

# **My Maternal Johnson Family**

**By Robert Louis Zambenini (1932-)**

## **Introduction**

Over the past 20 years I have pursued genealogy of my family. The most difficult part has been the ancestors of my Grandfather, John T. Johnson. At this point I feel it is best to commit what I know, and what I don't know, to paper, and to organize my large files, which I have accrued through various avenues of success and in taking a few wrong forks in the road.

I am most grateful to several people who have given me insight. My Uncle George Johnson spent many hours telling me what he knew, and shared many wonderful stories of growing up in Coal Bluff and Brazil. My Aunt Sue Brettnacher allowed me scan family photos. On line I have traded considerable information with Mary Lou Hazelrigg in Cloverdale, IN. I was lucky to hook up with her after finally finding my Johnson links to the 1800s and 1700s. I am grateful for help from George Archer, of the Archer Clearing house, and a prominent Archer family historian. I am indebted to the fine genealogy libraries in the counties around western Indiana and the resources on the Internet.

Precise relationships are difficult to determine prior to 1850, as census records only showed head of household. Census records have been found to have inconsistencies when comparing different years. Beyond my Grandparents, many of the Johnsons are shown as illiterate, and that would account for giving census takers vague and inconsistent info.

My current contacts are:

Homepage: [www.bobzam.com](http://www.bobzam.com)

Email: [b zam@compuserve.com](mailto:bzam@compuserve.com) or [bob zam@yahoo.com](mailto:bobzam@yahoo.com)

If you desire to leave your email address I will notify you when updates to his document are posted. Also I plan to scan and build a document of all my Johnson family photos and will notify you when available.

Address: 3241 Hillrose Drive, Los Alamitos, CA 90720

November 24, 2011

## Brief Overview of my Johnsons

I descend from my mother, Hazel Johnson (1907-1951). Her parents were John T. Johnson (1876-1951) and Wilehemia (Minnie) Dittmar (1883-1960).

John T. Johnson was the third son of Perry Commodore Johnson (1844-1908) and Mary Archer (1850-1930).

Perry Commodore Johnson was the first son of David Johnson (1822-?) and Maria Richards (1827-?).

David Johnson was the son of Abraham Johnson (1793-Before 1843) and Hattie (Kathryn) Mathews (about 1793-?)

Abraham Johnson was the son of John D. Johnson (1766-1843) and Mary Embry (1770-1848).

John D. Johnson was the son of Abraham (Johnston) Johnson (After 1715-Before 1829 and Rebecca Bonham (After 1724-Before 1835).

Abraham and Rebecca are well researched, but there are considerable differences in dates and their precise lineage.

This first Abraham and Rebecca lived in New Jersey but moved to Amwell Twp, Washington, Co., PA before Abraham died. This move occurred around 1770 or after. This area is in the very southwestern corner of Pennsylvania, and part later became West Virginia. This area was a western front at the time of the Revolutionary War in fighting with Indians.

After Abraham's death, the family moved on into Vermillion Twp., Ashland County, Ohio. It must be noted that this area of Ohio was true wilderness with jungle like conditions and large dangerous animals and Indians. As such, settlers were clearing land, and many of our family were involved in logging and sawmill operations.

John D. Johnson and son Abraham remained in Ohio the rest of their lives. The War of 1812 was an important part of their history, as the British were planning to attack across the Great Lakes into Ohio. Most able bodied males were formed into militias, including our Abraham (1770-1843). He received a pension as such. The legendary navy commander, Commodore Perry was 'reactivated' and he formed a navy in Great Lakes to thwart the British invasion across the Great Lakes into Ohio and Pennsylvania. As Commodore Perry, was a huge national hero both before the war of 1812 and after, many males were named with Commodore Perry or Perry Commodore in the following years. My Great-grandfather Perry's middle name was Commodore.

John D. Johnson's brother, Jeriah (1781-1952), moved on to Putnam County, Indiana, and took out land grants as the frontier moved west. Jeriah's sons Levi, Henry, and Oliver accompanied their father to Putnam County.

John D. Johnson died in Richland County, Ohio, 5 February, 1843. He left an explicit will, which is the vital link in identifying our line. His son Abraham had died before, so in his will, he gave part shares to Abraham's children and a granddaughter. Abraham's children were Sarah, my Great-great-grandfather David, Mary Ann, and Perry. Also, there was a part share to Evaline, who was shown as a granddaughter, but I have not found which of Abraham's children was her parent..

David went to Putnam County Indiana, where Jeriah, his Grandfather's brother, lived. On 3 September 1843, he married Maria Richards and they went back to Ohio, where their first son, and my Great-grandfather Perry Commodore, was born on 8 December 1844.

The following pages continue with the detailed history, and my notes of my Johnsons.

## Part I. My Maternal Grandparents

### **Grandparents John T. Johnson and Wilehemia (Minnie) Dittmar:**

**John T. Johnson**, third son of Perry Commodore Johnson and Mary E. Archer, was born on 17 Oct 1876 in Perth, (Clay County), IN. He died on 09 Feb 1951 in Brazil IN. He was born near Rock Run Church, south of Diamond, IN. He operated a blacksmith shop in Rosedale in late 1800s. He also owned and operated a tavern in Seelyville, IN, but apparently gave that up when he became married Wilehemia. He helped care for the great race horse, Dan Patch, in Oxford, IN, when he was courting or first married to Minnie Dittmar. They were married by Pastor John Vermillion, at the Coal Bluff M.E. Church, on July 27, 1901.

