

CASE STUDY OF MARY E. JOUETT

By

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Mrs. Elinor Jouett Gardner

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

There are very few known facts surrounding the life of Mary E. Jouett. Often times when researching such individuals it is very difficult to tell an accurate story of their life other than what is known from facts that can be recovered during the course of research. It is hard to understand the character of a person with only names, dates, and places. In this case study, I will combine both known facts and history to tell the story of Mary E. Jouett as accurately as possible.

SECTION 2: CHALLENGES

The first challenge surrounding this project was the lack of a birth and death record for the subject of this report.

The second challenge surrounding this project was the lack of any known information on the subject of this report from the known living descendants.

SECTION 3: PLAN OF RESEARCH

To gather the records and historical information necessary to accomplish this project, I did an exhaustive search of the following:

- Rapides Parish Birth and Death Records
- Rapides Parish Birth and Death Indexes
- Avoyelles Parish Birth and Death Records
- Avoyelles Parish Birth and Death Indexes
- Louisiana Statewide Birth and Death Records
- Louisiana Statewide Birth and Death Indexes
- U.S. and International Birth and Death Records
- U.S. and International Birth and Death Indexes
- U.S. Federal Census Images for Rapides Parish
- U.S. Federal Census Images for Avoyelles Parish
- Louisiana Statewide Cemetery Databases
- Existing Family Histories and Family Trees
- Reliable Historical Publications and Reference Books
- Louisiana Newspaper Archives Statewide

*In addition to performing these searches, I also contacted the known descendants from the line of Mary E. Jouett's family.

SECTION 4: FINDINGS

The first problem I listed previously in Section 2 was the failure to locate a birth or death record on the subject of this report. Upon doing a historical research for the area of Rapides Parish and surrounding areas, I was able to conclude that all records prior to 13 May, 1864 were destroyed in a purposely set fire in the city of Alexandria.

{SOURCE 1: <http://www.cityofalexandria.com/community/coahistory/rrcampaign.htm> -- Online Official Webpage}

CITATION

"About nine-tenths of Alexandria was burned between the hours of 8 and 9 o'clock, A.M. on May 13, 1864. This burning was called the Red River Campaign. During the Civil War, the town twice suffered the ravages of Federal Occupation and was virtually burned to the ground by Federal troops during their retreat in May 1864. The first building fired was a store on Front Street. The Court House was the only building on the square that did not burn. It remained uninjured. It was then fired from the inside and was consumed with every record of the parish."

So one can now conclude this is the reason for being unable to locate a birth record on the subject of this report.

The second problem I listed previously in Section 2 was the lack of information known by the living descendants of the subject of this report. Upon speaking with the known descendants that are living, it is unclear as to why information was not passed down in regard to the subject of this report. Information was provided by living descendants as to the parents, siblings, and vital information surrounding not only the subject of this report, but also her family.

Information from living descendants of the family which is the subject of this report states the following:

GENERATION OF PARENTS

FATHER

Charles Edward Jouett

Born: 1825 in Bath Co., Kentucky

Married: 1852 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Died: 21 February, 1897 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Burial: Unknown

MOTHER

Theresa Ruddock

Born: 1832 in England

Married: 1852 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Died: 12 February, 1876 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Burial: Unknown

GENERATION OF PEERS

SUBJECT OF THIS REPORT

Mary E. Jouett

Born: 1855 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Married: Unknown

Died: Unknown

Burial: Unknown

SIBLINGS

Ella McConnell Jouett

Born: 18 July, 1853 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Married: 29 January, 1874 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Died: 18 October, 1942 in Alexandria, Louisiana

Burial: Unknown

Spouse: Walter Lodowick Tanner

Jack Hayden Jouett

Born: 20 June, 1858 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Married: (1) 09 October, 1887 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

(2) 13 May, 1899 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Died: 1907 in Forest Hill, Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Burial: Paul Cemetery in Forest Hill, Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Spouses: (1) Ida Augusta Lindzay

(2) Maria Ria Graham Daniels

Leila E. Jouett

Born: 07 July, 1863 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Married: 13 December, 1883 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Died: 03 January, 1929 in Lamourie, Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Burial: Paul Cemetery in Forest Hill, Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Spouse: Thomas Perry Jones

Lacy Beverly Jouett

Born: 1866 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Married: 20 April, 1897 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Died: 1900

Burial: Paul Cemetery in Forest Hill, Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Spouse: Louisiana Amarylis Daniels

Sallie Woodford Jouett

Born: 1868 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Married: No marriage

Died: 12 December, 1888 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana

Burial: Unknown

Spouse: No spouse

Carrie Jouett

Born: 1870 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana
Married: Unknown
Died: Unknown
Burial: Unknown
Spouse: Unknown

