

Where Janetta and Presumably Joseph Londeree Lived

By Ben R. Londeree

Although Londeree Family lore states that Joseph and Janetta Londeree raised their family on the Chapman Glover Farm located on Route 602 just north of Walton Fork Creek (#2 on the accompanying map), there is mounting evidence that this was not the case. In this article I am going to present the case for a home site located on the east side of Route 601 about .5 mile north of Route 737 in Buckingham Co., VA (#8 on the map). We are deeply indebted to Nancy Faxon for supplying much of the information that led to this conclusion. Her relatives own much of the land in the Manteo area and she has researched historical ownership of most of it.

My initial doubts about Joseph Londeree living on the Glover farm were raised when checking census records for 1840 through 1860 which showed that Joseph lived near to people who were known to have resided between Route 738 and Island View Farm (#12 on map). This area is 8 to 10 miles by road from the Glover farm. In fact, Joseph was listed in the 1840 census as living right next door to William Harrison Starke, Janetta's father (see Harrison or Starkes? article elsewhere in this issue of The Londeree Line). In addition, 1840 personal property tax records showed that Joseph had 83 horses; the 1850 agriculture census listed him with 25 acres; and the 1860 agricultural census showed him with 100 acres. These facts are not consistent with the Londeree Family stories that Joseph was a caretaker for Chapman Glover throughout this period. (As an aside, Chapman Glover did not live on this farm until sometime between 1850 and 1860 according to the censuses.)

So where were the 25 acres located that were listed as Joseph's in the 1850 census? Janetta's father purchased 50 acres from John Ragland in 1834¹; he sold 25 acres to B. N. Ragland in 1839¹; he died in 1849², but the remaining 25 acres were listed in his estate until 1863 when John Horsley bought it¹, the year after Joseph Londeree was killed at Harpers Ferry. Who lived on this farm after William Harrison Starke died? The most logical conclusion is that Joseph and Janetta Londeree lived on and farmed these 25 acres. Since William Harrison Starke was listed as 85 years old in the 1840 census, it was likely that Joseph farmed the land or used it for grazing prior to Starke's death and then just continued farming it until he left for The Civil War in 1862.

The next question was where were Joseph's 25 acres located? As stated above, the census data suggested that it was located between Route 738 and Manteo. Initially I found a 25 acre plot on the Little Sycamore Creek near to the end of Route 738. However, since a second 25 acre plot was not found in this vicinity and John Horsley ownership did not appear on this plot in the Buckingham County Deed Books, we kept looking (I assumed that William Harrison Starke's two 25 acre plots were contiguous). Recently I found tax records that showed that the 25 acre plot sold to B. N. Ragland in 1839 was sold to Francis Ames in 1842, who sold it to Nicholas Mills in 1849.¹ Since Nicholas Mills already owned much of the land north of Route 737, it seemed logical that these 25 acres probably were located north of Route 737. Only one 25 acre plot was found in this area, but it was contiguous to the Mills' property. So it appeared that the two 25 acre plots were not contiguous.

So we were left with the same question, where were the 25 acres that Joseph Londeree claimed located? Nancy Faxon found the answer quite by accident while researching ownership of some property east of Route 601 for a friend. We had neglected looking in this area before because most of this land became part of Sycamore Island Farm that Charles Lewis Londeree later managed. Anyway, reference to ownership by William Harrison Starke turned up in this search and included a covenant for a 2 acre plot for a church and cemetery when the property was sold by John Horsley (Deed Book #2, p.690). The cemetery still exists on the site, about .5 mile north of Route 737.

Therefore, location of Joseph's 25 acres has been confirmed. We are left with the assumption that Joseph and Janetta Londeree lived on the property since it was listed as the William Starke Estate until 1863 and Joseph claimed 25 acres in the 1850 census. However, we do not know where the other 75 acres listed in the 1860 census were located. Finally, the connection to Chapman Glover may have occurred as a business deal involving Joseph Londeree serving for Glover in the War in exchange for a home and security for Janetta and the children. Unfortunately, Glover did not honor this obligation which led to hard times for the Londerees.

- ¹ Ward, Roger G. Land Tax Summaries & Implied Deeds, Volume 2 - 1815-1840 and Volume 3 - 1841-1870. Athens, GA: Iberian Publishing Company, 1994 and 1995.
- ² Wardell, Patrick G. Virginia/West Virginia Genealogical Data from Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrants, Volume 2, Dabbs through Hyslop. Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1990.