He was a mine boss at Universal (Bunsen), IN and then moved to Coal Bluff in about 1918. After a short stint as mine boss, he returned to Coal Bluff as a miner. He later became a full time blacksmith, and opened his shop in about 1932. He owned about 13 acres, from their home down to Cobb Tower, where he had a small house. His oldest daughter Mable and Husband Don Lenhart lived in this house for a while. He closed his blacksmith shop and moved to Brazil on November 11, 1937. He opened and operated a blacksmith shop at the corner of Jackson Street and Depot Street, from 1932 until retirement at age 72. He moved from basic blacksmithing to machine shop operations during WWII. Lots 9 and 10 are the lots of the blacksmith shop. Records show this property deeded to John Johnson on May 30, 1941 for \$500. Today, the Jackson Towers retirement complex occupies this property. He had a patent on a lazy Susan dining table, and this large table was used at large family gatherings.

After moving to Brazil, the family lived on South Forest Avenue, just south of the railroad underpass. Sons Jim, Bob and George were teenagers living home at that time. During the early 1940s, the family moved to South Lambert, the first house north of the RR on the West side. They lived there until the late 1940s.

They moved to Hollingsworth, IN, on US 36. They returned to Brazil on Hendrix Street, where John died.

**Wilehemia (Minnie) Dittmar** was born to Johan Valentine Dittmar (1851-1905) and Osanna Margeretha Koch (1836-1923) on 14 Jul 1883, near Hamburg, Germany. She died in Jul 1960 in Brazil IN. She came to the US at the age of 14 on the Alyce Lorane. by working as a waitress on the ship.. The family lived in Oxford, IN, northeast of Lafayette, and many of the family are buried in West Oxford Cemetery. She was an active quilter while living in Coal Bluff.

Grandma Minnie had one brother, J August (1880-1948), and two sisters, Mary (1873-1948), and Catherine E. 'Lizzie' (1878-1960). J. August married Iva Wilson and they had three children, Doris (7 May 1913-13 Feb 1982), Marshall (1915-), and Keith(1919-). Doris married Russell Westcott and lived in West Palm Beach, FL. I visited Doris during

the 1950s. Mary married Otto Kiger and may have had daughter named Crystal. Aunt Lizzie, as she was known, married Charles Herb (1875-1960), of Coal Bluff. They live on a large farm Northwest of Coal Bluff and raised a very large family.

I have no ancestors for Johan Valentine Dittmar. His wife, Osanna Margeretha's parents were Johann (John) Casper Koch (1822-1894) and Anna Christina. John Casper Koch was later married to Anna Kathrina Messerschmidt (1821-1891). They had three sons and a daughter. One son, George Koch settled in Coal Bluff area.

## **Family Details.....**

**Husband:** John T. Johnson

Birth: 17 Oct 1876 in Perth (Clay County) IN

Death: 09 Feb 1951 in Brazil, IN

Burial: Bee Ridge Cemetery, Brazil, IN

Marriage: 27 Jul 1901 in Vigo County, IN

**Wife:** Wilehemia (Minnie) Dittmar

Birth: 14 Jul 1883 in Germany

Death: Jul 1960 in Brazil, IN

Burial: Bee Ridge Cemetery, Brazil, IN

Father: Johan Valentine Dittmar

Mother: Osanna Margeretha Koch

**Children:**

**Mabel Lena Johnson**

Birth: 01 Oct 1903 in Coal Bluff, IN

Death: 07 Aug 1960 in Charleston, IL

Marriage: 11 Oct 1921 in Terre Haute, IN

Spouse: Daniel E. Lenhart

**Hazel Johnson**

Birth: 06 Oct 1907 in Coal Bluff, IN

Death: 12 Feb 1951 in Rosedale, IN

Burial: Bee Ridge Cemetery, Brazil, IN

Marriage: 02 Nov 1931 in Rockville, IN

Spouse: Isidor Valentine Zambenini

**August Johnson**

Birth: 10 Feb 1909 in Coal Bluff, IN

Death: 16 Dec 1994 in Clinton, IN

Burial: Clear Run, Bridgeton, IN

Marriage: 02 Feb 1935

Spouse: Bessie Elizabeth Sanders

**John Johnson**

Birth: 22 Jul 1911 in Coal Bluff, IN  
Death: 31 Aug 1975 in Indianapolis, IN  
Marriage: 1939  
Spouse: Hyla Grindle

**Russell Johnson**

Birth: 20 Jul 1913 in Coal Bluff IN  
Death: 25 May 1979 in Terre Haute, IN  
Marriage: 1939  
Spouse: Mary Rankins

**James Johnson**

Birth: 20 Sep 1915 in Coal Bluff, IN  
Death: 18 Mar 1977 in Brazil, IN  
Burial: Clearview Cemetery, Brazil, IN  
Marriage: 04 Aug 1941 in Canton, MO  
Spouse: Doris Marie James

**Susie M. Johnson**

Birth: 13 Sep 1917 in Coal Bluff, IN  
Death: 28 Aug 2000 in Lafayette, IN  
Burial: 31 Aug 2000 in St. Boniface Cemetery, Lafayette, IN  
Marriage: 11 Jan 1937 in St. Boniface Catholic Church, Lafayette, IN  
Spouse: Francis L. Brettnacher

**Minnie Johnson**

Birth: 03 Dec 1919 in Universal (Bunsen), IN  
Death: 07 Dec 1996 in Terre Haute, IN  
Marriage: 1937  
Spouse: Wilbert W. Nussell

**Robert Wayne Johnson**

Birth: 30 Mar 1924 in Coal Bluff, IN  
Death: 28 Nov 1990 in Brazil, IN  
Burial: Bee Ridge Cemetery, Brazil, IN  
Marriage: 1946  
Spouse: Charlesetta (Chuck) Ruddock

**George Washington Johnson**

Birth: 11 Mar 1927 in Coal Bluff, IN  
Death: 17 Apr 2007 in Owensboro, KY  
Burial: 21 Apr 2007 in Farmersburg, IN  
Marriage: 1977  
Spouse: Jacqueline L. Price

## **Notes collected during research.**

### **John T. Johnson**

Born near Rock Run Church in Perth, IN.

