

## Chesley COFFEY / Jane CLEVELAND

**Name:** Chesley COFFEY

---

Birth: Bet 1720-1730 Virginia  
Death: aft 1760 NC  
Father: Edward Jr. COFFEY (<1700->1774)  
Mother: Unknown MARTIN

### Misc. Notes

Edward COFFEY (1650-1670 - abt 14 Feb 1716) & Ann POWELL (1683-1685 - )

Edward Jr. COFFEY\* (bef 16 Jul 1700 - aft 1774) & Unknown MARTIN

**Chesley COFFEY (Bet 1720-1730 - aft 1760) & Jane CLEVELAND (1725 - aft 1760)**

\*Salathial COFFEY (abt 1753 - 1784) & Elizabeth NEWTON (1758 - )

\*\*Eli COFFEY\*\* (8 May 1775 - 18 Jul 1833) & Mary "Polly" COFFEY (7 Dec 1785 - 10 Mar 1872)

\*Nathan COFFEY (1760 - 1823) & Mary Ann SAUNDERS (1770 - )

\*\*Mary "Polly" COFFEY\*\* (7 Dec 1785 - 10 Mar 1872) & Eli COFFEY (8 May 1775 - 18 Jul 1833)

Newton Eli COFFEY (2 May 1823 - 13 Jan 1890) & Martha Louise VERMILLION (1827 - 1904)

William COFFEY (27 Oct 1848 - 16 Mar 1896) & Malcena BARBRE (1855 - 1920)

Newton COFFEY (23 Sep 1875 - 26 May 1969) & Adelia Gertrude ROBINSON (1878 - 1973)

Leo Newton COFFEY (22 Jul 1901 - 26 Oct 1998) & Elsie Maureen WALKER (1903 - 1983)

**Observation:** \* Salathial and Nathan were brothers, therefore \*\* Eli and Mary were first cousins.

### TO THE SKEPTICAL READER:

When we start to write about this "Chesley COFFEY", you need to understand that we're in the middle of a very poorly understood segment of our family tree. Yes, we do know with good confidence that we descend from the patriarch Edward COFFEY and his wife Ann POWELL. And yes, we do have good confidence in our descent from the Eli COFFEY who married his presumed cousin Mary. But the three generations in between – Edward Junior, Chesley and Salathial - are filled with uncertainties.

We do know that Edward Jr. existed, and do know he married Grace CLEVELAND. However the above descent postulates an uncertain earlier wife, who is not proven. And we do know there was a Salathial COFFEY, but his parentage and children are not solidly proven.

And the biggest problem is the Chesley, in the middle of this uncertainty. We are becoming increasingly skeptical that he even existed!

### ABOUT EDWARD SENIOR:

It may seem odd that we have confidence in Edward as an ancestor, when we cannot express confidence in the details of descent. However the existence of Edward is well documented, and the broad geographic movements of his extensive family well known, and DNA tests confirm that we are all connected within a moderate number of generations. There is not the slightest evidence of another immigrant family involvement. It has to be "Edward"!

### RESEARCH EXPERTS:

My own (Fred Coffey) contribution to the research into this "Chesley" is very modest, and even that may be redundant to what others already found. The real "expert", who has spent years trying to sort this out is Tim Peterman. I will quote much of his work below. However note that some of his essays are now dated, and I know Tim has developed new information. Hopefully he will do a full update soon?

*(I have been co-administrator of our DNA project, and will insert some minor DNA comments into Tim's essays below, as appropriate. I will show insertions in underscored italics, as you see in this paragraph. Fred)*

## Chesley COFFEY / Jane CLEVELAND

YES, THERE WAS A CHESLEY:

There are solid historical references for a "Chesley COFFEY", but those records are for a younger man, whom we have been calling "Chesley Junior" on the assumption he was another son of the "Chesley Senior" who has been postulated as our ancestor. As you will see, it's "Chesley Senior" who is now in doubt.

NOTES FROM TIM PETERMAN:

First section below is a 2004 update of an essay Tim wrote in 1981. The original Essay will follow. This update is extracted from the "Chesley Coffey Project" maintained by Jack Coffee at:

<http://www.thecoffeycousins.org/coffeecousins.html>

E-mail from Tim Peterman, Sep. 22, 2004:

Regarding Chesley Coffey:

I have recently been re-evaluating some of the conclusions that I made years ago. When I was on vacation in late August, I went to the KY state archives, visited Russell Co., KY, then went to Jackson Co., AL. I found a few things I had never seen before.

With regard to Chesley. I don't think he is a based born son of Anister's for two reasons:

1. If he were, unless incest was involved, Anister's base born sons would NOT have the Coffey y-chromosome & descendants of the Chesley group would NOT match those of the Edward Coffey/ Ann Powell family.

*(Observation: Anister DID have a base born son, named James, and of course the DNA of his descendants is NOT that of Edward. You can learn more if you visit the following web page. Fred)*

<http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/JamesCoffee.htm>

2. Based born individuals were more likely to be shunned & were more inclined to just leave the county\*. Instead, if the Chesley tradition is correct, he married Jane Cleveland, a respectable local family that the Coffeys were already intermarrying with.

*(\*Interesting: James Coffee lived in Surry County, NC, even though most of his cousins lived in neighboring Wilkes County. He seems to have been the only Coffey/Coffee in Surry!)*

Inasmuch as some descendants of the Chesley Coffey group have already matched the Edward Coffey group, reason #1 stands as proof that Chesley was

NOT the illegitimate son of Ansiter; reason #2 is not proof, but merely a consideration that would make be doubt this if we didn't have DNA evidence.

