

## John A. Harrington

**Son of Tabitha B., Grandson of Samuel, Great-grandson of James, &  
great-great-grandson of Peter Albritton Sr.**

**By Timothy Dean Hudson**

John A. Harrington (c1830–1866/1867) continued his academic studies at least through the age of twenty. In 1860, he taught school in the Pactolus community [1]. He married on 13 December 1860, presumably in Pitt County North Carolina, to Frances A. Ward [Fanny] (23 Jul 1838–19 Jun 1866), daughter of Lanier Ward (6 May 1803–18 May 1858) and Elizabeth Rogers (29 May 1812–12 Mar 1871) [2].

John and Fanny's eldest child was born in September 1861, precisely nine months after their marriage. The next spring, in early 1862, John enlisted as a private in a unit of soldiers from Pitt County. John's first cousin, Josiah D. Albritton, enlisted as 4<sup>th</sup> corporal in the same unit on April 14<sup>th</sup>, and presumably, John enlisted on about the same day. The men traveled east to Camp Mangum near Raleigh, where they were inducted into the Confederate military service as Company K, 17<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Infantry Regiment on May 1<sup>st</sup>. For unstated reasons, Confederate military officials discharged John A. Harrington from service on May 18<sup>th</sup> [3].

John's activities during the remainder of the Civil War are unknown, but he and Fanny had at least three children born between 1861 and 1866. According to family tradition, Fanny died as the result of a coral snake bite she received after going outside at night to check on a ruckus she heard in her chicken coop [4].

In August 1866, their three children lived with John A. Harrington, presumably on his parents' farm in the Pactolus community [5]. An account at the firm of Perkins and Rollins shows John A. Harrington purchasing supplies on July 2, 7, and 31, August 4, 8, and 10, and October 16, 1866. On November 27<sup>th</sup>, these items were purchased and charged to his account: pocket handkerchiefs (\$1.70), matches (\$1.15), caps, one bottle of whiskey (\$1.25), one "*Set Glass*" and sugar (\$1.13), one sack of salt (\$3.50), and "*Pens and Ink*" (40¢).

On 6 February 1867, someone charged two gallons molasses at \$1.00 each to John A. Harrington's account at Perkins & Rollins. If John A. Harrington himself purchased the molasses, then he died between February 6<sup>th</sup> and March 18<sup>th</sup>, 1867, for on the latter day, his father, Henry Harrington, appointed "*Special Administrator*" by the Pitt County Court, held a sale of the property of John A. Harrington's estate [6]. After Henry Harrington's death in January 1870, the Pitt County

Court appointed John A. Harrington's brother, William H. Harrington, as administrator of his estate and guardian to his children [7].

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## Children of John A. Harrington

The records show that John A. Harrington and Fannie Ward had three children who survived infancy:

1. **Joseph John Harrington** [Jack, John J.] (1 Sept 1861–19 Aug 1934) lived with his paternal grandmother in 1870 and 1880 [8], and he appears to have enjoyed a very close relationship with her until her death. In her will, Tabitha Albritton Harrington left her grandson Adrian Fleming

*...one third of the notes of which I may die possessed or of the cash value thereof subject to the following conditions, viz.: that he the said Adrian Fleming shall pay out of said third part of said notes or the cash value thereof one hundred dollars to John J. Harrington, as a mark of affection and gratitude to said John J. Harrington for his kindness to me in my old age."*

Tabitha also bequeathed her gun to John J. Harrington [9]. Jack also had a close relationship with his uncle, William H. Harrington, who served as his legal guardian until Jack reached the age of twenty-one [10].

At some point in his younger years, Harrington served as a private in the 3<sup>rd</sup> U.S. Artillery, but we do not have details of his service record [11]. John J. Harrington married on 12 August 1891 in Suffolk, Nansemond County, Virginia to Florence Josephine Mansfield (18 Feb 1860–27 Oct 1909), daughter of Joseph and Lucy J. Mansfield [12]. In 1900, Florence lived in Suffolk with their young daughter, Hilda (3 Nov 1893–4 Apr 1961), in the household of her widowed sister. Florence worked as a schoolteacher, while it appears that Jack worked as a salesman back home in Pitt County [13]. Florence died in 1909 and was buried in the Westview Cemetery, Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia [14]. It is unclear if she and Jack Harrington had separated by 1900, or if he merely traveled for his work.

