

Family Reunion

*A special edition newsletter for descendants
of William & Amanda Frankum,
and Gabriel & Amanda Lentz*

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Breaking thru brick walls

What a difference a year can make! Since last year's edition, I broke through a long-standing brick wall in my Frankum research. I didn't do it alone—I had help from several new-found Frankum cousins. Cousins that I might never have met if not for the Internet.

I am often asked if it's possible to do your family research on the Internet. I always give a qualified answer. There's a lot of good solid information to be found on the Internet. But you have to be a Doubting Thomas about what you find. Anybody and everybody with access to a server has thrown their personal genealogical research up for anyone who cares to look. Some diligently post their sources along with their data. But unfortunately these conscientious souls are in the minority.

The good news is that more and more scanned images of original records are being posted daily.

The bad news is that more and more amateur genealogists are posting unproven data as gospel, taking short cuts in their research that leads others on a wild goose chase, and just plain making mistakes as they transfer their data to a public forum. My own data for one of my maternal lines, painstakingly pieced together with proven data, was mangled by a distant contact and posted to the Internet loaded with errors. I'm not sure where along the chain of transfer the errors occurred, but how many more people will accept the data unquestioned and continue to perpetuate the error?

The moral of the story is, you have to be careful when you pull data from the Internet. Posted sources need to be rechecked with your own eyes. Data posted without sources should be considered suspect until you find good solid evidence to support it.

Where the Internet really shines, in my opinion, is in providing

the opportunity to make contact with others who are researching lines that are parallel to your own. Several companies and organizations have provided forums where you can post messages relating to a specific surname or locality and make contact with people miles away who can point you in new directions to help you make that next step backward in your family line.

Which is exactly how a small group of Frankum researchers made a crack in that brick wall I mentioned earlier.

I've monitored the small Frankum surname message boards for quite some time, hoping that someone out there might hold that clue that would help me find James Jefferson Frankum's parents. If any of you have ever tried to research the Frankum line, you know there aren't that many of us out there. Even with such an unusual name, clues are scarce.

The first tiny step to the breakthrough came not long after last year's reunion. A message was posted by a descendant of Charlie Frankum, Will Henry's younger brother, requesting information on Charlie's parents. I responded with what I knew about Jeff and Sallie.

My new cousin took the information I provided and started posting new queries on other boards. By the end of the year, new Frankum cousins had surfaced, including several descendants of Jeff's younger brother Robert. And we all wanted to know the answer to the same question: "Who were Jeff's and Robert's parents?"

For years I had been searching for a census record that would show Jeff or his brother Allen in the household of their parents. I had checked everything I could find in Tennessee, where I was told Jeff had been born. And I had checked everything in Arkansas near Fulton County, where Jeff's wife Sarah Busby was supposed to have been born. The only promising possibility that had come from these searches was a Frankum

family living in Lewis County, Tennessee, in 1850. Neither Jeff or his brothers Allen and Robert were yet born in 1850, so there was nothing to tie this family to ours. Except that the head of household's name was William and his wife was Martha. And Jeff had named two of his children William and Martha. It was a possibility, but I had no proof there was a connection.

A second piece of data I had picked up along the way was a marriage record from Maury County, Tennessee, between William W. Frankum and Martha A. Goodman, dated March 4, 1841. Since Maury County is the direct neighbor east to Lewis County, I felt like it was logical to believe this marriage record was that of the couple who are living in Lewis County in 1850.

I still felt like this couple was a strong possibility for Jeff's parents, especially since Lewis County is directly east of Perry County, which I had been told was Jeff's birthplace. But I lacked that piece of information that would tie all the pieces together.

And then the magic of the Internet stepped in. Out of the blue, a correspondent of one of my new Frankum cousins sent her a message pointing her to an odd census record they had uncovered for a Frankum family in Douglas County, Missouri in 1860. She asked me to take a look at it and see what I thought.

Having never heard of Douglas County, Missouri, I checked my maps and discovered it was *right across the border from Fulton County, Arkansas*. I quickly logged into my Ancestry.com account and pulled up the census page and there it was—the proof I had searched for for so many years:

Family #543
William Frankum, age 38
Martha A., age 32
William T., age 16
Samuel, age 14
Mary A., age 12
Allen T., age 8
Jefferson, age 6

This matched up perfectly with that 1850 Lewis County, Tennessee census record for William and Martha Frankum and their three children, William T., Samuel V. and Mary A. Voila! The brick wall had developed a big opening. And it only

took 30 years of looking.

