

## The Jewells of Honey Hollow

Jesse Jewell born February 4, 1776 in Dudley Massachusetts during the early colonization and the most defying time in this land's history, our fight for independence. The town of Dudley Massachusetts was only established as a settlement in 1732. Dudley lies just north of the Connecticut border. Jesse was just a few months old when the Declaration of Independence was signed. His parents must have felt an insurmountable burden raising a young child in a new world of so many unknowns. It is unknown when Jesse came to Vermont and with who.

Sally Smith was born in North Salem New York on August 30, 1781 to Abraham and Sally (Crane) Smith, Sally met Jesse in the beginning of the 1800's. They married in Richmond Vermont on September 5, 1803 and settled in Bolton; an area known as Honey Hollow. The start to their life together in the wilderness of Vermont was a struggle as the new colonies were still being populated and there was no shortage of work to be done. They lost their first daughter little Sally at birth in May 1804, she only lived a few days.

The Honey Hollow district of Bolton Vermont was being settled by those that dared to start a life in the rocky hills of Bolton. Noah Preston settled at the base of Honey Hollow in the 1790's. The Prestons would be neighbors to the Jewells. Other notable names in the Honey Hollow area at that time included the Stockwells, Lewis, Bennetts, and Algiers. The picturesque falls and other bountiful resources surely enticed Jesse and Sally to settle in the area. Their home was near the base of the lower falls but they also acquired plots of land further up the falls for purposes of farming. Jesse began clearing and working the land as he and Sally started a family.

During the War of 1812, Jesse left Sally and their 5 children in Bolton and joined up with the Volunteers of the Green Mountains. Many men from Bolton left their families to fight for final independence from Britain. With the young children to raise, Sally had to have been a strong woman watching her husband go off to war, not knowing what the outcome would be. It is likely that nearby families, including her own parents, helped provide support and comfort during this time. As an Acting Officer in the Volunteers, Jesse was present in 1814 at the Battle of Plattsburgh where he took part in the American victory before returning home to his family.

In the National Standard Newspaper published February 28, 1816, Jesse Jewell is listed in the Tax section having 71 acres of land in lot no.146 as well as 50 acres of lot 175 and 111 which included a house and building.

The Jewells made their home in Honey Hollow for decades. The land and brook provided a hard earned income to have a Sawmill built for uses of processing lumber from the mountains that surrounded them. Jesse and Sally raised 8 children in Bolton after they lost their first daughter. Sally gave birth to 5 boys and 3 girls, The last being George in 1822. Their children's names were Johnathan, Anna, Mary, Jesse Jr, Abram, Sarah, Isaac, and George. Jesse Jr. served the town of Bolton as town representative in the state legislature in 1843.

As the family grew, most of the children remained near Jesse and Sally's homestead. The 1850 census in Bolton lists Jesse now age 71 and Sally age 68 living near Noah Preston. Listed with them is son Isaac age 31, Isaac's wife Ruby, their children as well as Jesse and Sally's daughter

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Sarah Pierce and her son Abram all in the same dwelling. Sarah's husband Solomon (Saul) is not found in an 1850 census from my research. The Jewells 2nd youngest son George and his family along with their daughter Anna Colby and her children are also listed in close proximity on the census. Anna Colby's husband Arnold died in 1846, cause of death unknown. Anna who never remarried was left to raise 6 children. The closeness of family seems to have mattered greatly to the Jewells and their children.

The hills of Bolton provided a place for the Jewell's to raise their family into adulthood. As the children got older, the discovery of gold out west, the widely publicized "Gold Rush" enticed the younger Jewell boys. The California Gold Rush (1848–1855) was a gold rush that began on January 24, 1848, when gold was found by James W. Marshall at Sutter's Mill in Coloma, California. The news of gold brought approximately 300,000 people to California from the rest of the United States and abroad.

In the early 1850s Saul Pierce and George Jewell left their families in Bolton and began a trek across unknown lands, riding mules through the Isthmus of Panama enroute to California in hopes of finding success in the mining operations of the Sierra. They would stay there several years. They met a young man in the mines they befriended named T.M. Chapman.