Robert Jouett

Born: 1872 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana
Married: No Marriage
Died: 1880 in Rapides Parish, Louisiana
Burial: Unknown
Spouse: No spouse

{SOURCE 2: Mrs. Elinor Jouett Gardner, living descendant of Charles Edward Jouett}

The first sight of the subject of this report is in the census record during 1860 which has her living in the Parish of Avoyelles with her family as stated above. Present during this census are her following siblings: Ella McConnell Jouett and Jack Hayden Jouett. This falls directly into line with information provided by Mrs. Gardner. She is listed as seven years of age during the census report. This is contradictory to information provided by Mrs. Gardner, but with the history and inaccuracies of thousands of known census records when compared to actual birth records, this can be concluded as a common error on the part of the census recorder. Her father, Charles Edward Jouett is listed as being a carpenter. There appears to be no issues with any other data on this record when compared to information provided by Mrs. Gardner.

{SOURCE 3: 1860 UNITED STATES FEDERAL CENSUS, LOUISIANA, AVOYELLES: ROLL M653_407, PAGE 0, IMAGE 408}

The second record recovered was the census record during 1870 which has her living in the Parish of Rapides, in the township of Cheneyville with her family, also stated above. Among her siblings not listed are: Carrie Jouett and Robert Jouett. However, in the household with the family are the following persons: Herman Huffman who is listed as a cooper from Poland, Josephine Ransdall who is a domestic servant, Adeline Ransdall who is age 4 and likely the child of Josephine Ransdall, Willet Ransdall who is age 1 and also likely the child of Josephine Ransdall, and Eddy Phillip who is listed as age 6. Once again the age is in conflict with the information provided by Mrs. Gardner but can be ruled as an error on the part of the census supervisor. Charles Edward Jouett is listed as doing the occupation of a cooper. There appears to be no issues with any other data on this record when compared to information provided by Mrs. Gardner.

{SOURCE 4: 1870 UNITED STATES FEDERAL CENSUS, LOUISIANA, RAPIDES, CHENEYVILLE: ROLL M593_528, PAGE 49, IMAGE 99}

Upon viewing the census record for 1880, you find that the subject of this report is not listed in the household of Charles Edward Jouett. Present in the household are the two siblings not accounted for due to their births after these records were taken: Carrie Jouett and Robert Jouett. Other than the subject of this report, Ella McConnell Jouett is not present in this record which is due to her marriage with Walter Lodowick Tanner, and Theresa Ruddock Jouett who was deceased at the time of this census record which can be confirmed as Charles Edward Jouett is listed as a widower. From examining this record compared to the census record taken in 1870, one can conclude that the subject of this report has either married or deceased.

{SOURCE 5: 1880 UNITED STATES FEDERAL CENSUS, LOUISIANA, RAPIDES, CHENEYVILLE: ROLL T9_466, FAMILY HISTORY FILM 1254466, PAGE 656.3000, ENUMERATION DISTRICT 40, IMAGE 0315}

Upon additional contact with Mrs. Elinor Jouett Gardner, I was able to locate a man named Mr. Barry Causey who has the family bible of Thomas Perry Jones, the husband of Leila Elizabeth Jouett who was the sibling of the subject of this report. Mrs. Gardner and two of her cousins traveled to the home of Mr. Causey and viewed the family bible we are discussing. Upon viewing the Bible and obtaining photo documentation of the pages with information recorded, I can conclude the following:

- Mary E. Jouett, the subject of this report, died on 01 February, 1875.
- Lacy Beverly Jouett is actually supposed to be Lacy Bailey Jouett.
- Lacy Bailey Jouett's death date is actually 12 November, 1899 instead of 1900.
- Carrie Jouett is actually Caroline T. Jouett and died 29 October, 1890.
- The remaining information provided is correct.

{SOURCE 6: FAMILY BIBLE PAGES OF THOMAS PERRY JONES, OWNED BY MR. BARRY CAUSEY, COURTESY OF MRS. ELINOR JOUETT GARDNER, MRS. NANCY MEAUX, AND MRS. TRACEY WILSON}

There were no other records found regarding the subject of this report, nor was any other information provided.

SECTION 5: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Now that we know the true facts surrounding the subject of this report, we can do a more thorough research into her life which will allow people to see what life for her was like by compiling the facts we have, the knowledge and information we have on her family, and applicable history. One must first understand the background of Mary E. Jouett's parents.

