

February 6, 2000

COFFEY COUSIN'S CLEARINGHOUSE  
Attn: Mrs. Bonnie Culley  
1416 Green Berry Road  
Jefferson City, MO 65101-3620

2028 Bingle Road  
Houston, TX 77055  
-1453

Dear Bonnie,

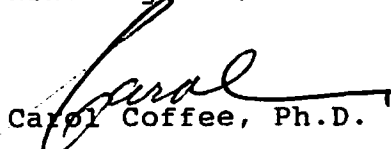
I recently sent to you a copy of my letter to Mr. Frank V. Coffee of New York and in which I responded to his request for information regarding the Peter Coffee line. Frank is directly descended from old Peter, Sr. through Peter, Jr. and has done extensive research regarding that branch of the Coffee tree. Frank is a very interested and skilled researcher and is quite an intellect. I will be continuing to encourage him in his work and hope that he may follow my suggestion that he take a membership in CCC. The purpose of my note now is to send you the material which I should have included with the copy of my letter but failed to. I enclose it herewith.

I am including Frank's covering letter as well as his data regarding his Peter, Jr. line that will certainly be of interest to researchers of the Georgia/Florida side of the family. His notes include well-documented information regarding his immediate family which I have never run across in my long study of the Peter Coffee Line. Perhaps you will want to include some or all of it in a future edition of the CCC Newsletter. Additionally, I plan to eventually share with Frank virtually all of the considerable information that I have on the Peter Coffee family in the hope that he will get more interested and involved in sharing his considerable interest and talents with the CCC membership and others.

I regret omitting his material from my earlier mailing. I'm sure that many folks of our old Peter Coffee line will be interested to learn of their "French Connection".

One day I hope to get back to more involvement in my genealogical research and writing, but a while yet my work with certain military archives, historical societies and involvement in WW-II veteran affairs consume all of my available time. The attached letter on behalf of the Eisenhower Center for American Studies and their soon-to-be-opened National D-Day Museum may suggest where most of my time goes these days. For now, please remember us to the CCC membership.

Kind regards,

  
Carol Coffee, Ph.D.

Attachment  
Enclosure



January, 2000

TO: Selected National and Regional Veteran Organizations,  
Veteran Affairs Agencies and Individuals

FROM: Carol Coffee, Ph.D., Veteran Host Committee  
Historian/Archivist, 66th Div. Panther Veteran Assn.

This mailing is directed to all presiding officers of the more than 300 National and Regional Veterans organizations in the United States. It includes the special announcement of the grand opening and dedicatory ceremonies launching The National D-Day Museum in New Orleans beginning Saturday, June 3, 2000 and culminating the dedication and military parade Tuesday, June 6, 2000, the 56th anniversary of the Normandy invasion. You and all named delegates of your organization are invited, indeed urged, to register now to be present on the afternoon of Monday, June 5 at 1:00 PM for the following recognition and ceremonies:

1. Organization leaders/delegates will be escorted through the Museum for the first time.
2. You will be given video tape presentations and printed brochures to take back to your membership who are unable to attend the ceremonies.
3. You will receive full information regarding the inclusion of the Museum and other facilities for future reunions of your organization.
4. Monday's ceremonies will conclude with a major donor gala in the Museum recognizing the individuals and Corporations who contributed the \$20 million to make the Museum a reality.

The entire four-day program is included in the accompanying Special Edition of The National D-Day Museum Newsletter. For now, and as soon as possible, you are requested to execute and mail the registration form at the last page of this Newsletter. By so doing you or your delegates will be recognized at the ceremonies and you will receive further information and the delegate registration materials.

Please mail the fully-executed pre-registration to:

DMI, Inc.  
ATTN: D-DAY GRAND OPENING  
610 South Peters Street  
New Orleans, LA 70130

Enclosures

1. National D-Day Museum Announcement
2. Pre-Registration Form



January 18, 2000

Frank V. Coffee  
25 West 16th Street, Apt. 5F  
New York, NY 10011

2028 Bingle Road  
Houston, TX 77055  
(713) 461-7005

Dear Frank,

Your e-mail to "Len" was apparently downloaded from the Internet by my brother, Jerry, who asked that I respond to your entreaty regarding genealogical matters. For good or ill I've been considered the Guru of the Peter Coffee, Sr. line in North America, a mantle I have worn too long and which I no longer deserve. Perhaps it is to you that I might throw with failing hands the torch to hold on high.

I am a geezer of 75 years and retired university pedant cum bureaucrat who has done little gainfully for the past fifteen years. I have tried to stay out of trouble through research and writing and have succeeded at least to the extent that I have considered returning to gainful work in order to get some rest. I am by formal training an Historian (Social Anthropologist) whose interest in Genealogy has been less in identifying and cataloging antecedents than in placing them in the context of their time and in the events of history. I prefer that, since we are all descendants of Adam and Eve or of an amoebaeic liaison in a primordial bog, depending, of course, on one's Weltanschauung. But, now that you know all about me, why don't I try to make myself useful in your search for the other gezillions of Coffees (eys) out there.