Operated blacksmith shop in Rosedale in late 1900s. Also owned and operated a tavern in Seelyville IN, but gave it up when he was married.

Operated blacksmith shop in Coal Bluff, IN, near Otter Creek Bridge.

He once took care of great race horse, Dan Patch. This was when he was courting or first married to Minnie Dittmar, and was in Oxford, IN area, where she lived.

mine boss at Universal (Bunsen) IN. Moved to Coal Bluff in about 1918. After a short stint as mine boss, returned to Coal Bluff as a miner. Later became a full time blacksmith and opened his shop full time in about 1932.

He also owned a small house on the road to Fontanet near the Cobb tower and daughter Mable and husband Don Lenhart lived in this house for a while.

Shown in Vigo County Directory as living in Nevins Township in 1911.

Moved to Brazil on November 11, 1937 Opened and operated a blacksmith shop at corner of Jackson Street and Depot Street from 1932 until retirement at age 72. Moved from basic blacksmithing to machine shop operations during WWII. Lots 9 and 10 may have been lots of blacksmith shop. Deeded to John Johnson on May 30, 194 for \$500. Had a patent on a lazy Susan dining table and this large table was used at large family gatherings.

Middle name may have been Tilden or Thomas?

Married in M.E. Church by a John Vermillion, Pastor. Probably Coal Bluff M.E. Church. After moving to Brazil, the family live on South Forest Avenue, just south of railroad underpass. Sons Jim, Bob and George were at home at that time. During the early 1940s, they moved to South Lambert, first house north of RR on West side. Lived there until late 1940s. Moved to Hollingsworth IN, on US 36 and back to Brazil.

He was a 50 year member of Bridgeton Masonic Lodge.

### **Wilehemia (Minnie) Dittmar**

Came to US at age 14 on the Alyce Lorane. Active in quilting club in Coal Bluff for many years. Assisted friends who prepared people for burial. Active in many church activities in Coal Bluff and Brazil.

### **Hazel Johnson**

After graduation from Fontanet HS (then known as Nevins Township School), worked as nanny for Coleman Family of Rosedale. Traveled to Florida taking care of Coleman children. Coleman family owned an auto dealership in Rosedale, IN.

### **August Johnson and Bessie Elizabeth Sanders**

August was in serious automobile accident in Raccoon Bottoms, which resulted in serious scarring of his face. They held 50th Wedding Anniversary party in Bridgetown. Member of Bridgton Masonic Lodge

### **John Johnson**

Was coal miner and timber cutter and sawmill operator. Had farm and sawmill in Parke County, northwest of Mansfield, and north of Bridgeton. On this farm he had a small coal mine and a donkey to haul coal from the mine. He was avid hunter and fisherman. Noted for his 'coon' dogs, and was a fur hunter. He was small and very muscular, and would capture fish and frogs by swimming in the streams, among the logs and rocks. Later had a donut shop in Brazil, and one in Charleston IL.

### **Russell Johnson**

Worked in his father's blacksmith shop at Jackson and Depot St. in Brazil. Worked for Terre Haute Malleable Company, and later for many years at American Verified Plant (Logan Clay Company), in Brazil. Retired in 1976. Member Masonic Lodge and Scottish Rite.

### **James Johnson**

U.S Army, 1942-45. Served at U. S. Army Hospital (Kennedy General), Memphis, TN as Prosthesis Tech. Supervisor of Coal Exportations Team for Ayshire Collieries, later AMAX Corp, for 44 years.

Member of Brazil Masonic Lodge No. 264, and Scottish Rite and Shrine Temple in Indianapolis, IN.

### **Robert Wayne Johnson**

Entered Army Air Corps August 5, 1943. Was B-17 Waist Gunner in 92nd Bomb Group. Flew many missions over Germany from England. Received many decorations, including Air Medal. Was discharged November 1, 1945 in Santa Ana, CA. After graduation from Bradley Univ. in Watch making, he worked at Chaney's Jewelry Store in Brazil. Later operated his own shop at 1300 East Hendrix Street. Was avid hunter and fisherman. Ran for Justice of Peace once.

Member of Brazil Masonic Lodge No. 264, and Scottish Rite, in Indianapolis IN.

### **George Washington Johnson**

Obituary: George Washington Johnson, 80 of Terre Haute died Tuesday April 17, 2007, at Owensboro Medical Health System in Owensboro, Ky. He came to Owensboro in December for rehabilitation at Harborside and Heritage Place. He was born March 11, 1927, in Coal Bluff, Ind. to the late John and Wilhelmina Dittmar Johnson. He was of the Methodist faith and was in United States Army and was a veteran of the World War II. He was a retired superintendent for Indiana State Laborers and HOD Carriers Union. He was preceded in death by his wife, Jacqueline Anderson Johnson; son, Mark Johnson; step-son, Mark Anderson; step-grandson, Brian Anderson Johnson; ten brothers, and sisters; and his ex-wife and mother of his children Margaret L. Johnson. He enjoyed wood working, gardening and spending time with family. He is survived by two daughters, Deborah Zaborac of Owensboro, Ky. and Cynthia Dickey and her husband Max of Pittsboro, Ind.; seven grandchildren, Todd Zaborac and his wife Kelly and Tamara Zaborac-Payton and her husband Anthony of Owensboro, Roland Showalter, Ryan Showalter, and Daniel Dickey of Pittsboro, Kevin Johnson and Dylan



Johnson of Texas; a step-grandchild, Travis Anderson of Sullivan; a great-grandchild, Jack Zaborac of Owensboro; a step-great grandchild, Tara Anderson of Sullivan; and sister-in-law, Doris Johnson of Evansville and Mary Johnson of Brazil; and several nieces and nephews. Services are at 6 p.m. today at James H. Davis Funeral Home Chapel in Owensboro. Visitation is from 4 to 6 p.m. today at the funeral home and 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday at his home, 2357 East Eaton Drive, Terre Haute. Burial will be at 4 p.m. Saturday at West Lawn Cemetery in Farmersburg, Ind. The family requests that expressions of sympathy may take the form of donations to American Diabetes Association, 2207 E. Morgan Ave, Suite E, Evansville, Ind. 47711.