Charles Edward Jouett came from Kentucky in the early part of 1851. This can be observed by viewing the census records of both he and wife Theresa Ruddock during 1850. Charles Edward Jouett is listed as a clerk in the household of his father, Jack Jouett in Montgomery county, Kentucky. *{SOURCE 7: 1850 UNITED STATES FEDERAL CENSUS, KENTUCKY, MONTGOMERY, DISTRICT 1: ROLL M432_214, PAGE 40, IMAGE 81}*

Theresa Ruddock is listed in the household of William Prince Ford in Rapides Parish, Louisiana. {SOURCE 8: 1850 UNITED STATES FEDERAL CENSUS, LOUISIANA, RAPIDES: ROLL M432_239, PAGE 60, IMAGE 121}

We can view the previously sourced census record in 1860 for the household of Charles Edward Jouett and Theresa Ruddock to determine that the birth of their first child was in the year of 1853. Knowing this, one can place the marriage of Charles E. Jouett and Theresa Ruddock taking place as reported in the year of 1852. {SOURCE 3: 1860 UNITED STATES FEDERAL CENSUS, LOUISIANA, AVOYELLES: ROLL M653_407, PAGE 0, IMAGE 408}

Previous research has shown us that Charles Edward Jouett lived on the plantation of William Prince Ford after he married Theresa Ruddock. He worked as a carpenter and cooper while living there. This is during the era considered The Antebellum Period of Rapides Parish. {SOURCE 9: THE CASE STUDY OF CHARLES EDWARD JOUETT BY PHILLIP D. MURPHY}

Mary E. Jouett was born during The Antebellum Period of Rapides Parish. She spend most of her childhood surrounded with the ways of plantation life which was quite extravagant, not just for the plantation owners, but also for the families of the white people who lived and worked for them. The plantation owner directly associated with Charles Edward Jouett and family was also a Kentucky born native in that of Reverend William Prince Ford. William Prince Ford was a well respected minister who was responsible for the establishment of a school for higher learning in the Rapides Parish area. {SOURCE 10: RAPIDES PARISH HISTORY BY MRS. SUE EAKIN: ILLUSTRATED BY LAUREN MARCHIVE, PUBLISHED BY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL LOUISIANA WITH THE HELP OF KISATCHIE-DELTA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT COUNCIL AND THE LOUISIANA AMERICAN REVOLUTION BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION: SECTION ENTITLED "RELIGION", SUBTITLED "EDUCATION: COURTESY OF HTTP://WWW.LAGENWEB.NET} He was quite wealthy which can be observed in the census record sourced in **SOURCE 8** previously mentioned at the top of this page. It would be safe to say that Mary E. Jouett had partaken in a good education and was the child of a family who was not hurting by any means financially.

To give a better picture of the type of lifestyle plantation residents lived, I will include a citation from a letter written which vividly describes in detail the typical lifestyle of plantation owners and their residents.

CITATION

{SOURCE 11: THE TRAVEL WRITING OF MARTHA R. FIELD, WRITTEN BY MRS. CATHARINE COLE: FEATURED IN NEW ORLEANS PICAYUNE ON MAY 5, 1889: COURTESY OF MRS. JOAN B. MCLAUGHLIN AND MR. JACK MCLAUGHLIN}

"As I write this letter I am seated in the window of a big old hotel that hangs over the banks of the Red River at Alexandria. Alexandria, in Rapides Parish, is one of the fine old towns of the state, and Rapides Parish was, before the war, one of the richest and most beautiful of parishes. When I say rich and beautiful, I mean more than we, since the war, can really comprehend. It was a vast garden. The country roads were like the private drives of a gentleman's park in England. The huge plantation homes were

furnished like palaces and when the mistresses of such a one drove forth it was behind four horses, attended by a coachman and footman. I am told the lawns at Eaton Hall, the home of the richest Duke in all England, or the grounds at Versailles could scarcely excel in exquisite order the lawns and grounds of the beautiful country homes in Rapides."

This type of lifestyle would last until the onset of the Civil War in 1861. During the Civil War, nearly all the plantation homes were destroyed, the entire city of Alexandria was burned, crops ravaged, livestock stolen, and often times people were killed. It became so bad that most every family involved in the plantation life had no option but to relocate, often times out of state. People that were once wealthy and well off were poor almost in the course of a day. Having been exposed to the riches of plantation life, this must have been a difficult adjustment for the subject of this report. {SOURCE 12: RAPIDES PARISH HISTORY BY MRS. SUE EAKIN: ILLUSTRATED BY LAUREN MARCHIVE, PUBLISHED BY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL LOUISIANA WITH THE HELP OF KISATCHIE-DELTA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT COUNCIL AND THE LOUISIANA AMERICAN REVOLUTION BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION: SECTIONS 3 AND 4: COURTESY OF: [HTTP://WWW.LAGENWEB.NET](http://www.lagenweb.net)}

One thing that particularly catches my attention while studying this family is the very near deaths of Mary E. Jouett and her mother Theresa Ruddock. They are literally only about a year apart. Another thing caught my attention in doing this research project is that in the 1870 census record that shows the subject of this report with her family, there is also an immigrant from Poland by the name of Herman Huffman living within the household. Another point to call attention to is only households away is a physician that has not been seen prior to this census report, a gentleman by the name last name of Slaughter, who ironically is also from Kentucky. Upon studying this information, I have a theory that I have developed that is impossible to prove with record, but makes perfect sense historically.