Like you, I am directly descended from old Peter, Sr. of Ireland and the Colony of Virginia, but through his first son, William. David Coffee, born February 06, 1775 in Bedford County, Virginia was my g.g.g. grandfather. (For the remainder of this brief narrative partial pedigree, I shall not list details of marriages, birth and death dates, etc. as I will be sending you a book under separate cover which provides that information). David emigrated down the Cumberland to what is present Smith County, Tennessee where my g.g. grandfather, Joshua, was born February 08, 1810. Joshua married Delilah Conger who bore him four children including my g. grandfather Joshua David. In 1846 Delilah Conger died and my g.g. grandfather, Joshua, married Sarah Hill in 1849 and, shortly thereafter assembled the Coffee-Wootten (Yes, that's how he spelled it) Expedition, jointly with George Wootten of Illinois and conducted several families over the California Trail to settle near Yosemite in what is now Stanislaus County of California. At the same time that g.g. grandfather Joshua departed Smith County, Tennessee for California, my g. grandfather, Joshua David and his older brother, John James, conducted two families down the Natchez Trace into present Fannin County, Texas, near the village and fort at present Bonham. The approaching Civil War and the gradual withdrawal of Union troops from the forts of Texas caused Indian depredations to increase and movement further west in Texas to stop until after the war. In 1867 my g. grandfather, having married Mary Lou Blanton in 1860, emigrated into west Texas with his older brother, John James, where they would found ranches. Joshua David and Mary Lou had seven children including John T., my Grandfather. Mary Lou, who was born in 1840, died in a wagon runaway in 1884. My grandfather, John T., was the first son of Joshua's seven children. he was born in 1870 and died in 1973 at the age of 103 years. He is recorded in data of the Social Security Adminis-

tration Master File as the longest-lived Coffee in the United States. He remains the oldest person at his death to be buried in the old and large Greenleaf Cemetery at Brownwood, Texas. John T. married Nora Whaley February 05, 1893 and they had five children including Peyton Joshua, my father, who was born April 14, 1900 and died in 1987. Incidentally, my old grandfather who lived to be 103 actually died accidentally. After the old gentleman attained his hundredth birthday people would frequently ask him to what he attributed his good health and longevity. I often heard him reply that one should "work hard, rest easy and stay away from doctors, as they will kill you". His admonition was prophetic. After his 102nd birthday he was entered into a 24 hour facility because he had always been very fond of walking and would in his later years sometimes wander off. It was while he was under "24 hour care" that he attempted to get out of his bed on which the rail had been inadvertently left down. In attempting to get out of bed unassisted he fell and broke his hip. Of course, back then they had to "shoot him" although, according to his attending physician the old man's vital signs were such that they didn't know how long he might have lived had he not fallen. I can truthfully state that after having known many men and having served in World War II with some of the finest men I have ever known, I never knew a kinder, gentler, sweeter man than John T. Coffee. My father, Peyton Joshua, and his two brothers were also good men, but not quite matching their father in a really unusual quality. I struggle for the most appropriate word, but maybe "equanimity" will have to suffice. More likely, however, there are human qualities so rare as to be yet undefined.

Now Frank, not knowing what you already have, and therefore what you may need or be interested in, I will include here a few random thoughts or suggestions before I later gather a small "Care Package" of material that I think you might find at least interesting, if not useful. First, and at the risk of insulting your intelligence, I'll offer a couple of suggestions. Unfortunately, all of my data on the Peter Coffee Line is in hard copy in two file cabinets. Back when I began tinkering with family history matters automation, including electronic storage and retrieval of such data and the widespread use of personal computers had not come along. Accordingly, much of my data gathering was the product of primary research conducted on the ground in many states around the Country and in countless archives, County Libraries, local and State Genealogical Societies, family cemeteries and in personal visitations to scores of Coffee cousins. For example, my last, and I suspect final, Coffee research odyssey was conducted during the summer of 1993 when my wife, Fifi, and I were on the road for two full months during which we travelled in twenty States, concentrating our time in some few States of known high concentrations of our cousins. Of course, we spent considerable time in Tennessee, Nebraska, Wyoming, Missouri, Arkansas, Virginia and Georgia. Yes, we rummaged all over Telfair and Coffee Counties locating and photographing Coffee graves, visiting County Libraries and Genealogical Societies. Yes, we found the grave of your General in McRae and the bit of apocrypha resulting from the profusion of Generals of the same name. I suspect that I have the same "Aunt Marguerite" family history that you refer to in your letter. I have even forgotten who gave it to me but it may have been the Mrs. "Willcox" you referred to because it was mailed to me by someone at either the County Library or the Chamber of Commerce after we returned from our travels. I swear, I thought there were a lot of Coffees in Texas, Tennessee and Alabama but,

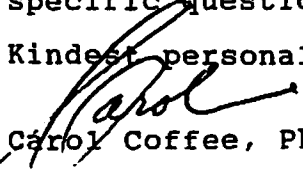
man, one can't swing a cat in Georgia without scratching a Coffee, or at least one of their tombstones! On balance, however, for a single area, I guess that northwest corner of Alabama, in and around Florence and Lauderdale County takes the cake. We spent a whole week in there and with the folks at the County Genealogical Society and in visiting graves of all of the General's people. Of course, we were there after one of our several trips to the Hermitage and after spending a great deal of time in the Tennessee State Library and in and around Smith County. Incidentally, we may have listened to the recorded tour that you produced for the Hermitage if it was still in use in 1993. The docents hung the device on us but we found it difficult to use. My wife is Austrian and one of her sisters from Vienna was visiting with us that summer and accompanied us through the Hermitage. I found it difficult or impossible to translate into German what we were seeing and hearing on the tape. Though it was an excellent and informative presentation, we managed better without it. None of the Ralph Earle paintings from the Coffee Collection were hanging at the time of our 1993 visit, because of the extensive renovation and dust that was kicked up in the home. Fortunately, the curator took us back in the archive and showed us the oils of General John and Mary. Before we departed for that two month research tour I had done an extensive advance mailing (February 4, 1993) to Coffee principals and archives all along our itinerary. A copy of that advance letter is enclosed. Our trip was in June and July. Incidentally, the writing which I intended to do incorporating the Coffee family data has not been done. I got sidetracked the following year on a military history of my old WW-II Infantry Division which I published commemorating the 50th anniversary of VE-Day (May 8, 1995), our victory over the Nazis in Europe. That work is described on the Internet in the accompanying web pages. I still hope to pick up where I left off in my writing of a romanticization of the Coffee family history as its several principals fit into and moved through some rather momentous chapters and events of American history. We'll see.