## **Great-grandparents Perry Commodore Johnson and Mary E. Archer**

**Perry Commodore Johnson**, son of David Johnson and Maria Richards, was born on 09 Dec 1844 in Ohio. He died on 20 Nov 1908 in Parke, Indiana, USA. His parents went to Ohio after they were married in Putnam County, IN and returned to Putnam County around 1849. The 1850 census shows them living in Washington Township, near relatives who had farms near where the Croy's Creek Church stands today. This census also shows sons Abraham and William were born before they returned from Ohio and Emeline born after they returned to Indiana. Perry was living in Van Buren Township in the 1870 Census, and shown as a day laborer. At that time they lived in a house between the John Bailey Sawmill and Pell farm near Cardonia, southeast of the town of Carbon.

Shown in 1880 Census living in Perth, listed as Teamster. Moved to Nevins Township, before 1885 and moved to Jessup, IN, north of Rosedale in Parke County, before 1907. Two nieces, Nora Archer and Daisy Archer, were living with them in 1900 census.

Mother of Nora and Daisy was a Mary Johnson. She is believed to be Perry's sister,, Mary Ann Johnson, who married A. J. Archer. She died shortly after the birth of her three children, and before 1884. She had a son, Albert, who was Mary Brown's son-in-law. Mary Brown and family lived north of Coal Bluff in Sandridge. See history of Big George Johnson for more in his relationship with Mary Brown and family. Perry bought lot 14, Block 1, in Carbon, IN from Carbon Block Coal Company, May 27, 1872 for \$200. He and wife, Mary Archer, sold this lot November 27, 1872 for \$400 to James Kuerr (Kerr) and Mr. Kerr also assumed the note that Perry had with the Carbon Block Coal Company. Lot 14 was between 1st and 2nd street on Lincoln Street in Carbon. Records in Clay County Clerk's office shows:

--John Johns and SP Oaks had a lawsuit against David Johnson (Perry's father), and Ebenzer Davis for foreclosure and the case was dismissed for a cost of \$8.05 on October 7, 1873. Book 5, page 267.

-- John Johns and SP Oaks had a suit against Perry Johnson, Sept 3, 1873, but, the case was dismissed for want of prosecution. Book 6, 194.

--Legal action between Perry Johnson and Carbon Block Coal company on May 7, 1880 book 22, page 27.

Perry died on 20 Nov 1908, while his family was living in Jessup. No death record was ever found in extensive searches of county records in Parke, Clay, Vigo and the Indiana State Health Department, funeral home records or in newspaper obituaries. Perry is buried in the family plot in Webster Cemetery, Parke County.

**Mary E. Archer** was born to John Archer and Sarah Payne on 15 January 1850 in Dick Johnson Township, Clay County Indiana. John Archer (1820-1888) and Sarah Payne (1822-1857), had four children, Thomas, Mary, Andrew J. and Lydia. It appears that Sarah died at or around the time of Lydia's birth. John then married. Mary E. Campbell and they had six children.

Sarah Payne was born in Virginia to Thomas and Mary Payne. There is considerable research available on the Paynes of Virginia.

Mary Archer had the nickname 'Aunt Doty', but was known to family as 'Grandma Archer'. In the first census, in 1850, shortly after her birth, her name appears to be Juda. She stated to some family that she was part Cherokee Indian, but no evidence of this is anywhere in the Archer family tree or found by several Archer family researchers..

She died in her home in Universal, Saturday, February, 8 and a service was held in the home on February 11, with burial in Webster Cemetery. Services were conducted by C. L. Brown Funeral Home, 1028 Jefferson, Montezuma. IN.

While census data states that she had given birth to 11 children, family records show Perry and Mary had 7 sons.

Mary Archer's father, John Archer (1820-1888), was the son of Patrick Archer (1790-1863), and Lydia Petty (1790-1863). Patrick was the son of Simon Archer (1748-1809) ,and Nancy Church. Simon and his brothers were Indian fighters in Southwestern Pennsylvania, and thus they were Revolutionary War Veterans. Patrick was the Son of the Revolution and used his rights to take large land grants in what became Dick Johnson Township of Clay County, near the town of Diamond. Patrick was a religious man, and was one of the founders of the Rock Run Church, which is still active southwest of Diamond. Patrick, Lydia and John Archer and family are all buried in Patrick Archer Cemetery, which is across the road from the Greek Cemetery, southwest of Diamond.