Now I'm busy chasing the next generation. I feel fairly confident that I have Martha's parents identified and I have a hunch about William's. Time will tell if I'm right. Let's hope it doesn't take another 30 years!

A Family Divided?

Armed with my new knowledge of Jeff's parents, I began to take a second look at the assorted Frankum notes I had compiled over the years.

My grandmother had told me that Jeff's father and two brothers were lost in the Civil War. Quite a while ago, I had copied pages from *The Roster of Confederate Soldiers* for the name Frankum and as many variations in spelling I could think of. Sure enough, a William Frankum and a William T. Frankum are listed as serving in the 42nd Tennessee Infantry, 2nd Company K. A regimental history of the 42nd Tennessee gives the additional information that 2nd Company K consisted of men from Perry County, Tennessee. Apparently the Frankum men went back

home from Missouri to enlist with their former neighbors.

That left the question of brother Samuel. No Samuel was listed in the Confederate Rosters. Initially, I assumed I would find him under one of the many spelling variations of Frankum. No luck.

And then I thought of checking the Union rosters. And I found a Samuel Frankham, serving in the 6th Tennessee Cavalry, Company E, on the side of the Union.

I am currently attempting to find information that will give me the fates of these three Frankum men. Until I have more information, I am left with the tantalizing possibility that this family was one of those where brother literally fought against brother.



Visiting the relatives on a Sunday afternoon

Down a narrow, shady, gravel road that turns off FM 812 just outside Red Rock, you will find a small cemetery with a historical marker erected in 1996 which reads:

OLD RED ROCK CEMETERY
The town of Red Rock grew at the crossing of the Austin-Port Lavaca Stagecoach road (now FM 812) and the Bastrop-Gonzales Trail (now CR 229). In 1892 the town moved one mile east to the newly-laid railroad. This site, with more than 370 graves, is the burial place of pioneer settlers, including Texas trail drivers and veterans of the Texas Revolution, the Mexican War, and the Civil War. The first documented burial was in 1864. Earlier graves may have been lost when homemade sandstone markers were removed. The cemetery is maintained by descendants of area pioneers.

When Spring arrives and the bluebonnets are in full bloom, I start thinking about making the rounds of the cemeteries in Bastrop County to check on the relatives who have passed on. One of my favorite stops is the Old Red Rock cemetery.

I can't think of a more peaceful place to spend eternity. In this grove of trees on a foggy morning, a mood is set that would make it quite natural to see a ghostly figure passing among the tombstones.

I feel a particular attachment to this cemetery where so many Lentz and Frankum relatives are at rest. Here you will find Gabriel Moore Lentz, our ancestor, buried near the front gate. Buried at his side is baby Louis

Delmar Frankum, the youngest son of Will Henry and Amanda Frankum, who died at the age of 5 months.

A little farther inside the cemetery is a fenced plot containing the graves of Gabriel's brother Ashley Rozelle Lentz, Ashley's wife Tabitha, and their son Daniel Webster. Other members of Ashley's family buried here are daughter Annette and her husband Alonzo "Donie" Harris.

Further to the back of the cemetery you will find several members of the family of Thomas Hansen Lentz, our Amanda's younger brother. If Thomas himself is here, the grave is unmarked. But you will find his wife Eliza and several of their children: son Osceola Bryan Lentz and wife Anna; daughter Erma Lois Lentz; son William Norman "Duncan" Lentz; son Dennis Curry Lentz; daughter Rosa Sydolia "Becky" Lentz; daughter Nona Lee Lentz; and daughter Wilma Juanita Lentz Bridgewater.

A small cluster of Frankum graves can also be found at the Old Red Rock Cemetery. Allen T. Frankum, Jeff's brother, is here. And Jeff

and Sallie also buried two children here: George Lee and Martha Ann.

There are other cemeteries in the area where Lentz relatives are buried. In a small cemetery in a field off State Highway 20 are buried Ashley's son and our Gabriel's nephew, Gabriel Moore Lentz and wife Martha Kadura Lentz. These are the only two marked graves.

Up the road from the Old Red Rock Cemetery, just off FM 812, is the High Grove Church Cemetery. Here you will find Gabe (Jr.'s) son, the Reverend Oscar Herbert Lentz and wife Mary Edna.

If you travel south from Red Rock on State Highway 20, you will come to the small community of Bateman. In the Bateman Cemetery is buried Gabe (Jr.'s) daughter Annie Beatrice and her husband Oscar "Pete" Fisher.