Assuming for a moment that Chesley really existed, we must ask what we really know about him. The most important point is that he had sons born in the early to mid 1740s. This pushes his birthdate well before 1725, possibly back toward 1715. I have considered the following as a possibility:

1. Ann (Powell) Coffey was of child bearing age when Edward died -she COULD have been expecting. If Edward didn't know this, this would explain why he wasn't in the will.

2. Chesley could have been a son born in 1716 that escaped the probate records of either Edward or Ann. He may have been taken care of so well that, when his mother died, he didn't contest her will.

What evidence do we have that Chesley Coffey, Sr. was an actual person? Very little. Eliza Porter, a descendant of Joel Coffey (d. 1789), left her often cited note in which she stated that Joel was the son of Chesley Coffey. But this could be the biggest red herring that has been misleading Coffey genealogists for decades.

The only Chesley Coffey to leave records was Chesley "Jr." (1755-1818). He was one of the last of the brothers to die. Eliza may have been under the mistaken impression that Joel's father was also named Chesley.

There is simply no evidence that Chesley Sr. and Jane Cleveland were the parents of Salathiel, Chesley "Jr.", Nebuzaradan, and Nathan. They may have been, but proof is thus far lacking. Based on geographical association and the usage of an unusual pool of given names, I made a "preponderance" claim back in 1981 that the 5 Coffeys were brothers. I will

## Chesley COFFEY / Jane CLEVELAND

say today that they probably were, but there could have been more; plus if someone finds proof that pulls one of the "5" from the list, by establishing real parents, I will go along with that.

I think it is important in this DNA study that we get real patrilineal descendants of Nathan, Nebuzaraden, Chesley "Jr." and Joel tested to see if they also match Edward/ Ann Powell. We might be in for a surprise.

*(NOTE: Tim's note is out of date. The DNA project DOES now include descendants of Martin, Joel, Nebuzaraden and Chesley "Jr.". They ALL have the DNA of our Edward Group. See the following reference. Fred)*

[www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/DNA](http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/DNA)

Another possibility that we can NOT overlook is Edward Coffey Jr.; who married Grace Cleveland. Has anybody ever found evidence of his children? There are a couple of possibilities to consider:

1. Edward could have had a first wife, perhaps a Miss Chesley who left no records. They could have had a son, Chesley Coffey. She died & he married (2) Grace Cleveland. It would seem mighty strange for a father & son to marry sisters -not impossible, just unusual.

2. Edward was Chesley. Let's say that Eliza Porter correctly remembered that Joel's mother was a Cleveland, but inadvertently changed Edward's name to Chesley, perhaps because she heard so many stories about her "Uncle Chesley".

Edward and Grace could have had children born beginning ca, 1734 down until Grace was ca. 45-50, which would have been 1761-66 (right about the time Chesley's family stopped growing. The only thing that would have prevented them from having children during this time would be the untimely death of either Edward or Grace. Edward is known to have been in Albemarle Co., VA as late as 1774.

Marvin Coffey suspected that Cleveland Coffey of Albemarle Co., VA was a son of Edward. This Cleveland is reported to have been married to Elizabeth. This Elizabeth was most likely the daughter of a man named Benjamin Franklin of Albemarle Co., VA. He had a daughter, named Elizabeth, who is known to have married a Clifton or Cliff Coffey & lived in Albemarle. Cliff was a nickname for Cleveland (at least Joel/ Martha Stapp's

son Cleveland was nicknamed Cliff). Most remarkably, this Elizabeth (Franklin) Coffey was the mother of Grace Coffey, who married Rutherford Coffey in 1801 in Green Co., KY -notice the connection!!!

Edward's presumed son, Cleveland, was apparently the 6th brother of Joel, Salathiel, Chesley, Nebuzaradan, and Nathan. Rutherford's beloved wife, Grace, was probably named after presumed her grandmother, Grace (Cleveland) Coffey.

Think about it for a minute. We probably need to modify our ancestor charts to show Edward Coffey Jr. and Grace Cleveland as the parents of Nathan and Salathiel...

A couple more observations:

1. I noticed in the Adair Co., KY tax lists that Martin Coffey seemed to be listed adjacent to Elizabeth Coffey. This Elizabeth was apparently the Elizabeth (Franklin) Coffey, who was the mother of Gracie (wife of Rutherford). Anyhow, I am now beginning to wonder if Martin Coffey was the eldest son of Cleveland Coffey and Elizabeth (Franklin) Coffey??

We know that Gracie was born after March, 1780 (since she was under 21 when she married. This places the earliest limit on Elizabeth's birth at ca. 1730-35, perhaps a few years later -she was well within range to have been the mother of Martin (b 1762). Oddly, the 1810 POA recorded in Adair Co., KY was signed by Rutherford Coffey and Martin Gryder. I wonder if the original was signed by Rutherford Coffey and Martin Coffey -since there was a Martin Gryder in the area (born ca. 1790), the clerk could have made a transcription error...

2. Of the 5 presumed Coffey brothers, we have good proof on the children of Joel and Nebuzaradan. These are based on wills. I'm not sure about the proof, offhand, for the children of Chesley [Jr] -perhaps there was a will in Maury Co., TN. I thought there was strong evidence for the children of Nathan Coffey, but have yet to find it. He was identified as the father on marriage bonds/ consents for some of his younger daughters -but I can't find any will or Family Bible record for Nathan. The best I've found is an abstract of a 1910 newspaper article, which told the story of his then 88 year old grandson, Milton Coffey. Yet, the DAR continues to support the link from Nathan to daughter, Mary, so there must be some proof in their files.