## **Family Details.....**

**Husband:** Perry Commodore. Johnson

Birth: 09 Dec 1844 in Ohio

Death: 20 Nov 1908 in Parke, Indiana, USA

Marriage: 22 Nov 1868 in Clay County IN

Father: David Johnson

Mother: Maria Richards

**Wife:** Mary E. Archer

Birth: 15 Jan 1850 in Clay County IN, Dick Johnson Township

Death: 08 Feb 1930 in home in Universal, IN

Father: John Archer

Mother: Sarah E. Payne

**Children:**

**Son:** George W. Johnson

Birth: 31 Mar 1870 in Perth (Clay County), IN

Death: 07 Mar 1957 in Carbon, IN

Marriage: 19 Oct 1891 in Clay County, IN

**Wife:** Orpha Jane Chapman

**Son:** Andrew J. Johnson  
Birth: 13 Jul 1874 in Perth (Clay County,) IN  
Death: 20 Jan 1906 in Jessup, IN  
Marriage: 02 Nov 1902 in Clay County, IN  
**Wife:** Given Hill

**Son:** John T. Johnson  
Birth: 17 Oct 1876 in Perth (Clay County), IN  
Death: 09 Feb 1951 in Brazil, IN  
**Wife:** Wilehemia (Minnie) Dittmar

**Son:** Silas Johnson  
Birth: 1879. No record found of death. Believed to have died as a teenager.

**Son** James Aden Johnson  
Birth: 04 Mar 1881 in Perth (Clay County), IN  
Death: 20 Nov 1955 in Brazil, IN, R.R. #5  
Marriage: 01 Jun 1928  
**Wife:** Glenda E. Brummet

**Son:** Homer C. Johnson  
Birth: 13 Oct 1885 in Coal Bluff, IN  
Death: 21 Sep 1931 in Universal, IN  
Marriage: 11 Feb 1907 in Vigo County, IN  
**Wife:** Ella Taylor

**Son:** Victor Hugo Johnson  
Birth: 10 Jan 1891  
Death: 15 Jul 1910

**Son:** Robert F. Johnson  
Birth: Jan 1896  
Death: 1950  
Marriage: 12 Dec 1922 in Vigo County, IN  
**Wife:** Bertha C. Williams

### **Notes collected during research.**

#### **Perry Commodore Johnson**

Was living in Van Buren Township in 1870 Census. Shown as daily laborer.  
In 1880 Census living in Perth, listed as Teamster.  
Moved to Nevins Township before 1885.between James and Homer's birth.  
Living in Jessup in 1907. Two nieces, Nora Archer and Daisy Archer, living with them in 1900. The mother of Nora and Daisy was a Mary Johnson. This is believed to be

Perry's sister, Mary Ann Johnson ,who married A. J. Archer. She had a son who was Mary Brown's son-in-law.

Perry bought lot 14, Block 1, in Carbon, IN from Carbon Block Coal Company, May 27, 1872, for \$200. He and wife, Mary Archer, sold this lot November 27, 1872, for \$400 to James Kuerr (Kerr). Mr. Kerr assumed the note that Perry had with the Carbon Block Coal Company. Lot 14 was between 1st and 2nd street on Lincoln Street in Carbon. Records in Clay County Clerk's office shows:

--John Johns and SP Oaks had a suit against David Johnson and Ebenzer Davis for foreclosure, and case was dismissed for cost of \$8.05 on October 7, 1873. Book 5, page 267.

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--Legal action between Perry Johnson and Carbon Block Coal company, on May 7, 1880, book 22, page 27.

### **Mary E. Archer**

Mary Archer may have had the nickname 'Aunt Doty'. In first census in 1850, shortly after her birth, she is shown under the name of Juda. She had stated to some family that she was part Cherokee Indian, but no evidence is available to support this. She died in her home in Universal Saturday, February 8, and services were held in the home on February 11, with burial in Webster Cemetery. Services were conducted by C. L. Brown Funeral Home, 1028 Jefferson, Montzuma, IN. My Uncle George Johnson, was a small boy, and he recalled this funeral and burial in Webster Cemetery. There is no road into Webster, so he remembered the horse and wagon used to carry the casket into the cemetery on a cold and muddy day..

In census data, she states that she had given birth to 11 children, so perhaps four were still born.

### **Son George W. Johnson**

Lived in Nevins Township, where the large oak tree is in the middle of the road. Their house was next to the Mary Mine. His wife, known as Aunt Jane, smoked a pipe and they had a furnished cellar in the hill, where they lived most of the time, as it was cool in summer and warm in winter.

1920 Census shows a daughter-in-law, Blanche, age 19, Born in IL, living with them. She could be Charles's wife They were living in Nevins Township in 1910.

They were living in Blanford, Vermillion County, in 1920.

One child may have been named Mary. She is believed to be Mary Young living in Winfield, KS,in 1976.

Services were conducted by Maddox Funeral Home, in Fontanet.

Aunt Jane's father was Lindsey Poe Chapman, of Tennessee, and her mother was Mary Wilson, of Terre Haute. Aunt Jane's sister, Isabelle, was married to Oscar Nevins, a prominent farmer, with a large farm, immediately to the north and east of the large Oak tree in the middle of the road.

**Son Andrew J. Johnson**

His nickname was Uncle Jack to the family. Member and officer of Brazil Masonic Centennial Lodge, #541. Resigned his Conductor position on the Railroad on December 18, 1905, due to ill health. Died at his parents' home in Jessup, of stomach trouble and rheumatism. Buried with wife and daughter in Webster, next to parents.

**Son Silas Johnson**

Believed to have died between birth and 1900.

**Son James Aden Johnson**

Had a first wife, dissolved by divorce, in 1913.

Living in Universal in 1918. Miner for 59 years, who lived in NW Vigo County near New Goshen. Helped sink the Snow Hill Mine shaft, a deep mine in Vigo County, where he worked for 29 years. He lived at Shadylane, east of Brazil, for about 10 years prior to his death. Services were conducted by Lawson and Son funeral home in Brazil.

**Son Homer C. Johnson**

In 1920 census 'Omar' was living with his mother, Mary E. Archer Johnson in Universal. His obituary shows him as 'Omar'. Marriage in 1907, shows him as Homer. In 1910 census he is shown as Omar, living Jessup, IN area with wife Ella and daughter Ora. Ora died at age 7. Homer is shown as Omar on his Webster Cemetery tombstone, where he is buried with wife and daughter. Services were held in the home of his brother, Robert Johnson, on September 23, 1931.