Frank, are you familiar with the Coffey Cousins' Clearinghouse? If not, I recommend that you might take a membership. I have been a member for years and have attended several of their annual Coffey (ee) Reunions. Membership is \$8 a year and that includes a quarterly newsletter, the current copy of which I am enclosing. I have met several really fine researchers at their meetings. Check Page 10 of the enclosed Newsletter for information on Jack Coffee's Genealogy Pages and the Coffey Cousins' website.

A final comment and I'll stand down for now. I gathered from par.5;p:2 of your e-mail to "Len" that you are of the impression that the Rev. Joshua M. Coffee of McMinnville, TN may have descended from the Joshua line of Gen. John of Tennessee/Alabama. He is the brother of my g.g.g. grandpa, David, also descended from William, first son of old Peter, Sr. That line is extremely interesting and found their way into Texas and later, through cattle drives, up into western Nebraska and Wyoming, also to California.

I'll be sending you some "stuff". Meanwhile, Let me know if you have specific questions.

Kindest personal regards,

  
Carol Coffee, Ph.D.

Enclosures



# Odyssey International

2028 Bingle Road, Houston, Texas 77055 U.S.A. (713) 461-7005

February 4, 1993

Carol Coffee, Ph.D.  
President

My contact with you was facilitated through Coffee Cousins' Clearing-house, Jefferson City, Missouri; and The Coffee Family Database, Denver, Colorado. Sincere thanks in advance for reviewing these materials.

I am a hobby-genealogist of the Peter Coffee "line" currently engaged in an historical research and writing involving principals of the line throughout North America. The accompanying materials, though burdensome in their quantity, are self-explanatory and will suggest how I am proceeding with the work. Additionally, the enclosures may enable you to determine whether or not you are of the same "line" and further, whether or not you would have any interest or ability to help me.

I would welcome help in any of the following ways:

1). I need a "Georgia Contact", preferably of the Peter Coffee line, who has or could easily obtain, a complete or partial "Pedigree" Chart of the line in Georgia. A "Simplified" Chart appears at Page 3, attached.

2). I need to be put in contact with someone in Georgia who is fairly familiar with any materials, published or unpublished, dealing with Georgia principals of the line dating from the late 1700's, the approximate time of arrival of Peter Coffee II in Georgia from Virginia.

3). I would welcome copies of old genealogical notes, family Bible or historical notations; as well as reproduceable photographs, portraits, daguerreotypes of ancestors, memorials, old graves, historical markers or old homesites. Originals of any such materials should not, of course, be mailed but, if selected for use, would be professionally reproduced locally at the expense of the writer/publisher and appropriately acknowledged in the final work.

4). If you feel that you may be able to assist me in any of the above-numbered ways, please call me "Collect" week-days AM at the above number. If not, perhaps you could pass these materials along.

During the current year and into 1994, my wife and I will spend several weeks, or months as necessary, in primary research on location in Georgia, Virginia, Tennessee, Missouri, Alabama and California. Our work in Texas is substantially complete.

Any assistance that you may be able to provide will, I assure you, be deeply appreciated and gratefully acknowledged in the published work.

Kindest regards,

  
(Mr.) Carol Coffee, Ph.D.

Attachments

Specializing in Custom Tour Packaging and Directing.

Direct Male Descendants of Peter Coffee, I, Ireland & Prince Edward Co., VA  
Earliest recorded presence of Peter Coffee I in the Colony of Virginia  
dates from Court Records of 1731, King George County, Virginia.

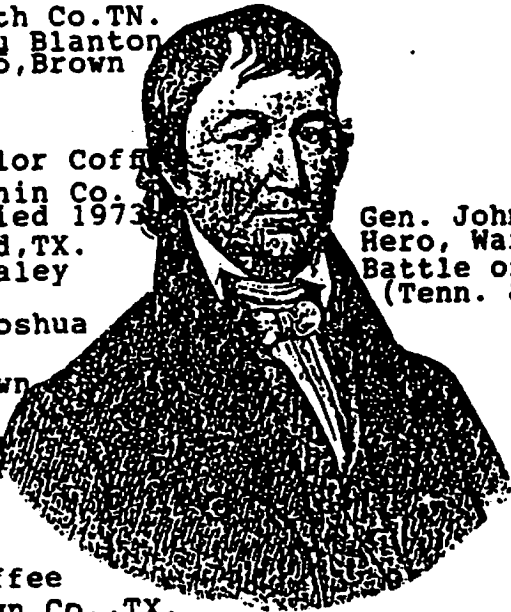
NOTE: Complete line of first-born son, William, from Peter I to Charles  
E. Coffee. Partial lines of sons James, Benjamin, Joshua and  
Peter II.