## Chesley COFFEY / Jane CLEVELAND

When we get to Salathiel, there simply is no evidence of who his children were. I used to think that Newton, Eli, and Gracie (previously called Graney) were his children. A habit seems to have developed - after I made this suggestion in the late 1970s- of assigning miscellaneous Coffeys in Adair/ Russell to Salathiel. If anyone has evidence regarding any children of Salathiel, I would like to see it.

We can pull Gracie from this list. We have fairly strong evidence that she was really the daughter of Cleveland (or Clifton) Coffey and Elizabeth (Franklin) Coffey of Albemarle Co., VA.

I still think that Eli and Newton were brothers, although I have no proof. Oddly, and I hope this point doesn't get drowned in a sea of text, Eli's full name was Eliazar Coffey. This can be seen in the

early tax lists of Adair Co., KY, plus a deed that refers to the land of Elizazar Coffey (Adair Co., KY deed book B-461).

Salathiel Coffey's wife was Elizabeth Gore. This is supposedly proven by the case file of a lawsuit in 1793 (or thereabouts), in which she was identified as wife (or widow) of Pierce Noland, and formerly wife of Salathiel Coffey. The lawsuit was against her brother, who was a Gore. I am trying to get the case file to see what it really says. Interestingly, Elizabeth had a brother named Eliazar Gore -this is not proof that she was the mother of our Eli(azar) Coffey, but it's enough to make you wonder. The fact that both Newton and Eli(azar) named sons, Salathiel, is another indication that Salathiel/ Elizabeth Gore were their parents.

Tim

1981 ESSAY SOURCE:

[http://www.thecoffeycousins.org/Text\\_Files/chesley.html](http://www.thecoffeycousins.org/Text_Files/chesley.html)

This data in the form presented here is ©1998-1999 by Jack Coffee, and Coffey Cousins' Clearinghouse. It may not be copied or reproduced for presentation in any other form intended for sale, profit or for display at any location on the World Wide Web, except by the Author, Timothy E. Peterman.

---

### **THE CHESLEY COFFEY FAMILY**

**by Timothy E. Peterman**

December, 1981

My intent in writing this essay is to express my reasons for believing that Chesley Coffey and Jane Cleveland were the parents of Joel Coffey (d. 1789), Salathiel Coffey (d. 1784), Chesley Coffey (1755-1818), Nebuzaraden Coffey (1757-1797), and Nathan Coffey (1760-1823). During the 1790's, the families of these men moved from Wilkes County, North Carolina to Madison County, Kentucky and then to Green County, Kentucky. Their residences in Green County were located in the portion of that county that became Adair County and finally Russell County, Kentucky. The only record found thus far pertaining to the elder Chesley Coffey is a piece of paper now in the hands of Calvin Reese Porter, on which his grandmother, Eliza (Coffey) Porter, a granddaughter of Joel Coffey (d. 1789), wrote that the said Joel was a son of Chesley Coffey and Jane Cleveland. To date no other evidence has been found that even hints at the existence of the elder Chesley Coffey. Therefore, this essay will not contain a clear cut proof that Joel, Salathiel, Chesley, Nebuzaraden, and Nathan were sons of Chesley Coffey, but rather will contain an analysis of the families of Joel, Salathiel, Chesley,

Nebuzaraden, and Nathan Coffey and an analysis of why they were probably brothers. This essay contains an assumption that if the five were brothers and if Chesley Coffey and Jane Cleveland were the parents of Joel Coffey, then they were the parents of the other four as well. At the end of this essay there will be a brief discussion of how Chesley Coffey and Jane Cleveland probably relate to the rest of the Coffey and Cleveland families.

#### 1. JOEL COFFEY

Joel Coffey died in 1789 in Wilkes County, North Carolina. His Will was proved in July, 1789 and is as follows:

In the Name of God Amen-I, Joel Coffee, of North Carolina and County of Wilkes tho weak in Body yet perfect in mind and memory Constitute this my Last Will and Testament, I give my soul to God my Redeemer and my Body to Buried in a Descent manner and after my just Debts are paid I Dispose of my Worldly Goods as follow, to wit, I give to my wife, Martha, the plantation whereon I now live and all my Household furniture and Two Negroes namely, Harry and Teg, and all my Stock of Horses, Cattle, Sheep and Hogs Enduring her natural life or Widowhood, I also will that as much of my Land be

## Chesley COFFEY / Jane CLEVELAND

sold by my Executor to pay my Debts. The Remainder of my Land to be Equally Divided among my sons, Cleaveland, James, Joel and Nathan And the Rest of my Negroes to be Equally Divided among all my Children to wit, Cleaveland, James, Joel, Nathan, Caty, Jane, Sealy, and if my wife is at present with Child, for it if it Live to share an equal part with the Rest and at the Death or Marriage of my Wife for what I give her to be Equally Divided among all my Children my present Estate to be Improved and kept together till my Youngest Child come of Age or Marry. Nebuzaraden Coffee and my son Cleavland Coffee Executors. I acknowledge this my Last Will and Testament made this 27th Day of April 1789-

Joel Coffey (his mark)

A number of things can be learned from this will:

1. Martha, wife of Joel, was expecting a baby in April, 1789. If we assume that she was no older than 50 at the time, 1739 would have been her earliest possible birthdate. Fifty is an extreme upper limit for childbearing years and she was probably a few years younger, born no earlier than 1745.
2. In naming his executors, Joel Coffee referred to Cleveland as "my son Cleavland Coffee". He referred to Nebuzaraden only as "Nebuzaraden Coffee". Considering that this Nebuzaraden was not named in the Will, nor referred to as "my son Nebuzaraden", it is quite unlikely that he was a son of Joel Coffee. If he had been disinherited, chances are Joel would not have named him Executor.
3. Chances are that Cleveland Coffee was the eldest son. Because he was an executor, we can assume he was born in 1768 or earlier. If his mother were born in 1745, he was probably born no earlier than 1760.
4. If Cleveland were born in 1768, his mother, Martha, was probably born no later than 1753. His father, Joel, was probably born no later than 1750. We can be reasonably certain that Martha was born between 1745 and 1753. If she was born in this time period, her husband, Joel, was probably born between 1740 and 1750, although he could have been born much earlier.
5. The children named in the will were probably born between 1760 and 1790. A critic might argue that the children were considerably older, because Joel did leave land to his sons. However, we must remember

that this was Joel Coffee's last chance to have any say on the division of his land. Joel implied later in the Will that at least some of the children had not attained their majority.

A woman named Eliza (Coffey) Porter (born March 10, 1825) left some notes written sometime before 1900, which refer to the family of Joel Coffey:

My Father was Nathan Coffey, son of Joel Coffey. His Mother's maiden name was Martha Step, daughter of Joseph and Katherine Step. His grandmother's maiden name was Weatherspoon.

My Fathers Brothers were Joel, James, Cleavelin, and Nebuzaridan. His sisters were Katherine, Jane, and Celia.

In these records we find a family that is exactly identical to the family found in the Will of Joel Coffee, with the exception of Nebuzaraden. Considering that Martha was expecting a baby at the time of the Will, that baby could have been Nebuzaraden.

On a paper entitled "Family Record of Nathan Coffey", we find written:

Nathan Coffey, son of Joel and Martha S. Coffey was born January the 10, 1788 in North Carolina

Sarah M. Coffey his wife was Born Oct 26, 1789 North Carolina

The notes of Eliza (Coffey) Porter identify Sarah M. Coffey as the daughter of Daniel Meredith.

Nathan Coffey and his brother, James Coffey, owned a Bible dated 1814. The following are some excerpts from it:

Nathaniel Coffey and Sally Coffey were married November 13, 1806

Nathaniel Coffey was Borne January the 10th 1788

James Coffey borne March 13, 1774

Betsey, his wife, borne May 12, 1781

Marthy Coffey, Mother of Nathan Coffey, Died September 25, 1816

Cleveland Coffey Died October 29, 1814

## Chesley COFFEY / Jane CLEVELAND

James Coffey Died May 5, 1826

Nathan Coffey Died Sept 19, 1834

Descendants of Nebuzaraden Coffey give his birthdate as August 29, 1790. However, because his father died prior to July, 1789, his birthdate was probably August 29, 1789.

The 1810 census of Adair County, Kentucky shows Cleveland Coffey as born between 1765 and 1784. This narrows his birthdate to 1765-1768.

James Coffey married Betsy Coffey in about 1806. She was supposedly the daughter of Nathan Coffey (1760-1823). The birthdates of his older children suggest that he was married once before. He might have been the James Coffey who married Sarah Coffey on August 30, 1794 in Wilkes County, North Carolina.

Many genealogists have claimed, without proof, that Joel Coffey (d. 1789) was born in 1730. They also claim that his wife was a Martha Sealey born in 1737. As shown earlier, we can be fairly certain that Martha was not born as early as 1737. We can be certain that Joel Coffey (1730-1789) and Martha Sealey are identical to Joel Coffey (d. 1789) and Martha Step (d. 1816), because the same Will was used as evidence for the names of the children in both cases. The genealogists who claim that Joel was born in 1730 also claim that he was the father of Nathan Coffey (1760-1823). It is interesting to note that both birthdates are round numbers exactly 30 years apart. Both dates were probably estimates that became accepted as fact. Those who initially estimated Joel's birth year as 1730 probably put the year of his birth that early to account for a son born in 1760. In reality, Joel Coffey was probably not born that early.

### CONCLUSION:

Joel Coffey -born 1740-50 -married 1765-68 -died before July 1789 in Wilkes County, N.C.

Martha Step -born 1745-53 -died September 25, 1816

### CHILDREN:

1. Cleveland Coffey -born 1765-68 -married Jane Witherspoon on February 11, 1794 in Wilkes County, North Carolina -died October 29, 1814

2. James Coffey -born March 13, 1774 -married Betsey Coffey about 1806 -died May 5, 1826

3. Joel Coffey -born 1774-88 no further information

4. Nathaniel Coffey -born January 10, 1788 -married Sarah Meredith on November 13, 1806 -died September 19, 1834 (or 1835)

5. Nebuzaraden Coffey -born August 29, 1789 -married Elizabeth Easley on September 11, 1810 -died January 20, 1867

6. Katherine Coffey -born between Cleveland and Nathan no further information

7. Jane Coffey -born between Katherine and Nathan, she might have been the Jennie Coffey who married Joel Coffey, son of Nebuzaraden (d. 1797)

8. Celia Coffey -born between Jane and Nathan she might have been the Celia Coffey who married Fielding Coffey

Eliza (Coffey) Porter mentioned in one of her notes that there were nine children of Joel Coffey (d. 1789), rather than eight. The other child was Joseph, considering that he was not mentioned in Joel's Will, he probably died before 1789.