**Son Victor Hugo Johnson**

Some census shows Hugo Victor and other years Victor Hugo.

**Son Robert F. Johnson**

He was a professional gambler, often seen playing cards in card rooms across from bus station on Wabash Avenue, in Terre Haute. Sometimes when waiting for a bus, I would go in to the front of the card room and he would take a break and come and talk with me. He was a very pleasant and kind man. He had a skin condition on hands and wore black gloves most of the time. He owned a Tavern with wife, 'Aunt Bertha', in Universal IN about 1929. Was living with Mother, Mary E. Archer Johnson, in Universal in 1920. Shown as coal miner.

## **Great-great-grandparents David and Marie Richards Johnson**

**David Johnson** was born in 1822 to Abraham Johnson (1793-before1843), and Hattie (Kathryn) Mathews, in Ohio. David came to Putnam County Indiana just before 1844 and after his father's death. He and Maria were married in Putnam County 8 Sep 1844. The marriage application shows that Levi Johnson certified or vouched for them, as Marie was underage. Levi was the son of Jeriah Johnson, brother to David's grandfather. Jeriah and his sons, Levi, Henry, Oliver and John, came to Putnam County, IN around 1840 from Ohio and took land grants in the very southwestern corner of Putnam County near the Clay County line and Big Walnut Creek.

After their marriage, David and Marie returned to Ohio, where sons Perry Commodore and Abraham were born. They returned to Putnam County, IN, in 1849.

The 1850 census shows them living in Washington Township, Putnam County, IN, living next to Henry Johnson, on a farm close to where the Croy's Creek Church stands today. This census also shows sons Abraham and William born before they returned from Ohio and Emeline born after they returned to Indiana. In some census records, David and Maria were shown as not being able to read or write. In 1850s, children John (1851-), Mary (1853-bef1884) and Sarah (1857-) were born. George, also known as Big George or Soupbone, was born 2 Jul 1867. See later page for details on life of Big George.

In 1870 census the family was residing in Washington Township in same area as in 1850. No census record has been found for 1860.

In 1880 census, the family was residing in Cass Township of Clay County, although this location is only a few miles south of where they were in Putnam in 1870. They were residing with or next to John E. Johnson, who was David's uncle. John E. and family moved to Saline City, in south central Clay County, and was a tavern owner.

This ends the trail for David and Maria, as I have never found a record of their deaths and burials. Members of the Johnson family have talked of some split in the family, but no one knows the reasons. There were the legal problems with the property around Carbon in the 1872 time period. It is also noted that the names of the children were handed down for several generations, but Perry and Mary Archer Johnson had 7 sons, and did not use most of the names of children from the previous generations.

**Maria Richards** was born in Kentucky in about 1827. She may be a twin sister to Jemima Richards, who married Daniel Boswell, in the Clinton Falls area. Maria's youngest son, Big George Johnson, lived with this Boswell family so Jemima would

have been his aunt. Later he married Jemima's granddaughter, Ida Mae Bee. Boswell bible records list Maria as Mayre in reference to wedding of Big George and Ida Mae.

I have been told family members did make trips to Kentucky to visit with the family, but have never been able to determine any more on the Richards family, as Kentucky genealogy records are sparse.



## **Third Great-grandparents**

### **Abraham Johnson (1793-before 1843) and Hattie (Kathryn) Mathews**

Little is available on Abraham and Hattie. They lived in Vermillion Twp, Richland Co, Ohio (Vermillion Township was later changed to Ashland County, OH). Records show Abraham in a militia during War of 1812, and he received a pension from his service.

I have never been able to physically visit this area of Ohio and to research the family.

## **Fourth Great Grandparents Abraham Johnson and Rebecca Bonham**

Abraham Johnson (Johnston or Jonson) was born on Sep 23, 1731 in Mendon, Morris, New Jersey. Some places show his birthday in 1737.

Rebecca Bonham Johnson was born in Maidenhead, Hunterdon County, (now Lawrence, Mercer County), New Jersey, about 1738. Her father was Amariah Bonham.

Abraham Johnson (Johnston or Jonson) and Rebecca Bonham were married in 1763, in New Jersey. They moved from New Jersey to Washington County, PA, where they raised their family and died.

Washington County, Pennsylvania, was created from a portion of Westmoreland and Fayette County in 1781. Originally, it was a part of Virginia. There were many boundary disputes among the early settlers until the firm boundary lines were established in 1794. Washington County split into Allegheny, Greene and Beaver Counties.

Rebecca and Abraham's children were John D. Johnson (1766), Samuel Johnson (1772), Mary Johnson (1774), Sarah Johnson (1778), Uriah Johnson (1779), Amariah Johnson (1780) and Jeriah Johnson (1781).

This family is well researched, but there are differences in the number and names of children. Also, some researchers have a Rebecca Casbeer as married to Abraham, but this does not seem to have validity.

In 1794, Abraham and his sons signed the Oath of Allegiance in Washington County, Pennsylvania.