If you want to tackle one of the larger cemeteries in Austin, you have the chance to visit Gabriel and Ashley's brother Samuel Jarrett Lentz and wife Ellen at the Oakwood Cemetery Annex, off MLK boulevard.

And now for the \$64,000 question that everybody wants the answer to. Where are our Amanda and her parents buried? The answer to that question seems to be lost in time. One source told me that Amanda wished to be buried with her parents and that they are buried together somewhere in the Corbell community of Bastrop County. Another source mentions the Corbell-Jones Cemetery. Unfortunately, no records exist that verify such a place existed. No mention of this cemetery is to be found in the local cemetery surveys you will find in the Bastrop Public Library.

Only one person that I've spoken to feels he knows the answer to the question. In a telephone conversation with a Lentz cousin one night, he mentioned to me that he thought he had discovered the location. From a particular vantage point, looking out over a field, he thought he could make out the shapes of long-forgotten graves. There were no markers, so he had no way of knowing for sure if he had discovered the lost Corbell-Jones Cemetery.

Did you know?

How many of you are aware that our Gabriel Moore Lentz remarried after the death of first wife Amanda in 1880?

On September 6, 1881, Gabriel married Mrs. Mary C. Lovejoy in Bastrop County. However, the marriage did not last. On October 24, 1891, the Bastrop Court granted Mary Lentz a divorce.

Gabriel's brother Ashley followed almost the same schedule. Ashley also lost his wife in 1880 and remarried on July 26, 1880, to Mrs. Mary J. Webb. He beat Gabriel to Divorce Court by a small margin. Ashley's divorce was granted on October 25, 1890.

Another little known bit of Frankum trivia

In the September 30, 1899, issue of the *Smithville Times*, a list of Bastrop Schools is given, along with the number of students and the trustees of each.

For the school year beginning September 1, 1899, and ending August 31, 1900, the Staten School in Watterson had 25 students and the trustees were S. P. Sims, Jeff Frankum and C. J. Wright.

The Bastrop Advertiser
January 23, 1909

GABRIEL M. LENTZ

Gabriel M. Lentz was born in Limestone County, June 24th, 1834. He came to Bastrop County, Texas, in 1852. He enlisted in the Confederate army at the beginning of that struggle. He made a public profession of faith in Christ in early life. He was one of the oldest Masons in Bastrop county.

A chief characteristic of this veteran hero was his keen appreciation of the value of time and opportunity. Lyssippus made a statue, cold, stern and lifeless, to teach to the Greek this lesson.

This man has made a life, warm, exemplary and energetic. The statue has perished, and no trace of it is found. His life is hid with Christ in God, and his influence will last through time into eternity.

He was also characterized by his braveness. He feared not the danger nor struggle of frontier life. The scoffs, scorns, and ridicule of a sinful world were hurled at him in vain when he heard his Master say, "Follow Me". The "hungry wolf" was bravely driven from his door by patient, honest, energetic frugality. The muttering of the cannon, the flash of the sabre, nor the sufferings of war, caused him to falter.

Sociability characterised his entire life. Home was to him sacred. The people of God were his brethren. His messmates were indeed his comrades. His fraternal brethren were to him all that the term signifies. He was husband, father, neighbor, friend in truth and in sincerity.

Two children survive him, Mrs. Francis [sic] Rucker, of Otis, and Mrs. Amanda Frankum, of Watterson. He leaves a brother, Sam Lentz, of Austin; a nephew, Gabriel Lentz, of Red Rock, a niece [sic], Mrs. Donie Harris, of Bateman; several grandchildren and a host of friends.

His departure occurred at 2 P.M., Jan. 6, 1909. His body was laid to rest in the Cemetery at Red Rock, January 7, 4 P.M., in Masonic honor, witnessed by many friends and relatives.

T. J. WOMACK
Otis, Texas

Until next time...

Last year I introduced my new website. It's still under construction, but has improved over the year. Please stop by www.wilcoxen.com/family, take a look, sign the guestbook, and let me know what you think. All comments and suggestions are welcome!

Frankum/Lentz Photo Album



*Amanda
Lentz
Frankum in
yard.
Daughters
Linnie and
Virgie
Frankum in
doorway.
1914*



*William Henry Frankum with his kids, left to right
Ivy Wilcoxen, Virgie McVay, Sam Frankum
Ora Lamb, Ruby Johnston, and Linnie Brown*



William Henry Frankum



*William Henry with his kids-in-law, left to right
Shorty Lamb, Arthur Wilcoxen, Herman Brown,
Bill Johnston and Nancy Cox Frankum*



Sarah Elizabeth Busby Frankum