LIMITED  
DIGREE CHART  
Carol Coffee

Peter COFFEE , Prince Edward Co., Virginia  
\* ca 1716  
= Susannah --

<u>FIRST SON</u>	<u>FOURTH SON</u>	<u>FIFTH SON</u>
Tenn., Mo., Texas	-----Tennessee	Georgia-----
William Coffee ca. 1738 King Geo. Co. Virginia =Mary McAllister	Joshua Coffee , Smith & Coffee Cos., * 1745 Tennessee = Elizabeth GRAVES	Peter Coffee II * 1750 Coffee Co., GA. = Sarah SMITH
David Coffee 1775 Bedford Co.Va. =Sytha Meadows	Gen. John Coffee, Coffee Co., TN * 1772 & Coffee Co., Ala.	Gen. John Coffee * 1782 Coffee Co., GA
Joshua Coffee 1810 Smith Co.TN. =Delilah Conger =Sarah Hill	= Mary DONELSON (the "Alabaman", or the "Tennessean")	= Connelepy BRYAN: (Mary Penelope?) (the "Georgian")
Joshua David Coffee 1837, Smith Co. TN. =Mary Lou Blanton Died 1915, Brown Co. TX.		

John Taylor Coffee  
1870 Fannin Co.  
Texas. Died 1973  
Brownwood, TX.  
=Nora Whaley



Gen. John Coffee  
Hero, War of 1812 and  
Battle of New Orleans  
(Tenn. & Alabama)

Peyton Joshua  
Coffee  
1900, Brown  
Co. TX.  
Died 1987  
=Virginia  
Estelle  
Gilmer

Gen. John Coffee  
Commander, Georgia  
State Militia.  
Hero, Creek Ind-  
ian War. Congress  
of the United  
States.



Carol Coffee  
1924 Brown Co., TX.  
=Rudolfine (Fifi)  
Prager

Charles E. Coffee  
1953, Travis Co. TX.  
=Judy Ann Kornegay

Dustin W. Coffee  
1994, Harris Co., TX..



Col. John Trousdale Coffee  
Commander, 3rd Missouri  
Cavalry (Iron Brigade), CSA.  
Hero of the Confederacy.  
Born 1816, Smith Co. Tenn.  
son of Joshua M. Coffee,  
brother of David Coffee,  
Bedford Co. VA., above.  
Died in Texas, 1890.

Prepared by: C. Coffee

<u>SECOND SON ?</u>	<u>THIRD SON ?</u>
James Coffee? Stafford, VA. 40 Died: Unk.	Benjamin Coffee Stafford, VA. 1743 Died: Unk.

~~Ambrose Coffee, 1762 McMinn Co.  
Tenn., father of Holland Coffee  
Holland Coffee, 1807 McMINN Co. TN.  
Died 1846, Texas.~~

**From:** Frank V. Coffee <fvcoffee@earthlink.net>  
**To:** Corb32@aol.com <Corb32@aol.com>  
**Date:** Saturday, January 08, 2000 6:00 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Gen John Coffee

---

Dear Len,

What a pleasure to hear from someone who actually knows something! I sent that piece to every Coffee listed on rootsweb.com and yours is the first reply of any substance. I've mostly received nothing more than polite thank-you's; I thought the purpose of the web was to share information.

I'm a direct descendant of General John Coffee of Georgia, your ancestor's first cousin. They were exact contemporaries and both were fanatical adherents of Andrew Jackson (although your ancestor was obviously much closer to him). My forebear served in the Congress during both Jackson administrations, died while in office, but was nevertheless elected to a third term, which would have carried over into the van Buren administration. If you are interested, I'll send you the complete lineage.

Needless to say, our ancestor cousins have been much confused by later generations. I was appalled and embarrassed when I first visited my General's grave in McRae, Georgia. In the 1940's he had been disinterred from the family plot in Jacksonville (one of two in Georgia) by some well-intentioned DAR ladies and given a grand ceremonial reburial with a monument declaring him a member of the Tennessee Volunteers and a hero of the Battle of New Orleans!

I'm originally from Jacksonville, Florida (you can't get away from them!) but have lived in New York City since 1963. You can find me at 25 West 16th St., Apt. 5F, N.Y., N.Y. 10011. Tel. (212) 929-4904.

I'm embarrassed to admit that I don't have any record of the sources of the following information. Much of it comes from a family history left me by my Aunt Marguerite, and back then no one listed sources. I found additional information in a local history shown me by Mary Lee Willcox when I visited her at the Telfair County Chamber of Commerce in McRae. That was when I first started doing this research and was too foolish to realize how important a source could be later on. At any rate, this material says your ancestor's father was Joshua, not John, and as they didn't leave Virginia until 1775 he would have been born there.

The Donelson house is just down the road from the Hermitage and is quite lovely, with portraits of John and Mary and John's sword hanging over the mantel. You ought to see it. Back in 1989 I wrote, produced and narrated a recorded tour for the Hermitage which is no longer in use.

1/10/00



Peter Coffey came to Virginia in 1730 aboard the Forward Galley, George Buckeridge, Captain. He came in peonage under the Transportation Act of 1715 which allowed debtors to be sold in bondage and 'transported' to the colonies. The data from that fog-shrouded source are now confused with my fictional speculations:

The usual term of indenture was seven years, but it appears that it was necessary for Coffey to re-indenture himself for another seven before he was able to acquire enough money and farm equipment to marry his wife Susannah with whom he would strike out for the interior to stake out their own claim of land. They settled on about two-hundred acres between Sawney's Creek and Vaughn's Creek, and from Walkers Road to the county line in what is now Prince Edward County, Virginia. Their eldest son William was born in 1745, followed by Joshua (m. 1769 Eliz. Graves, the father of Gen. John Coffee of Tennessee, b. 1772), then Peter, Jr. (the father of Gen. John Coffee of Georgia, b. 1782) in 1750, Catharine (Thomas), Mary (Kindal), Hannah (Weakley), Lydia, and Elizabeth.