Mining in the Sierra region was extremely risky but if gold was found, it would make those hard days worthwhile. It was quite the different world from small town Bolton Vermont. Growing tired of mining and having already collected a considerable amount of money, George Jewell, Saul Pierce, and T.M. Chapman went to Sonoma county in California. Saul bought a ranch in the west corner of Petaluma. George Jewell bought a smaller adjoining ranch and T.M. Chapman bought another place about 3 miles away.

In 1854 George Jewell went back to Vermont and brought his wife, Polly and Mrs. Saul (Sarah) Pierce with her son Abram. The women talked to Mr. Chapman of their niece Mary Colby in Vermont and so interested him that, after carrying on a correspondence with her for some time. He returned to Vermont in 1858 and within two weeks, on March 1st, he married Miss Mary Colby and brought her to California via Panama.

The land in Sonoma was good for dairy and cattle farming. Having his eye on a much larger property in Tomales Point of Marin County, Saul wrote his brother-in-law Isaac Jewell in Vermont to come out and take the ranch while he went to his new ranch. Issac, wife Ruby (Ridley) and their children made the trek out west to live.

Ruby Ridley is the daughter of Duxbury Vermont's prominent businessman, "Samuel Ridley. Samuel was an entrepreneur with a hotel at the base of the Camel's Hump road. He may have taken the entrepreneurial spirit a little too far when he announced to the world that he had discovered gold on one of his trips up Camel's Hump. He prospered quite well when the people on the gold rush would stay at his boarding house and rent his wagons to make the trek up the mountain. After weeks of digging and paying board the prospectors finally gave up the pursuit

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and returned home. It was later discovered that the only gold that was ever on the mountain was the gold that was loaded into Ridley's gun and shot into the bedrock for all to see." The former North Duxbury railroad station was named Ridley Station and Ridley Brook that runs parallel to Camels Hump Road was also named after Samuel Ridley.

The Jewell family sold their home in Bolton in 1859 and made the decision to join their children out west in Sonoma California. Phoebe S, Colby, granddaughter to Jesse and Sally recalls the long trip to California via Panama. Cited from the Jewell family bible 'she remembers well the long slow ride along the Chagres river on the little narrow gauge railroad principally because she was interested in the numerous alligators sunning themselves along the banks of the river. At the Pacific side the passengers, nearly twelve hundred in number, made themselves as comfortable as possible on the beach and awaited their turn to be barged out a mile or so to the big steamer (the John L. Stevens)'

John Stevens was an engineer and inventor who was one of the earliest U.S. experimenters with steamboats. He built his career on promoting better transportation, not only with steamboats but also with railroads. Stevens built the first steam-powered locomotive in the United States. John L. Stevens steamboat carried them to San Francisco. The *John L. Stevens* built in 1852 in New York, it was brought to Sacramento California and first operated in 1853. The steamboat ran between San Francisco and Panama for the Pacific Mail Steamship Company until October 1860.

Accompanying her was her mother, Anna Colby, her grandmother and grandfather, Jesse and Sally Jewell well in their 70s, Edgar and Abbie Needham (he nineteen and she sixteen). Miss Colby and Mrs. Anna Colby went to the ranch of T. M. Chapman in Two Rock, Sonoma County and the Needhams to George Jewell's ranch, and Jesse and Sally Jewell to Isaac R. Jewell's ranch in Sonoma Valley."

The patriarch of the family Jesse Jewell passed away at age 84 in 1863 2 months after the passing of son George, while the country was in the midst of the Civil War. Sally having lost her eyesight a number of years ago, one eye went blind due to a cataract and another due to inflammation. In 1869 Sally had cataract surgery to correct vision in the one eye. It was a success and in August of that year she celebrated her 88th birthday surrounded by her large family which included 12 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren along with 3 daughters and 1 son. Some of the grandchildren Sally had never been able to see because of her vision until that day. It was a wonderful celebration according to newspaper reports. Sally passed April 12, 1872 age 90. The Jewell family descendants are spread all throughout the country,

Family information obtained from the Jewell Family Bible owned by Ciera Oxner who descends from Isaac's family line. Also, Letter typed by Grace Cummings on stationery of Ben H. Cummings re: Colbys, Chapmans, Jewells, Pierces, Needhams (info from Ciera Oxner) Duxbury Historical Society

[https://www.maritimeheritage.org/ships/Steamships\\_H-to-M.html#SSJohnLStevens](https://www.maritimeheritage.org/ships/Steamships_H-to-M.html#SSJohnLStevens)