I believe this Herman Huffman in the Jouett household in 1870 who immigrated from Poland brought in some type of illness to the Jouett household. This would explain the relative close deaths of Mary E. Jouett and her mother, Theresa Ruddock. It would also explain the need for a physician in the plantation area. It is not a secret that Rapides Parish became a central location for many immigrants from different countries which can be confirmed by looking at various census records which state their birth location. After doing a historical search for the time period at hand in Louisiana, I found that indeed there was a problem during this time which was partly the result of mass immigration. There is absolutely no way to prove the theory I have just mentioned, but I find it peculiar that these facts that can be observed fall into line with a problem that was obvious in Louisiana during this time period, while the entire time a physician shows up in the neighborhood, while an immigrant is living in their household, who is not present in the 1880 census record for the Jouett household which just happens to be the same time period that the subject of this report and her mother had died. It could be coincidence, but I highly doubt it. {SOURCES 4 AND 5 PREVIOUSLY SOURCED ABOVE}

To better help understand the disease problem that plagued Louisiana during this time period, I will cite sections from an article that helps offer a view of what was going on in Louisiana during this time period.

{SOURCE 13: THE CABILDO: TWO CENTURIES OF LOUISIANA HISTORY BY DAVID M. KAHN, DIRECTOR OF LOUISIANA STATE MUSEUM: COURTESY [HTTP://WWW.LSM.CRT.STATE.LA.US/CABILDO/CAB8A.HTM](http://www.lsm.crt.state.la.us/cabildo/cab8a.htm)}

CITATION

(Page 1)

"The most deadly diseases to strike Louisiana during the Antebellum period were Cholera, smallpox, malaria, and yellow fever. In an epidemic year the mortality rate could reach as high as sixty percent of those who contracted the disease."

(Page 2)

"Yellow fever continued to plague Louisiana until 1905, the year of the last major epidemic. Before scientists at the turn of the century discovered that mosquitoes carried yellow fever, other serious epidemics affected Shreveport in 1873 and New Orleans in 1878.

Primary victims of disease were immigrants, children, laborers , and the poor."

From examining this, one can easily see the clear and present threats that the citizens of not just the bigger cities like New Orleans and Shreveport faced, but all port cities, including Rapides Parish, who as I said before, had a very high immigration rate during this time. You see many deaths of people from different families at very young ages in Rapides Parish during this time period. I believe this is most likely the reasoning behind it.

SECTION 6: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In doing the research of records and historical sources in regard to Mary E. Jouett, I would say she lived a two way life. At the dawn of her childhood until about 1861, Mary E. Jouett lived a dream life. She was involved in a very comfortable life with her family on the setting of a prosperous plantation. When the Civil War ensued, Mary E. Jouett shifted from living a dream life to living a sense of a nightmare. Her family was uprooted and forced to give up what they knew. They went from prosperous to ordinary, perhaps even struggling. It had to be a difficult thing to experience for a child her age. One may never know the true cause of her untimely and very young death, but I have to believe with the things already cited, it had to be because of some type of illness, likely brought in from the Polish immigrant in 1870. Along with

many of her siblings and family, her burial location is unknown at this time. We may never know where it is located. We at least have the facts surrounding her short life and now we are able to see the essence of the person behind the facts.

SECTION 7: CONCLUSION

This project was learning experience for me. Anytime an official record is unable to be located, it can present a challenge within itself. To look at the character of a person, the person behind the facts always proves to be a challenge. To accomplish this, one must mix genealogical facts and viable history surrounding that person. One must examine the people close to the person of interest. In doing so, we can gain a knowledge, in ways a chance to see through the eyes of that person. We may never be able to definitively conclude on all facts, but in the end, the wealth of information learned is priceless to those of us who find this to be a passion.

SECTION 8: RECOMMENDATIONS

I would recommend further research into the life of the Polish immigrant in the household of Charles Edward Jouett and family during the census of 1870 to try to determine the whereabouts of him before and after the aforesaid census record. This may offer insight into the Jouett family from a different angle.

END OF REPORT

(The following pages will contain photocopies of records recovered during this research project)