During the Revolutionary War Joshua Coffee served as captain of mounted gunners, and Peter was a private in Captain Benjamin Casey's 12th Virginia Regiment.

Peter, Jr. married Sarah Smith in 1774 and their children were: Elizabeth (b. 1775, m. 1. C. Daniel & 2. T. Ligon), Nancy (b. 1778, m. 1. Abram Heard & 2. Jas. Kennedy), Susannah (b. 1780, m. T. Randall), John E. (b. 1782, m. Ann Penelope Bryan, d. 1836), Sarah (b. 1785, m. Wm. Harris), Joshua who never married (settled in Mandarin, Fla?) and died in Darien, Georgia (1861? St. Andrew's Cemetery?); Mary (b. 1789, m. H. Gibson); Cynthia (b. 1791, m. Thos. Stocks); and Martha known as Patsy (b. 1793, m. Geo. Heard).

About 1775 (Captain, USA, Rev. War) Joshua Coffee (1745-97, son of Peter Sr.) and his wife Elizabeth Graves (b. 1751) left Virginia for Granville County, North Carolina, and about 1790 to 200 acres on the Haw River in Rockingham County where he died in 1797. His widow moved with her children to Haysborough on the Cumberland River in Tennessee where she died in 1804. The Rev. Joshua Coffee was born in Rockingham in 1789. He married Jane Trousdale in 1810 and died in McMinnville, Tenn. on 3 Oct. 1842; Thomas, b. 4/15/1788; and Michael who married a Margaret. John (b. 1798) married Mary Donelson (niece of Rachel [Mrs. Andrew] Jackson) in Nashville in 1809. In 1812 clerk of Rutherford Co. Court. Had farm on Stones River. Gen. USA 12/10/1812 to 6/20/1815. Natchez Exped. 1/5/1813; Creek Campaign 9/1813-4/1814; New Orleans 9/14-4/15; Tallahatchie, Horseshoe Bend, Night Battle 12/23/14. Wounded right side, Emuckfau. Daughter Mary b. 9/1812. Surveyor General of Northern Mississippi Territory. Founded Florence, Alabama where he died July 7, 1833. In D.C. (1833) for nullification crisis. "The first war was begun by Tea – the last one was ended by Coffee." Toast, Tuscaloosa, 1826. From Washington Globe obituary.

In 1800 Peter Coffee with his 18 year old son John along with all the younger children (The older married daughters presumably stayed in Virginia with their husbands. We do not know the date of the death of his wife Sarah. She might have died in 1793 at the birth of her last child, or she may have been yet alive.) moved to Powelton, in Hancock County Georgia. Peter died about 1803 and is buried in the Baptist cemetery of Powelton. In 1806 a lottery was held for the Ocmulgee Lands. As a single head of family, John Coffee was entitled to one draw, Sarah, Peter's widow, to one draw, and an unnamed orphan of Peter (most likely John's younger brother Joshua) also to one draw. As a result of the lottery (Major Carley's Batallion, Captain Coffee's District), the entire Coffee family moved one hundred miles due south to acreage on the north shore of the Ocmulgee River in Telfair County. John married Penelope Ann Bryan (born Jones County, North Carolina, September 23, 1784, died Madison, Florida 12 December 1865) shortly after arriving in Telfair Co. He family probably having come to Georgia by much the same route as the Coffees. John, a surveyor of the lands bordering the Altamaha and Ocmulgee Rivers, would later name the hamlet near his property Jacksonville, in honor of Andrew Jackson.

The world's a happier place when we know our cousins.

Fond regards, Frank

## Frank Coffee

25 January 00

Dr. Carol Coffee  
2028 Bingle Road  
Houston, Texas 77055

Dear Carol,

I was delighted to hear from you. The Internet has overwhelmed me with Coffees! How different from my childhood in Jacksonville, Florida when it seemed that my immediate family were the sole bearers of this strange name. I was also sure that my father and I were the only Franks on the face of the earth!

When my Aunt Marguerite Coffee Chiasson died she left me two packets of letters going back to before the Civil War, many of them in French. I had been told many stories about our Louisiana French heritage and of our connection to Myra Clark Gaines, but my Florida Cracker concept of it remained rather nebulous and ill-formed. Those letters woke me up. How it rankles me now that I spent four years in school in Tallahassee completely unaware that my great grandfather Dr. Frédéric François Villeret had set up practice there shortly after arriving from France in 1853 and that his daughter Sophie Anita would marry Christopher Columbus Coffee, Jr. from nearby Madison. His wife, by the way, was Zulime Morejón (they were wed in nearby Eufaula, Alabama on 30 April 1864) a second cousin of Myra's.

Needless the say, my first line of research was on my father's maternal line which starts in this country in New Orleans in 1763. I have only come fairly recently to what I thought of as the more prosaic Coffees. What a joy it has been to discover the role our family has played in the history of our country and what a delicious lagniappe it is to learn that the Coffees and the Villerets first crossed paths in the swamps and fields at Chalmette! Do you remember learning in fifth grade history class about Andrew Jackson's supporters' ripping the drapes and muddying the carpets of the White House at his inaugural? When I first started delving into our history I remarked to my sister, "Anita, that was no rabble, that was us!"