*Oath of Allegiance: I do solemnly, in the presence of Almighty God, swear and declare that I will faithfully and sincerely support the Constitution of the United States, and obey all laws thereof, and will discontinue opposition thereto, except by way of petition and remonstrance, and all attempts to resist, obstruct, or illtreat the officers of the United States in the execution of their respective duties, so help me God.*

*Each person, in taking this oath, was required to subscribe his name thereto, as well as sign the following pledge: In pursuance of the oath hereto annexed, I do hereby engage and associate to and with all others who may subscribe these presents to countenance and protect the officers of the United States in the execution of their duties according to law, and to discover and bring to justice all persons who may be concerned, directly or indirectly, in illegally hindering or obstructing the said officers, or any of them, in the execution of their duty, or in doing any manner of violence to them, or either of them. In witness of all which I have hereunto subscribed my hand the day and year opposite my name.*

15 Nov. - 30 Dec. 1794 - sworn before Wm. Naile. . . Samuel Johnson. . . John Johnston, Amazariah Johnston, Abraham Johnston. . . (from History of Washington County by Alfred Creigh, Published by B. Singerly 1871.)

Their child Jeriah Johnson (1781-1852) is a vital link in our family history as he and sons, Levi, Henry and Oliver, moved through Ohio. Around 1840, they moved to Putnam County, IN. Here are some notes on their time in Ohio.

*In 1803 "At a meeting of the subscribers, trustees of the twp. of Steubenville on the 11th of Oct., 1803, ordered that the aforesaid twp. be divided in the following manner: Beginning at the Ohio River at the mouth of Wills Creek; thence up said creek to the head gate of Josiah Johnston's saw-mill: thence north to the township line: thence with said line to the river allotted to George Friend." (from History of Steubenville and Jefferson County Ohio, Chapter 22 "The River Townships")*

*According to early Ohio Gazetteers, from 1806 to 1808, Jeriah and a John Johnston were near Steubenville, Jefferson County, Ohio. They had land for sale including a sawmill. They were also listed as receiving mail in Steubenville. (Note spelling of as Johnston). Again there was a John Johnston receiving mail.*

*At the time of the 1820 census, the Jeriah Johnson family was in Green Township, Harrison County (which borders Jefferson County). The household consisted 3 boys under 10, 1 man between 26-44, a girl under 5, and a woman between 26-44. They were involved in manufacturing.*

*Jeriah did not appear in Wayne County tax records for 1825. Other Johnstons appear as does Jonathan Casebeer who was the witness to Abraham Johnston's will.*

*The household appeared in the 1830 Lake Township, Wayne County (northwest of Harrison County), Ohio census with a boy between 5 and 10, a boy between 15 and 20, a man between 50 and 60, a girl between 5 and 10, a girl between 10 and 15, and a woman between 40 and 50. (p. 9)*

*On August 6, 1834 Jeriah Johnson bought 80 acres in Holmes County, Ohio for \$350 from George Metcalf (his son, Levi's, wife's maiden name). Holmes County was formed from Wayne County in 1825.*

*In 1834 son Levi married Rachel Metcalf in Holmes County. On June 05, 1835 Henry Johnson married Elizabeth Stough in Holmes County.*

*On February 25, 1836 Henry bought 40 acres from Moses Stough (his wife's maiden name).*

*In 1839 both Jeriah and son Henry sold land in Holmes County.*

*In 1840 both Henry and Levi Johnson were in Washington Township, Putnam County, Indiana. Jeriah, Henry and Levi were listed in the 1841 Washington Township tax list.*

Abraham died in 1798 in Strabane Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania. His will was dated June 28, 1789, and proved August 17, 1798.

*Abraham's will: Abraham Johnston or Jonson of Washington County, dated June 28, 1789, proved August 17, 1798; wife Rebekah; children, John, Samuel Uriah, Jeriah, Sarah, and Mary; grandson Amariah Paramore Johnston; daughter in law Elieonor Johnston to hold said grandson's share in trust until he is 14 years of age; executors, wife Rebekah and son Samuel witnesses, Jonathan Casebeer and Jeriah Bonham 1, p. 356 " (from Abstracts of Wills of Washington County)*

In 1800, Rebecca was living in Strabane Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania. She died in 1803.

## **Additional Details on George B. Johnson (1867-1955)**

**George B. 'Big George' Johnson** was born on 02 Jul 1867 in IN. He married Ida Mae Bee on 25 Dec 1898 in Putman County, IN. He was known as 'Big George' and also 'Soup Bone'.

In the 1900 census, George and Ida Mae were living with her parents, James and Elizabeth Boswell Bee, in Clinton Falls.

They had a son, Estel Bee, who was a career military man and died in a plane crash in 1943. See more on Estel below. George and Ida Mae had a daughter, Lilly, born September 26, 1908, and died on January 22, 1910, while they were living in Rosedale, IN. She died of croup, which lasted four days. Lilly is buried with family in Clinton Falls Cemetery. George, Ida Mae and Estel were living in Rosedale in the 1910 census, and George was listed as miner. In the 1920 census, George was living in Universal, IN with his sister-in-law, Mary Archer Johnson and her sons.

It is unclear if George and Ida Mae ever divorced. George's death certificate shows him as a widower. Ida Mae worked as housekeeper and cook at the Commercial Hotel, in Greencastle, IN, for many years. My Grandmother, Minnie Johnson, remained close to Ida Mae, and included her in Johnson family activities. Grandma Johnson and other family ladies sometimes went to Greencastle for visits with Ida Mae.

Ida Mae was born 25 Apr 1884 and died 12 Nov 1944. She is buried in Clinton Falls Cemetery.

Sometime after 1920, George moved to Mexico, Missouri, to work on railroads and returned to Brazil, Indiana from time to time. He became injured in a railroad accident. He was a very tall, lanky person, he walked dragging one leg along, as he took slow and long steps. Nephew John made two trips out to Missouri to see him, accompanied by son George, and one time with daughter Susie and her husband, Francis Brettnacher. During his time between trips between Indiana and Missouri, he lived with a Mary Brown in Sandridge. The story goes that he went to get a loaf of bread and soap down in Coal Bluff, but went on to Missouri! When he came back years later, in about 1935, he got a loaf of bread and a bar of soap in Coal Bluff, and went back out to see Mary Brown, but she refused to let him in the house. So then he promptly returned to Missouri.