Jack J. Harrington appears to have spent the remainder of his life in Greenville. In 1910, he lived in Greenville boarding house and worked as the Deputy Register of Deeds. In 1920, he worked as a bookkeeper in a gun store, and by 1930, he worked as a justice of the peace [15].

Jack Harrington married on 20 February 1932 in Pitt County, North Carolina to Sarah Elizabeth Ross House (2 Sept 1866–21 Mar 1936), the daughter of William Alfred Ross and Harriot Gurganus [16]. He died two years later of "*cerebral appoplexy*" and was buried in the Cherry Hill Cemetery in Greenville [17].

2. **O'Jennings Wise Harrington** (7 Nov 1862–6 Feb 1939) probably had few, if any, memories of either of his parents, as both died before he reached five years of age [18]. His only paternal

uncle, William H. Harrington, served as his guardian, and the pair appear to have had a close relationship [19].

While his brother lived with and was primarily raised by their grandmother, O’Jennings Wise Harrington moved in with his aunt and uncle, Lydia Elizabeth and David S. Fleming, and they raised him along with their only son, Adrian Fleming [20]. This led O. W. Harrington to develop a very close relationship with his aunt and uncle, becoming their primary heir after Adrian’s premature death in 1880. In his will written on 21 December 1882, David Fleming wrote, *“I give and bequeath to my nephew O. J. W. Harrington”* a 62-acre tract of land and one horse. Fleming left his other real and personal property to his wife during *“the term of her natural life, Except what is necessary to carry into effect”* the two bequests to Harrington. Moreover, Fleming’s final bequest stated

*After the payment of all my debts and at the death of my wife, I give and bequeath absolutely forever in fee to my Nephew O. J. W. Harrington the Homestead tract of land being the land whereupon I now live [sic] containing [blank] acres more or less.*

Fleming gave Lydia authority to sell any of his property to pay his debts, except for the items he had specifically bequeathed to Harrington [21].

O’Jennings Wise Harrington married on 15 December 1892 in Pitt County North Carolina to Martha Elena Thigpen [Lena] (28 July 1870–1 Apr 1948), daughter of James Ashley Thigpen and Martha Fleming [22]. O. J. W. and Lena Harrington farmed near Greenville until the 1920s. After his uncle, William H. Harrington, was replaced as sheriff in 1898 by Mr. Mooring, a Democrat paid to have this anonymous notice published in the local newspaper on 31 August 1898 [23]:

*...as I have heard Mr. Mooring say that he would not accept anything, then I want to place O. W. Harrington in his place and we will have two of the best men in the county on our ticket, Henry King for Clerk of Court and O. W. Harrington for Sheriff.*

Pitt County residents elected Harrington as their Sheriff in the fall of 1900 [24], and he served two terms as sheriff. Between 1904 and 1908, he served as deputy sheriff under Sheriff L. W. Tucker. Throughout this time, he continued his farming operation, later working as the government cotton weigher in Greenville.

In the latter 1920s, O. J. W. and Lena Harrington moved in with their son, Dr. Carey Lanier Harrington, a physician. By the latter 1930s, they lived in Asheville, Buncombe County, North Carolina, where Dr. Harrington worked as a government physician at the Oteen Veterans Hospital. O’Jennings W. Harrington died there in 1939 of a cerebral hemorrhage [25]. Lena Thigpen Harrington continued to live with her son, moving with his family to New York and

California. She died in Fayetteville, Cumberland County, North Carolina in 1948 [26]. O. J. W. and Lena Harrington are buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina [27].

3. **Elizabeth C. Harrington** (c1864–1871/1873) lived with her father, John A. Harrington, in August 1866 [28]. She is not found on the 1870 Federal Census in the households of either of her grandmothers or of her aunts or uncles. In January and February 1871, Elizabeth was listed with her brothers in a court action to procure a guardian for them in the settlement of the affairs of the estate of their grandfather, Henry Harrington [29]. However, when the Pitt County Superior Court appointed her uncle, William H. Harrington, as the guardian of her brothers, Jack and O. J. W. Harrington on 11 January 1873, Elizabeth was not listed. This presumably indicates that she died between February 1871 and January 1873 [30].