### 2. SALATHIEL COFFEY

Salathiel Coffey died in 1784 in Wilkes County, North Carolina.

The County Court Minutes reveal some interesting facts:

28 July 1784-It is ordered by the court that Letters of Administration be granted Elizabeth Coffee on Estate of Salathiel Coffe, dec'd. Joel Coffee and Nathan Coffee, securities.

29 July 1784- Inventory of Estate of Salathiel Coffee returned by the Administrix and ordered recorded.

26 October 1784- It is ordered by the court that the Perishable Estate of Salathiel Coffe be sold by the sheriff according to law.

Elizabeth Coffee was evidently the wife of Salathiel. Though no children were named in the above records, this does not preclude the possibility of there being children. If he had any family, it is quite possible that his family would have moved to Green County,

## Chesley COFFEY / Jane CLEVELAND

Kentucky with the rest of the family.

There were three siblings, Newton, Eli, and Elizabeth "Graney" Coffey, who settled in Green County, Kentucky during the 1790's, along with the rest of the Coffey family. The father of these three was probably one of the five Coffeys suspected of being brothers or possibly a sixth brother. Considering that the names of any possible children of Salathiel Coffey are not known, it is interesting to consider the possibility that he was the father of Newton, Eli, and Elizabeth "Graney" Coffey. Before I proceed any further, I will reveal the identities of these Coffey siblings:

Newton Coffey was born in 1773 in what is now Wilkes County, North Carolina. In 1802, he married Sarah Muridith (Meredith) in Adair County, Kentucky. Between 1810 and 1818, they settled in what is now Montgomery County, Illinois.

Eli Coffey was born May 8, 1775. On March 22, 1801, he married Mary Coffey, a daughter of Nathan Coffey (1760-1823), in Green County, Kentucky. According to tradition, they were first cousins. Eli Coffey died on July 18, 1833.

Elizabeth "Graney" Coffey was probably born between 1775 and 1784. On March 17, 1801, she married Rutherford Coffey, a son of Nathan Coffey (1760-1823), in Green County, Kentucky.

The marriage bond and consent for Rutherford Coffey and Elizabeth "Graney" Coffey reveals some interesting relationships:

1. The bond was between Rutherford Coffee and Eli Coffee.
2. The consent for "Graney" was given by Elizabeth Coffey, Newton and Eli Coffey.

Because the full name for "Graney" was actually Elizabeth "Graney" Coffey, we know that the Elizabeth who gave consent was probably not a sister. Because she could not have given consent for herself, we can conclude that the Elizabeth who gave consent was her mother. Newton and Eli must have been brothers. Because consent was given, "Graney" was probably younger than age twenty.

Eli named a son Newton Eli Coffey. One of Newton Eli Coffey's sons, Robert Coffey, married Sarah Coffey, a granddaughter of the elder Newton Coffey. According to tradition, the two were 2nd cousins.

The name "Newton" is peculiar to the families of Newton and Eli Coffey and was not used by any of the other Coffeys of Adair County, Kentucky. We can conclude that the name probably came from the family of Elizabeth, mother of Newton and Eli.

The probability of Newton, Eli, and Elizabeth "Graney" being children of Salathiel Coffey (d. 1784) is strengthened by the fact that Newton named a son, Cleveland Salathiel Coffey and that Eli named a son Salathiel Coffey.

If Salathiel were the father of Newton, Eli, and Elizabeth "Graney", he was probably born no later than 1755, because Newton was born in 1773. Elizabeth was probably born no later than 1758.

### CONCLUSION:

Salathiel Coffey (or possibly another Coffey brother)  
-born before 1755 -married before 1773 -died before 1801 and probably in 1784

Elizabeth \_\_\_\_\_ -born before 1758 -died after 1801

### CHILDREN:

1. Newton Coffey -born 1773 -married Sarah Meridith 1802 -died 1858
2. Eli Coffey -born May 8, 1775 -married Mary Coffey March 22, 1801 -died July 18, 1833
3. Elizabeth "Graney" Coffey -born 1781-1784 -married Rutherford Coffey March 17, 1801

There were probably other children between Eli and "Graney".

See page 13 on ADDITIONS.

### 3. CHESLEY COFFEY, JR.

Chesley Coffey was born on November 19, 1755. He married Margaret Baldwin (one of seven sisters with bad tempers). They moved to near Knoxville, Tennessee during the 1780's. They moved to Adair County, Kentucky in the vicinity of the rest of the Coffey family, between 1800 and 1810. In 1811 or 1812, they moved to Maury County, Tennessee. Chesley Coffey died there on September 18, 1818. He had nine children:

1. Nathan Coffey -born August 13, 1780 -married(1) Elizabeth Gilbreath (2) Euphy Stockard

## Chesley COFFEY / Jane CLEVELAND

2. Polly Coffey -married John McClain
3. Isaac Coffey -murdered 1799 in Stockton Valley.
4. Gracie Coffey -born 1785 -married on December 12, 1802 to Andrew Turnbow -died January 13, 1859 Erathe County, Texas (Barbee Cemetery)
5. John Coffey -married Sallie Brown
6. Joel Coffey -married Sallie Mackey
7. Felicia Coffey-born March 3, 1787 -married James Turnbow -died May 18, 1865
8. Jake Coffey -married Annie Kelsey
9. Landon Coffey -born 1794 -married Polly Pate (or Tate) -drown

### 4. NEBUZARADEN COFFEY

According to most reports, Nebuzaraden Coffey was born in 1757. In about 1780, he married Elizabeth Hayes. In 1794, he moved to Madison County, Kentucky, where he died in 1797. His Will was proved on March 7, 1797. The children listed were: Joel, Sary, Polly, Fieldin, Sail, Nias, Hays, Betsy and Ruth. Most of these were nicknames. The proper names were probably: Joel, Sarah, Mary, Fielding, Salathiel, Ananias, Hayes, Elizabeth and Ruth (or Rutherford). The order of birth is undetermined. According to another report, there were two other sons: Louis and James.

