lives in Kinston.

Alfred Cheney, Jr., the last child, was born at Harmony Hall, Kinston N.C., December 2, 1916. He now lives in Union, South Carolina.

— Gwendolyn Cheney White



illness, he made a will leaving his land and a few cattle and other belongings to his family.

In 1635 Ambrose became the second Cobb to make his home in Virginia. He was a son of Ambrose and Angelica Hunt Cobb of Eastleigh and Petham, England. He was born in 1603 at Petham. The young immigrant received a land grant in 1639 of 350 acres in Henrico County, Virginia for the importation of himself, his wife Ann and five children. Located on the Appomattox (a tributary of the James River) near what is now Petersburg, Ambrose Cobb built the plantation "Cobb's Hall" which later had a famous role in Virginia society. He is believed to have died in 1656 about the time his son Robert sold his land to Michael Masters, who in the same year traded it to Thomas and John Burton. In 1794 a son of Thomas Burton sold the mansion to Col. John Bolling, great-grandson of John Rolfe and Pocahontas.

Nicholas Cobb emigrated from London in 1635 by way of Christopher Island in the Caribbean. His land grant of 202 acres on Pagan Creek in Isle of Wight County was issued in 1663. He and his wife Susan had four daughters and an additional land grant was issued to him of 900 acres in 1664. He was perhaps the wealthiest of the three Cobb immigrants, but his background is a mystery. He died at the age of about 60 years.

The Cobbs of colonial times were part of a well-defined aristocracy and middle class. Ambrose, Joseph and Nicholas Cobb never became great land barons or found the riches they sought in the new world. Many of their North Carolina descendants amassed sizeable fortunes as farmers and merchants. By the time of the War Between the States many of the Cobbs held highest political and military offices. They were considered qualified members of the ranks of the self-ordained landed gentry of the South.

Among the Cobbs who left their mark in government, education, military service and the general development and growth of America as a new nation are several mentioned in the copyrighted book "Cobb and Cobbs — Early Virginians" by genealogist John E. Cobb Jr., published in 1976.

Samuel Cobb (1698-1757), a great-grandson of Ambrose Cobb was born in York County, Virginia. A prosperous Williamsburg innkeeper, planter, politician and churchman, he served in the House of Burgesses from Amelia County for five terms 1742-47. He married Edith Marot, daughter of a French Huguenot (Jean Marot) an innkeeper at Williamsburg. His family and kinsmen were among the founders of Bruton Parish.

— W.H. Cobb

THE FRANCIS C. COKER FAMILY

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Francis C. Coker was born October 22, 1839 in Lenoir Co., N.C. and died February 28, 1926 in Mt. Olive, Wayne Co., N.C. He married Sallie A. Dawson, about 1865.

Francis and Sallie had six sons and two daughters. William Coker was born Septem-

ber 1866 and died April 8, 1928. He married Carrie Handshaw. Frank Coker was born July 7, 1868 and died April 5, 1930. He married Annis Gossit and was later divorced. Georgiana Coker, born August 18, 1870 and died November 2, 1921. She married Abner "S" Fields, May 8, 1886. They had six sons and six daughters. A daughter was born 1872 and died as an infant. Dock Coker was born January 13, 1874 and died February 10, 1963. He married Lena Becker and was later divorced. Claude C. Coker was born January 7, 1876 and died March 15, 1917. He married Mary Aldridge. Retious Coker was born January 6, 1878 and died July 30, 1925. He married Eva Smith, March 8, 1906. Winzar Burk Coker was born March 4, 1880 and died January 18, 1945. He married twice. His first wife was Quinnie Smith and his second was Ella Florence Smith.

In his later life, Francis married a widow named Phebia Moye. Family members said that both Francis and Phebia were so feeble that Francis went to live with his children and Phebia went to live with her children until they died.

— Barbara Simkins Spencer

THE HOUSE OF COLEMAN

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James Coleman came from England and settled in America where his son, Frances Coleman, was born. Frances Coleman's son, Benjamin Andrew Coleman, came to North Carolina from Maryland to establish a large plantation, "Elm Grove," in Jones and Dobbs Counties (now Greene and Lenoir) through a land grant. Major Benjamin Andrew Coleman (1753-1813) died in Georgia but left Elm Grove Plantation to his son, William Blount Coleman (1792-1847).

In his later years, Colonel William Blount Coleman moved to what is now Kinston as one of its original incorporators. He is buried in Kinston's oldest cemetery off Shine Street be-



Elizabeth Parrott Coleman
(Mrs. William Augustus Coleman).



William Augustus Coleman.

tween Heritage and Queen Streets.

Colonel Coleman's son, William Augustus Coleman (1824-1894), studied law at Wake Forest College before graduating from Yale Law School with a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree. He married Elizabeth Peebles (1848-1885) in 1868 in what is today known as Harmony Hall. Confined at home due to rheumatism, William A. Coleman taught law from his home office.

In 1871, William Blount Coleman II (1871-1930) was born to William A. and Elizabeth Peebles Coleman. He read law under his father. In 1908 he married Vida Barrus (1885-1964) of Kinston. In 1911 they became the parents of William Augustus Coleman II. Elizabeth Wyche Coleman (now Mrs. John T. Jenkins) and Dr. Julian Barrus Coleman followed.

William Blount Coleman II served as City Clerk of Kinston for thirty years and was known as one of the most honorable citizens the town has ever produced.

In 1941, William Augustus Coleman II (1911-1974) married Elizabeth Parrott (1909-1973) daughter of Dr. James Marion and Lottie Tull Parrott. Mr. Coleman, an accomplished architect, built many of the Lenoir and Greene County public buildings, including Kinston's City Hall complex, schools and many fine private homes.

Elizabeth Parrott Coleman (1943-), their first child, married Thomas Jimison of Kinston and at this writing, they reside in New Orleans. W.A.B. Coleman (1948-), lives in San Francisco. C. Craig Coleman, the youngest (1949-), continues the family line in Kinston as heir to two of the area's oldest families. He owns and operates Colarrottage Farms and works as a systems analyst.

C. Craig Coleman