I assume you know all about my line of the family but I can certainly fill in any gaps. Most accounts say Peter, Jr. settled in Powelton, Georgia in 1800, but I have seen one that claims he moved there just after the Revolution, about 1780. Peter died in Powelton in 1803 and his son John E. resettled in what is now Telfair County as a result of the land lottery of 1806. His wife Ann Penelope Bryan was from ~~South~~ <sup>North</sup> Carolina but we don't know where they met or married. In 1838, just as the last of the Indians had been force-marched to Oklahoma on the infamous Trail of Tears and two years following his death, half of General John E's progeny, along with his widow Penelope, upped and moved down the Coffee military road to Madison, Florida. It's hard to imagine why they would do such a thing, but back then people were bitten by the frontier gadfly that practically drove them to move on in search of something better. When new territory opened up, they lit out for it!

25 West 16th Street • New York, NY 10011 • (212) 929-4904 • fvcoffee@earthlink.net

\* Jones County, N.C. 9/23/1784 - d. Madison, Fla. 12/12/1865

Have you ever been told by an Irishman that the Coffees are illiterate tinkers, little better than wandering gypsies? I have, on more than one occasion. A few years ago, there was an article in The New York Times about the plight of the Irish tinkers, most of whom lost all they had during the famine, and Coffees were mentioned in it as having transcended their class and won election to the Dail. It made me realize why, when I first went to Ireland back in the 60's, they seemed amazed that I could read and write!

I am quite flattered by your offer to pass the mantle of Coffee Historian on to me, but I'm not sure I'm up to the task. While I am eager to learn anything I can about the Clan, I am unwilling to assume any responsibility to all those Coffees out there who just want to be told where they come from without having to do anything themselves. Neither would I want to have to keep track of every line and to have to constantly emend and update the genealogy.

There's no need to apologize about that recorded tour at the Hermitage. What a trial it was working with that "Ladies' Committee" (the governance is modeled on that of Mount Vernon). All they wanted to talk about was the interior restoration, they weren't interested in history at all. Those tours all pander to a median intelligence that is supposedly afraid of actually learning anything. And what could be more annoying than having to dodge museum visitors who bolt from one picture to another like errant cattle as they slavishly follow the damned things. That's one line of work I was glad to leave. (I'm enclosing my CV, along with a grab bag of other documents, so that you can follow the grand sweep of my career! I am now semi-retired, occasionally recording a book for the Library of Congress and writing advertising copy (sold out to mammon!) to keep the wolf from the door. I am single and have lived in New York since getting out of the Army in '63.)

Did you by any chance teach at the University of Houston? Do you know William Lee Pryor? He taught English and Humanities there until he retired several years ago. He was finishing his PhD when I was an undergraduate at FSU in the 50's and was a friend and mentor. He achieved some celebrity in Houston as a TV cultural maven during the 60's and 70's. Haven't heard from him in a few years as he's gone dotty and doesn't remember anything.

Will look forward to hearing from you.

Fond regards to you and Fifi (Ich küss' die Hand),

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Frank' or similar, written in a cursive style.



General John R. Coffee of Tennessee, first cousin and contemporary of General John E. Coffee of Georgia, was Andrew Jackson's friend, business associate, in-law and comrade in arms. He was Jackson's aide de camp during the war of 1812 and is generally thought to have planned the strategy that won the battle of New Orleans.

**"The first war was begun by Tea — the last one was ended by Coffee"**  
Toast, Tuscaloosa, 1826, from Washington Globe obituary.

General John Coffee (b. Nashville, 1798) married Mary Donelson (niece of Rachel [Mrs. Andrew] Jackson) in Nashville in 1809. In 1812 clerk of Rutherford Co. Court. Had farm on Stones River. Gen. USA 12/10/1812 to 6/20/1815. Natchez Exped. 1/5/1813; Creek Campaign 9/1813-4/1814; New Orleans 9/14-4/15; Tallahatchie, Horseshoe Bend, Night Battle 12/23/14. Wounded right side, Emuckfau. Daughter Mary b. 9/1812. Surveyor General of Northern Mississippi Territory. Founded Florence, Alabama where he died July 7, 1833. In D.C. (1833) for nullification crisis.

The Battle of New Orleans at Chalmette, January 8, 1815  
from Grace King's New Orleans:

And Coffee, with his ever-to-be-remembered brigade of "Dirty Shirts," who after a march of eight-hundred miles answered Jackson's message to hasten, by covering in two days the one-hundred-and-fifty miles from Baton Rouge to New Orleans. p. 220

After them Jackson's companion in arms, the great Coffee, trotted at the head of his mounted gun-men, with their long hair and unshaved faces, in dingy woolen hunting shirts, copperas (sic) dyed trousers, coonskin caps, and leather belts stuck with hunting knives and tomahawks. "Foward at a gallop!" was Coffee's order, after a word with General Jackson, and so they disappeared. p. 228

The most distinguished prisoner made by the Americans was Major Mitchell of the Ninety-fifth Rifles, and to his intense chagrin he was forced to yield his sword, not to regulars, but to Coffee's uncourtly Tennesseans. p. 233

The other (division, on the left, was commanded) by Coffee, whose line extended so far in the swamp that his men stood in the water during the day and at night slept on floating logs made fast to trees; every man 'half a horse and half an alligator,' as the song says. p. 244

Genealogy of the Carriere, Despau, Morejon, Villeret & Coffee families showing connection with Myra Clark Gaines.