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## Notes

1. 1850 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Parkers District, p. 57b, Dwelling #930, line #1: Henry Herrington (age 44, "Farmer"); #2: Tabitha Herrington (aged 38); #3: John H. Herrington (age 20, "Student"). 1860 Pitt County NC Federal Census, P.O. Greenville, p. 31a/62, Dwelling #520, line #38: Henry Harrington (aged 54, "Farmer"); #39: Tabitha Herrington (age 50); J. A. Harrington (aged 29, "Teaching of C. Scls"). All other records show that John's middle initial was "A," not the "John H." given on the 1850 Federal Census.
2. *Bible Records From Eastern States*, Greenville, NC: Burroughs Wellcome Genealogy Club, 1997. This collection includes a transcription of the Family Bible of Lanier Ward and Elizabeth Rogers, who married on 20 March 1836. It records the birth of "Francis A. Ward" on Monday, 23 July 1838, the marriage of "F. W. Ward & J. A. Harrington" on 13 December 1860, and the death of "Frances A. Harrington" on 19 June 1866. The birth and death dates of Lanier Ward and his wife are also given in the Bible. The marriage of John A. Harrington and Frances A. Ward was not recorded in the Pitt County records.
3. Compiled Military Service Records, John A. Harrington and Josiah D. Albritton, Co. K, 17<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Infantry (Confederate), Civil War. John's mother, Tabitha Albritton Harrington, was the sister of James B. Albritton, father of Josiah D. Albritton.
4. Communication on 6 February 2020 with Charles Harrington, a descendant of William H. Harrington, the younger brother to John A. Harrington.
5. Pitt County NC Estate Files, Lanier Ward, 1858, LDS Film #7672815, Images #933–1045. Numerous petitions filed by Lanier Ward's administrator in August 1866 identifies John J. Harrington, O. J. Wise Harrington, and Elizabeth C. Harrington as children of John A. Harrington and heirs of Lanier Ward's estate. This proves that John A. Harrington lived through August 1866.
6. Pitt County NC Estate Files, John A. Harrington, 1867, LDS Film #7384265, Images #1084–1141.
7. Pitt County NC Superior Court, Appointment of Administrators, Executors, & Guardians (1868–1901), p. 40 (Estate of John A. Harrington, W. H. Harrington replaces Henry Harrington, now dead, as administrator, 12 February 1870; bond \$200, with David S. Fleming as one surety); p. 65 (W. H. Harrington appointed guardian to minors J. J. and O. J. Harrington, 11 January 1873).
8. North Carolina Death Certificate #373, 1934: Joseph John Harrington, Pitt County. 1870 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Greenville Township, p. 163a/30, Dwelling #291, line #39: Tabitha Harrington; Dwelling #292, line #40: W. H. Harrington; p. 163b/31, line #1: Henrietta T. Harrington; line #2: John J. Harrington. 1880 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Greenville Township N.S. Tar River, ED #127, p. 381b/33, Dwelling #298, line #22: Caroline Harrington (age 40, black, "Cooking & Washing"); #28: Tabitha Harrington (age 70); #29: Wm. H. Harrington (age 33); #30: John Harrington (age 19).
9. Pitt County NC Will Book 2, pp. 379–381 (Will of Tabitha Harrington, written 1 April 1880, probated 20 January 1887).
10. Pitt County NC Superior Court, Appointment of Administrators, Executors, & Guardians (1868–1901), p. 65 (W. H. Harrington appointed guardian to minors J. J. and O. J. Harrington, 11 January 1873). Pitt County NC Record of Settlements, Book 4 (1878–1911), p. 12 (Final Account of W. H. Harrington, Guardian to J. J. Harrington, 28 April 1883). On this date, J. J. Harrington acknowledged receipt of \$122.20 from his uncle as an heir of John A. Harrington, deceased, and thus released him for any further liability as his Guardian.
11. Cherry Hill Cemetery (Greenville, Pitt County NC), tombstone of "Joseph J. Harrington, North Carolina, Pvt. 3 U.S. ARTY, August 19, 1834."
12. Suffolk, Nansemond County VA Marriage records. The marriage record gave the names of her parents.
13. 1899 Nansemond County VA Federal Census, Suffolk Town, Holy Neck District, ED #30, p. 194a/13, Dwelling #245, line #23: Rosa Baker (age 39, Head, "School Teacher"); #24: Florence J. Harrington (age 38, married, sister, "School Teacher"); #25: Hildah Harrington (age 6, niece). 1900 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Greenville "North Side Tar River," ED #92, p. 217a/18, Dwelling #321, line #45: William M. Brown; line #49: John J. Harrington (born March 1861, age 39, "Salesman"). Crest Lawn Cemetery (Atlanta, DeKalb County GA), Section 17, tombstone of "Hilda Harrington Jarvis" (3 Nov 1893–4 Apr 1961).
14. Westview Cemetery (Atlanta, Fulton County GA), Section 8, tombstone of "F. Josephine Mansfield Harrington" (18 Feb 1860–27 Oct 1909).
15. 1910 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Greenville Town, ED #100, p. 77a, Dwelling #59, line #27: Joseph J. Harrington. 1920 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Greenville Town, ED #52, p. 162a, 514 Fourth Street, Dwelling #104, line #10: J. J. Harrington. 1930 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Greenville Township, ED #74-32, p. 110a/14, Dwelling #215: Jack J. Harrington.
16. Pitt County NC Marriage records. North Carolina Death Certificate #326, 1936: Sarah Elizabeth Harrington, Pitt County. Her death certificate lists her husband as "Jack" Harrington.
17. North Carolina Death Certificate #373, 1934: Joseph John Harrington, Pitt County.
18. North Carolina Death Certificate #178, 1939: O. W. Harrington, Buncombe County.