1. Joel Coffey married Jennie Coffey. She was probably a first cousin and might be identical to the Jane Coffey, who was a daughter of Joel Coffey (d. 1789). They might be the Joel Coffey and Jane Coffey who married August 22, 1793 in Wilkes County, N.C.
2. Sarah Coffey- She might have been the Sarah Coffey who married James Coffey on August 30, 1794 in Wilkes County, N.C.
3. Polly Coffey married Joe McDowell McMillian on March 14, 1801.
4. Fielding Coffey married Celia Coffey. She was probably a first cousin and might be identical to the Celia Coffey, who was a daughter of Joel Coffey (d. 1789).

5. Salathiel Coffey married Anna Lynch on August 19, 1813
6. Ananias Coffey was born 1785, married Jane Hindman, died 1828.
7. Hayes Coffey was born 1793, married Mary Burkett, died 1860
8. Betsey Coffey married James Lester on December 14, 1819
9. Ruth Coffey- no further information (maybe Rutherford ?)
10. Louis Coffey married Cassey Coffey
11. James Coffey-no further information.

If Joel Coffey married as early as 1793, he was probably born no later than 1775. This would put the marriage date for Nebuzaraden Coffey and Elizabeth Hayes in the early 1770's. If this was the case, Nebuzaraden might have been born a few years earlier than 1757.

### 5. NATHAN COFFEY

Nathan Coffey was supposedly born in 1760. He married Mary Saunders, supposedly just before 1785. She was supposedly born in 1770. They moved from Wilkes County, North Carolina to Green County, Kentucky during the 1790's. Nathan Coffey supposedly died in 1823 in Jackson County, Alabama.

According to DAR records, Nathan Coffey was a son of Joel Coffey (d. 1789). As mentioned in the section on Joel Coffey, this idea has been entirely discredited.

The children of Nathan Coffey were:

1. Mary "Polly" Coffey-born December 7, 1785. However, the Family Bible of Eli Coffey reveals the date as December 7, 1780. She married Eli Coffey on March 22, 1801. She died in Russell County, Kentucky on March 10, 1872. (The 1785 birthdate seems more likely when one considers that her youngest son, Reuben was born in 1830.)
2. Rutherford Coffey was supposedly born in 1786. If Mary was born on December 7, 1785, then he must have been born in late 1786. He married Elizabeth "Graney" Coffey on March 17, 1801. If the year of



## Chesley COFFEY / Jane CLEVELAND

his birth is correct, he was only 14 years old at the time of his marriage. He was probably born in the late 1770's or early 1780's. Some reports show him married to a Celia Coffey. The 1830 census of Jackson County, Alabama gives Rutherford Coffey a birthdate between 1770 and 1780.

3. Absolem Coffey was supposedly born in 1788. He married first to Mary Lusk and second to Nancy Chadwick.

4. Joel Coffey was supposedly born on August 3, 1790. In 1817, he married Mary Knox. He died in 1850.

5. Elizabeth Coffey was supposedly born in 1791. According to some reports, she was the Betsy Coffey who married James Coffey, son of Joel Coffey (d. 1789). However, the Family Bible of the Nathan and James Coffey reveals her birth date as May 12, 1781. If her sister, Mary, was born December 7, 1780, there is no way that she was born on May 12, 1781. One or the other is wrong. Elizabeth died in 1837. 6. Grace Coffey was supposedly born in 1793 and married a Marlow.

7. William Saunders Coffey was supposedly born in 1795. He married Elizabeth Schuyler. 8. Nancy Coffey was supposedly born in 1797. She married Richard Lockett. 9. Catherine Coffey was supposedly born in 1799. She married John Baxter. If Mary, Rutherford and Elizabeth Coffey were born as early as records suggest, then Nathan Coffey must have married Mary Saunders in the late 1770's. Nathan Coffey was probably born between 1755 and 1760. Mary Saunders was probably born between 1760 and 1765.

### HINTS THAT THE FIVE COFFEYS WERE BROTHERS

1. Geography- The five came from Wilkes County, North Carolina and their families all lived in close proximity in Adair County, Kentucky.

2. Each of the five used the same names in their families, some of which are quite unusual. These names are: Chesley, Nebuzaraden, Salathiel, Cleveland, Nathan and Joel.

3. Joel Coffey named Nebuzaraden Coffey as his executor. The only Nebuzaraden of age in 1789 was the one who died in 1797. This is a strong clue that they were brothers.

4. Joel Coffey and Nathan Coffey were both securities for the estate of Salathiel Coffey. The only Joel and Nathan who were of age in 1784 were Joel Coffey who died in 1789 and the Nathan Coffey who was born about 1760. This is a strong clue that the three were brothers.

5. Regardless of whether Joel Coffey (d. 1789) was the son of Chesley Coffey, the fact remains that his descendants carried a tradition of having a Chesley in the family. Therefore, Chesley was indeed a family name in the Joel Coffey family. This suggests an affinity to Chesley Coffey (1755-1818). Considering that Chesley Coffey (1755-1818) was born into the same generation as Nathan (1760-1823), Nebuzaraden (1757-1797) and probably, Salathiel (d. 1784) and Joel (d. 1789), chances are that if indeed there is a kinship between Chesley (1755-1818) and the other four, that kinship is brotherhood.