Jean Carriere b. Libourne 9/6/1749, d. at sea, 1784, m. (8/16/1763) Marie Chauffert b. Bordeaux 4/1/1744, d. Opelousas, 7/6/92:

- 1) Marie, b. N.O. 9/24/1764, m. (1/2/1785) Bertrand Lassabe, b. 1751
- 2) Rose, b. N.O. 1766; d. Biloxi c.1855, m. (6/1/1785) Symphorien Caillevet, b. Bordeaux, 8/22/1746, d. N.O. Jan 1806. Children: Symphorien Guillaume (Wm) b. N.O. 1786 d. Libourne; Bertrand Latour b. Opelousas 1788 d. Libourne; Louis
- 4) Arbaud b. N.O. 1790 (blind from 1850) d. Biloxi 1860; Adolph b. N.O. 1803 d. Biloxi 1842.
- 5) Sophie, b. N.O. 8/1/1770, d. Biloxi c. 1867 [referred to as living in 5 Feb.'65 letter from Caroline McMahon to Zulime Villeret, & in 6 Sept.'66 letter from MCG to Jos. McMahon], m. (2/4/1786) Guillaume Despau, b. Libourne 7/2/1751, d. Veracruz, Mexico (San Andreas Hosp) Nov. 1808.
- 6) Louis, b. N.O. 5/28/1774, d. Opelousas 1814, m. Louise Gradenigo: son, Gerard, daughter Myra Antonia; grandson, John Gustave.
- 7) Marie Julie (Zulime) b. N.O. 1778, d. N.O. 1853 m. 1) Jerome Des Granges, N.O. 12/2/1794; 2) (supposedly) Daniel Clark, Phila. spring 1802; 3) James Gardette, Phila. 8/2/08. Sons, James, b. 12/19/1809; Edmund, b. 9/8/16 Phila. Joseph Treville b. 1783, d. Sept. 1795.

Myra, illegitimate daughter of Daniel Clark & Zulime Carriere Des Granges, b. N.O. July, 1805; d. N.O., 1/9/85, adopt. by Samuel Davis & reared in Wilmington, Del. m. there 9/13/1832 Wm. Wallace Whitney of Binghamton, N.Y., d. N.O. 9/13/37, = W.W. (b 1834, d. D.C. 6/81) m. Hattie L. = W.W. 3, Myra C., Zulime (m. Somers) & Rhoda (m. James Y. Christmas of Warrenton, N.C. 1862 = W.W., Jos. M., Rhoda [m. C.A. Kennedy]) Myra m. 1839 Gen. Edmond P. Gaines from whom she inherited property in Memphis, Tenn. & Jacksonville, Fla.

Sophie's surviving issue (out of 8): Emerance b. 1788 m. (4/24/1807, N.O.) Louis Desdunes of Santo Domingo. Sophie b. N.O. 1799, m. 22 April 1817 in Regla (Havana) Cuba Francisco Valdes (Ubaldo) Morejon of Matanzas. (Age given 17. Witness: Bartolome Riols of N.O.) where both Caroline & Zulime Dolores were born in 1826 & 1830. Louis Despau b. N. O. 1800. Sophie d. Biloxi 1/2/1852. Caroline m. Col Jos. H. McMahon of Memphis in Biloxi on 6/21/1843. Zulime Dolores Morejon, d. Jax 7/28/1891, m. (4/30/1864, Eufaula, Alabama) Dr. Frederic Francois Villeret (b. Nantes 12/25/1817, d. Jax 12/23/1905) and gave birth to Frank Uvaldo in 1864, Apalachicola (d. Jax. 3 Aug. 1902) & Anita Sophie July 19, 1868 in Monticello, Fla., [tombstone gives birthdate as 7/19/69] bap. 6/1/69 Jax., d. Jax 6/19/1948. Anita Villeret m. (5 Feb. 1890 Jax) Christopher Columbus Coffee (b. Madison Fla 1866, d. Jax 10/12/1917).

Issue of C.C. Coffee & Anita Villeret: Edwin, m. Juanita Simmons (their issue Ed, m. Pauline Petiot, = Christine [m. Wm. Miller = Christine] & Nada, m. Shaler Richardson = Wm. & Shaler) Frederick, m. Josephine Rowland (their issue Emolyn who m. ? Cocks = Emolyn [m. Chas Parker, son Jay] & Fred) Marguerite b. 10/26/1898 d. 3/15/1985, m. 4/18/23 Jax Eugene Chiasson b.6/10/1898 Patterson La, d. Jax 12/10/1986 = Joan 1925-35 & adopt Christopher (b. 1/14/36) & Anna Zulime (b. 3/3/42) Frank (b. Jax 10/15/03, d. Jax. 5/25/75), m. Marjorie Lloyd (b. Jax. 4/12/10, d. Jax. 6/15/55) = Frank b. Jax 11/10/38, Michael b. Jax. 3/30/42 & Anita Jane b. Jax 9/7/48.

Prepared by Frank Villeret Coffee, Jr./ June, 1990.

# Frank Coffee

Narrator \* Writer \* Producer

Narrator of recorded books for The Library of Congress. Since 1973 have recorded hundreds of titles at the American Foundation for the Blind.

1988 to 1992: Writer, Producer and Account Executive at Soundalive, Ltd. and consultant to Thwaite Productions. Researched, wrote and produced recorded tours for museums and historical sites.