19. Pitt County NC Superior Court, Appointment of Administrators, Executors, & Guardians (1868–1901), p. 65 (W. H. Harrington appointed guardian to minors J. J. and O. J. Harrington, 11 January 1873). Pitt County NC Record of Settlements, Book 3 (1883–1903), p. 28 (Final Account of W. H. Harrington, Guardian to O. W. Harrington, 26 January 1884). On this date, O. W. Harrington acknowledged receipt of \$173.04 as the ward of the elder Harrington, and thus released William from any further liability as his Guardian.
20. 1870 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Greenville Township, p. 157b/19, Dwelling #190, line #4: D. S. Fleming; #5: Lidda E. Fleming; #6: Adrian Fleming; #7: O. G. Herrington. 1880 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Greenville Township North Side of Tar River, ED #127, p. 370b/11, Dwelling #108, line #46: D. S. Fleming; #47: L. E. Fleming; #48: Adron Fleming; p. 371a/12, Dwelling #15: O. J. W. Harrington (age 18, “*Laborer*,” “*Works in farm*”).
21. Pitt County NC Will Book 2, pp. 312–314 (Will of David S. Fleming, written 21 December 1882, probated 1 September 1884).
22. Pitt County NC Marriage Register (1866–1924), Image #74 (O. W. Harrington to Lena Thigpen, 15 December 1892). North Carolina Death Certificate #7547, 1948, Mrs. Lena Thigpen Harrington, Cumberland County.
23. “*King’s Weekly*” (Greenville, NC), 2 September 1898, p. 1, column 4.
24. “*King’s Weekly*,” 5 October 1900 p. 4, column 1.
25. “*The News and Observer*” (Raleigh, NC), 7 February 1939, p. 5, column 1. North Carolina Death Certificate #178, 1939: O. W. Harrington, Buncombe County.
26. “*The News and Observer*,” 3 April 1948, p. 3, column 1.
27. Greenwood Cemetery (Greenville, Pitt County NC), tombstones of “*O. W. Harrington*” (7 Nov 1862–6 Feb 1939) and “*Lena T. Harrington*” (28 July 1870–1 Apr 1948).
28. Pitt County NC Estate Files, Lanier Ward, 1858, LDS Film #7672815, Images #933–1045. Numerous petitions filed by Lanier Ward’s administrator in August 1866 identifies John J. Harrington, O. J. Wise Harrington, and Elizabeth C. Harrington as children of John A. Harrington and heirs of Lanier Ward’s estate.
29. Pitt County NC Estate Files, John A. Harrington, 1867, LDS Film #7384265, Images #1084–1141. It seems probable that Elizabeth was omitted from the household of one of her relatives in 1870.
30. Pitt County NC Superior Court, Appointment of Administrators, Executors, & Guardians (1868–1901), p. 65 (W. H. Harrington appointed guardian to minors J. J. and O. J. Harrington, 11 January 1873).

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