### A CLUE TO THEIR PARENTAGE

Eliza (Coffey) Porter left another note entitled, "History of Nathan Coffey":

Nathan Coffey was the son of Joel Coffey and Martha (Step) Coffey, was grandson of Chesley and Jane (Cleveland) Coffey, natives of Virginia. But the grandparents removed to North Carolina in an early day and settled on the Yadkin River where the parents of our subject was born and raised and married.....

This note is not proof that Joel Coffey was the son of Chesley Coffey, because the note was written almost one hundred and fifty years after Joel Coffey was born. Yet, this note is a strong implication that Chesley Coffey and Jane Cleveland were the parents of Joel. In the other notes left by Eliza (Coffey) Porter, her memory was quite accurate. There are other reasons to believe that Chesley Coffey and Jane Cleveland were the parents of Joel, Salathiel, Chesley, Nebuzaraden and Nathan:

1. Cleveland became a very prevalent name within this Coffey family and has been carried forward for many generations. Considering the degree to which this name was used, it seems very likely that the name was actually the maiden name of a common ancestor.

2. The fact that Chesley Coffey (1755-1818) carried the name "Chesley" makes it easier to believe that his father could have been a Chesley Coffey.

## Chesley COFFEY / Jane CLEVELAND

If Joel Coffey (d. 1789) was the eldest brother and was born between 1745 and 1750, then Chesley Coffey was probably born between 1720 and 1730. Jane Cleveland was probably born between 1725 and 1735.

### CONCLUSION:

Chesley Coffey -born 1720-30 in Virginia -married 1740-50 in Virginia -died after 1760 in North Carolina?

Jane Cleveland -born 1725-35 in Virginia -died after 1760 in North Carolina

### CHILDREN:

1. Joel Coffey -born 1745-50 -married Martha Step 1765-68 -died 1789 in Wilkes County, N. Carolina
2. Salathiel Coffey -born 1745-55 -married Elizabeth \_\_\_\_ 1765-73 -died 1784 Wilkes County, North Carolina
3. Chesley Coffey, Jr. -born November 19, 1755 -married Margaret Baldwin 1775-80 -died September 18, 1818 in Maury County, Tennessee
4. Nebuzaraden Coffey -born 1750-57 -married Elizabeth Hayes 1770-80 -died 1797 in Madison County, Kentucky
5. Nathan Coffey -born 1755-60 -married Mary Saunders 1775-80 -died (?) 1823 in Jackson County, Alabama

### KINSHIP TO OTHER COFFEYS

There was another Coffey family that moved from Wilkes County, North Carolina to south central Kentucky (Wayne County). This family, headed by James Coffey, was probably closely related to the Chesley Coffey family.

James Coffey was born around 1728. He died September 1786. He married Elizabeth Cleveland in the late 1740's. They were from Orange County, Virginia. In 1750, they moved to Albemarle County, Virginia. In 1764, they moved to Amherst County, Virginia. In 1776, James and his brother, Thomas, moved to Wilkes County, North Carolina. That same year their brother, Benjamin Coffey, moved to the area that became Burke County, North Carolina in 1777. James Coffey became a Baptist missionary in 1757.

The family of Chesley Coffey was also quite involved in the Baptist Church. So strong are the parallels between the two families that someone once suggested that Joel Coffey (d. 1789) was a son of James Coffey. The only problem with this theory was that James' son, Joel, was born in 1769.

Chesley Coffey was NOT a brother of James Coffey. James was the eldest of nine children. The others were: William, John, Edmund, Reuben, Winnefred, Elizabeth, Thomas and Benjamin. These were the children of John Coffey and Jane Graves.

Chesley Coffey was NOT a brother of John Coffey. John Coffey was the son of Edward Coffey and Ann Powell (daughter of Thomas Powell and Mary Place). Edward Coffey died in 1716 in Essex County, Virginia, leaving five Children: John, Edward, Martha, Austin and Elizabeth. There is a possibility that John and Edward were twins. They were born between 1700 and 1705. Martha and Austin were born between 1705 and 1712. Elizabeth was born about 1714. This family migrated up the Rappahanock River, eventually settling in Spotsylvania, Orange and finally Albemarle County, Virginia.

1. Edward Coffey married Grace Cleveland.
2. John Coffey married Jane (Jean) Graves.
3. Martha Coffey married Joshua Stapp. It is possible that they were relatives or even ancestors of the Martha Step who married Joel Coffey (d. 1789).
4. Austin (or Austus) Coffey married a Shenault.
5. Elizabeth Coffey married John Cleveland.

If Chesley Coffey was born between 1720 and 1730, there is no way that Grace Cleveland (b. 1716) could be his mother. Therefore, we can rule out Edward Coffey as the father of Chesley Coffey, unless Edward was married before his marriage to Grace Cleveland. Austin Coffey could have been the father of Chesley Coffey, but there are no records that indicate anything about the family of Austin Coffey. Chesley Coffey was, nonetheless, probably somehow related to Edward Coffey (d. 1716 in Essex County, Virginia).

### KINSHIP TO THE CLEVELAND FAMILY

According to a letter written by Rice Coffey (1766-

## Chesley COFFEY / Jane CLEVELAND

1853), a son of Elizabeth (Cleveland) Coffey, his grandfather was an Alexander Cleveland. The identity of this Alexander Cleveland has never been proved beyond doubt, with regard to his relationship to the Cleveland family of Virginia.