My Uncle George Johnson was a small boy, and he said he clearly remembered Big George returning after not being heard from in some time. They were eating dinner and they looked out and saw Big George walking toward them as he crossed the Otter Creek bridge. George said his Dad was very upset. He went to the door and said 'Big George, where have you been?'. Later in the 1940s, Big George returned to Brazil and lived in a small shack, formerly used by the railroad crossing watchmen on South Lambert Street at Penn RR crossing, directly across the street from his Uncle John.

I have a vivid memory of a fishing trip with Big George, when he lived in this shack. My brother Bill and I were visiting Grandma and Grandpa, so we packed our lunches and drinks and Big George took us fishing to Waterworks Pond on the west side of Brazil. This was a long walk across town, but he walked very slowly, dragging his bad leg while carrying big long cane poles. We fished for some hours on a steep bank, and then made the journey back to South Lambert.

Big George was a very laid back and happy-go-lucky person. He did not have a care in the world, and loved to sit around with the guys, under the big shade tree at Grandpa Johnson's. He enjoyed being the center of attention.

Later he moved into a small unit next to his Uncle Jim Johnson's house, at Shadylane, on east U.S. 40. He died at Bridgewater Nursing Home in Brazil, 29 Jun 1955. Services were held at Maddox Funeral Home in Fontanet and burial in Bee Ridge Cemetery in an unmarked grave next to John and Minnie Johnson. In the late 1990s, my brother Bill and I had a stone marker made and placed on his grave.

**Estel Bee Johnson (15 Jun 1900-12 Jun 1943).** Estel was a career Non-Commissioned Officer in the Army Air Corps. He entered service in WWI, 6 April 1917 and served continually in a number of assignments in aviation. He was an instructor in aircraft maintenance. In 1943, on his ninth enlistment, he was the senior enlisted NCO in the 584th Bomb Group, at MacDill AFB, Florida. The group had advanced B-26 Bombers, and were moving to a base in Oklahoma, before moving overseas for combat duty. The aircraft departed MacDill, headed for Oklahoma. Estel was killed on July 12, 1943, when one of the B-26<sup>s</sup> crashed near Walker, LA, near Baton Rouge. I was able to obtain Estel's full military record, and the detailed accident report. I also talked to his Group Commander, who was still living in the 1990s.

Estel's remains were brought back to Greencastle, and buried in Clinton Falls Cemetery.

Estel came to Brazil to visit family when on leave. He was a true military man, usually in uniform, with many decorations and medals. He was a very personable man. He had very little to do with his father, and in most of his military records he did not list his father, but he remained the pride of his mother and the Johnson family.

Estel was first married to Mary Stultz, from Putnam County, 27 December 1919. They had a daughter, Lucile Alberta Johnson on 15 December 1921, while stationed in Little Rock, Arkansas. This daughter apparently died. There is no record of the disillusion of this marriage. According to Mary Stultz's father's obituary, she was living in Indianapolis with the name Goins. Mary Goins died in Indianapolis, in 1994.

Estel later married Margaret Steinkamp. In the 1930 Census, Estel and Margaret lived on Ft. Sam Houston, in San Antonio, TX. Margaret was born in Germany, in 1905 from German parents, and was a naturalized US citizen.

Margaret died in San Antonio, in July, 1965. Her obituary in a San Antonio paper gave an account of her Catholic services, and listed some friends, but no family. This article stated that her body was shipped to Greencastle, IN for burial in Clinton Falls Cemetery. But, her date of death was not carved on the tombstone with Estel.

## **Relationship between the Susan Ellis Johnson Family and Perry and Mary Johnson**

Perry and Mary Johnson and their family occupy a large plot in Webster Cemetery.

Adjacent, is Susan Ellis Johnson and family. One of my first ventures was understand whether or not there was a connection. I found that Susan's family lived in the small town of Catlin, north of Rosedale, where Perry and Mary also lived for some time.

Then I found that Susan was the widow of John C. (JC) Johnson, of Monroe County, Bloomington, IN. JC entered the Civil War late, and at an advanced age. He contracted illness and was discharged. He returned home, where he died June 21, 1869, from this illness. This left Susan with several children and then she moved to Parke County. Susan drew a pension as a Civil war widow.

JC was born in Danville, Vermont, July 4 1824. Susan Ellis was from a prominent and well documented family in Monroe County, IN. I was fortunate to connect with a Great-granddaughter of Susan, who had Susan's bible, with her complete family history. We spent an evening going through the bible, and there is no evidence of any connection with my Johnsons, other than Susan's oldest daughter, Mary, married the J. J. Archer, cousin to Grandma Mary Archer. This daughter, Mary, was a schoolteacher in Parke County for many years and remarried George Payne after J.J Archer died.

After locating Perry's parents and family from Ohio, I see no direct connection between the two families.



## Will of John D. Johnson

Will dated 25 Dec 1842, leaves property to Mary and children

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1843 (year at top of page)

Johnson, John, Vermillion Twp., (AR IV, p. 271) 25 Dec 1842    21 Feb 1843

To wife, Mary, entire estate.

To children Sarah Lance, Rebecca Johnson, Mary Lance, Elizabeth Harman, John E., Thomas, Uriah, Samuel, and James, each one equal share of estate.

To Sarah, David, Mary Anne, and Perry, children of deceased son Abraham, each one-eighth of one share.

To granddaughter Evaline, daughter of deceased son Abraham, one-half of one share.

Executors: Samuel Harmon, Jr., William W. Irwin (deceased at time of probate).

Witnesses: David Cipher, Henry Gribben.