1963-88: Broadcast producer, programmer and announcer at major radio and television stations in New York City, specializing in classical music and news editing and presentation. Host of WNCN's weekly opera broadcasts (1978-87). Produced award-winning programs on the arts, including a two-year series on Schubert Lieder with my own translation of the texts. Interviews with major artists.

WQXR-FM/AM, 1968-88. The radio stations of The New York Times.

WNCN-FM, 1977-88. GAF Broadcasting.

WNET-TV, 1973-75. Public Television.

WBAI-FM, 1967-73. Pacifica network: public affairs, music, drama.

Production Director.

WNYC-FM/AM/TV, 1965-67. Broadcast stations of the City of New York.

WBAI-FM, 1963-65.

1975-78: Publicity and Development -- Public Relations Writer. Worked with several arts-related organizations, helping them find and exploit new avenues for publicity, to cultivate their existing clientele as potential donors and to approach foundations and governmental agencies for additional support.

New York State Council on the Arts, Music Division. Consultant, 1975-78.

The Brooklyn Philharmonia. Director of Development, 1975-76.

Light Opera of Manhattan (LOOM), 1976-77.

The Rehearsal Club, 1976-77.

Jacobs Ladder Dance Company, 1978.

Jeffrey Norton Publishers. Sales Promotion, 1973-74.

Languages: French, German, Hungarian, Spanish, Italian.

1960-63: U.S. Army, Europe. Hungarian Interpreter. Honors: U.S. Army Language School; Monterey, California; 1961.

B.A. in English & modern languages. Florida State University, 1960.



January 1980

# WNCN Announcers

## FRANK COFFEE

Gordon Spencer likes to say, "Stay tuned for your Coffee," and Matt Edwards points out that "He looks exactly like Alexis Weissenberg, only taller." Frank Coffee was born and bred in Jacksonville, Fla. He claims that "Yes, I did have a distinct Southern accent which has diminished over the years, but can still be detected when I'm tired or eating Hoppin' John—that is, black-eyed peas and rice." It goes without saying that he never indulges in Hoppin' John during business hours. His voice welcomes tourists to the Statue of Liberty in English, Spanish, German and French, and will soon conduct helicopter tours of the Grand Canyon in those languages.

Frank determined early in high school that he wanted to excel in speaking languages, especially after he discovered that "Gō-ēth" produced a "bewildered, uncomprehending gaze from my high school English teacher about my naïve Anglicization of Goethe."

At Florida State University, Frank majored in English with four years of intensive French, two each of German and Russian, followed by a course in Hungarian at the Army Language School in Monterey, Cal. The remainder of his tour was spent in Bavaria, Germany, all of which "left little time for Tennyson," so his thoughts of gaining a Ph.D. in English fell away.

This was fortunate for weekend listeners of WNCN, since after months of cajoling, Frank's roommate at FSU hauled him down to the university radio station where he auditioned for an announcing job. After the gaff of introducing a recording performed by Yehudi Menuhin, "that great Indian violinist," Frank learned his lessons well and by his senior year was student manager of the station. It was ap-

(above) WNCN's Frank Coffee set quite a record himself by taping the complete *Guinness Book of Records* for the Library of Congress. Photo: William L. Vallée.

parently an exciting and vigorously musical situation in the basement studios of WFSU-FM in Tallahassee. Frank became the first narrator of the live faculty and student recital series, featuring faculty members such as Edward Kilenyi and Ernő von Dohnányi, who was the first person to interest Frank in the Hungarian language and culture. In these concerts, Frank would conduct live interviews backstage with the performers and then journey out into the auditorium and lobby of the theater for first-hand discussions with audience members.



On his return from Bavaria, Frank stopped off in New York and registered with an employment agency that arranged an audition for him at radio station WBAI. He was hired and working before he realized that the station was no longer principally a classical-music station, but rather a part of the avant-garde and radical Pacifica Network. While the lack of classical music disturbed Frank, he was interested enough in the activities of this energetic group of broadcasters to remain working there for "eight very exciting, eye-opening years."

Those years may have been eye-opening,

but they apparently couldn't satisfy Frank's musically oriented ears. Since there were no openings at any of the classical radio stations in New York at the time, Frank left WBAI in 1973 to become a fund-raiser and publicist for organizations in the arts such as the Brooklyn Philharmonia, the Light Opera of Manhattan and the Rehearsal Club.

Frank came to realize during this time that he needed to blend music and broadcasting together since that would make "an ideal fusion of my two abiding passions: music and language." In 1977, after WNCN had resumed classical-music broadcasting for a little over one year, Frank joined the staff as a freelance announcer.

The crisp and extremely accurate pronunciations that highlight Frank's on-air delivery are perhaps a result of his extensive work on behalf of the visually impaired of this country. Having recorded scores of books (including the complete *Guinness Book of Records*, *Mein Kampf* and "lots of novels about Hungarian vampires") at the American Foundation for the Blind for the Library of Congress' Talking Books program, Frank has polished his English to an astonishing degree. He is virtually unbeatable in the pronunciation contests that often take place in the WNCN studios, where

Frank can stump people in pronouncing common English words, let alone in one of the Slavic languages.

Frank Coffee is most recognized for his 7 PM broadcasts on WNCN of the Sunday Opera. Frank can transform the most mundane libretto into the exciting drama it was meant to be by infusing it with the great affection he feels for this form of music. For an example of precise diction and enunciation, plus a grand time at the opera, tune in WNCN each Saturday and Sunday evening for music with Coffee—Frank Coffee, that is.

—William L. Vallée