There is much information on the Clevelands in an article entitled, "Virginia Cleveland Ancestor Discovered", by George A. Martin. This article was published in the National Genealogical Society Quarterly, Vol. 46, Number 3, September 1958. Beginning at the second paragraph, it was written as follows:

Roger Cleveland, the ancestor of the Clevelands of Virginia, came to America prior to 16th of November 1670 and settled in Gloucester County, Virginia. Concerning his English background, nothing is known, as a check of over seven hundred printed English parish registers at the Library of Congress failed to reveal any record of his birth or baptism.

### CHILDREN OF ROGER AND DORCAS CLEVELAND

Elizabeth Cleveland, baptised 31 Oct 1684

Alexander Cleveland, baptised 31 July 1687

### CHILDREN OF ALEXANDER CLEVELAND, SR. AND HIS WIFE MARY

1. Alexander Cleveland, Jr, baptised 25 May 1712
2. John Cleveland, born July 31, baptised 24 August 1714
3. Grace Cleveland, born September 1, baptised 30 Sept 1716
4. William Cleveland, born February 23, baptised 22 March 1718
5. Benjamin Cleveland, born November 21, baptised 28 November 1721

The fact that the above John Cleveland married Elizabeth Coffey and that Grace Cleveland married Edward Coffey make it quite likely that either Alexander Cleveland, Sr. or Jr. was also the father of Elizabeth (Cleveland) Coffey.

Jane (Cleveland) Coffey could not have been the daughter of Alexander Cleveland, Jr. or John

Cleveland, because neither named her in their Wills. William and Benjamin Cleveland would have been too young to have been the father of Jane Cleveland. The more likely possibilities are that:

1. Jane Cleveland was a younger daughter of Alexander Cleveland, Sr., whose baptism was not entered into the parish registers of Gloucester County, Virginia.
2. Records hint that Roger Cleveland has a son, John, born before baptism records were kept in Gloucester County. Perhaps John was the father or grandfather of Jane Cleveland.

The Clevelands moved from Gloucester County to Spotsylvania County, Virginia prior to 1734. If the Clevelands made this move in the mid 1720's, Jane and Elizabeth Cleveland could have been born in Spotsylvania County, Virginia and likewise omitted from the Gloucester County parish registers. They could very possibly be younger daughters of Alexander Cleveland, Sr.

The families of Chesley Coffey and James Coffey were apparently close on a social basis. Yet, the kinship between Chesley and James could have been no closer than first cousin. However, the social bond between the two families would have been a lot stronger if Jane and Elizabeth were sisters.

### FUTURE RESEARCH

1. Our goal should be to establish a complete list of descendants of Chesley Coffey, Sr., through at least five generations.
2. We must try to acquire as much information as possible on Chesley Coffey, his children and grandchildren, exhausting all sources, even the obscure ones. The relevant counties are:

Essex, Caroline, Spotsylvania, Orange, Albemarle and Amherst in Virginia; Surry, Rowan, Anson and Wilkes in North Carolina; Greene, Knox and Maury in Tennessee; Madison, Green, Adair, Russell and Pulaski in Kentucky; and Jackson County in Alabama. We should thoroughly research the following sources: Court Records (federal and state)-Plaintiff, Defendant and Criminal; Property Records; Probate Records; Minutes of County Courts; Marriage Bonds and Consents-for each Coffey marriage; Baptist Records (unfortunately, there are not many); and Fraternal Records-many Coffeys might have been Masons. After exhausting these, we

## Chesley COFFEY / Jane CLEVELAND

should try to locate any other records that might exist for the above localities.

3. We should try to locate other children of Chesley Coffey, Sr. Chances are he had a few daughters and maybe other sons.
4. We should try to find records on the families of Austin and Edward Coffey.
5. The author would appreciate copies of any information or documents that could either strengthen or disprove the contents of this essay.
6. All information should be analyzed and eventually published, along with any ideas or theories concerning this branch of the Coffey family.

### ADDITIONS

1. There was a Salathiel Coffey, who married Polly Blair on 25 Oct 1808 in Adair County, Kentucky. He was supposedly born in North Carolina in 1781. With a name like Salathiel, he must have been a member of the "Chesley Coffey, Sr. Family". He could not have been a son of Joel (d. 1789), Chesley, Jr. (1755-1818), or Nathan (1760-1823). Nebuzaraden (1757-1797) did have a son, Salathiel, who married Anna Lynch in 1813. Salathiel (b. 1781) might have been a son of Salathiel (d. 1784). If not, Salathiel (b. 1781) must have been the son of a brother to Joel (d. 1789), etc., whose identity is undetermined.

Copyright Coffey Cousins' Clearinghouse, 1998. All rights preserved for the Author

---

**Spouse:                    Jane CLEVELAND**

---

Chesley COFFEY & Jane CLEVELAND

Salathial COFFEY (abt 1753 - 1784) & Elizabeth NEWTON (1758 - )

Chesley COFFEY (19 Nov 1755 - 18 Sep 1818) & Margaret BALDWIN

Nebuzaraden COFFEY (1757 - 1797) & Elizabeth HAYES

Nathan COFFEY (1760 - 1823) & Mary Ann SAUNDERS (1770 - )

Joel COFFEY ( - 1789)

---

Please report corrections or additions to...

Fred Coffey, FredCoffey@AOL.COM