

Family Trails

By John C. Houston *

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Living in the Fatherland long, long ago,
The Assayes joined with the French Huguenot.

The very earliest knowledge, history tells,
Their homes were in the city of Aux-La-Chappells.

If all we've been told is really true,
The Asay name goes back to the year 1422.

Research thru history the fact one gleans,
That our kinship is traced to the Maid of Orleans.

A famous deliverer "Heaven" did send
The Hundred Years War she brot to an end.

Joan of Arc led the disheartened French,
The war spirit of England she did quench.

The name was spoken by the French Assaye,
An s and the e were dropped at a later day.

Because of war on the Huguenots so much,
They took refuge among the peace loving Dutch.

Spain ruled Holland with an iron hand
War existed quite universally over the land.

In Western Europe everywhere was strife,
The toll of a Protestant was to pay with his life.

Always at war with the inflooding sea,
From this enemy the Dutch will never be free-

This warfare has made them determined and brave,
They would turn in the sea their liberty to save.

An early Assaye married a Hollandish dame.
That she was wealthy some people claim.

Phillip of Spain in his tyrannical ire,
Burned Dutch cities, their home he did fire.

The Spanish Inquisition drove many away.
The Assayes left Holland early so writers say.

They felt they had stood all they could endure,
Persecuted French yielded to Canada's lure.

In the Eighteenth Century the Asays we find,
Having settled in Acadia with those of their kind.

Thinking the land was owned by the French,
They raised the French flag and themselves did entrench.

For over a century the French lived in the land.
Prosperity sprang up on every hand..

These people at last a haven had found,
Nothing to annoy them not even a sound.

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It was autumn when in walked, one day-
At noon time-into the busy village of Grand Pre-

An English officer with papers from the King.
Into the church he was everyone to bring.

Everyone came whether from fields or from loom.
Hastily they filled every nich in that room.

The windows were locked the door was barred,
While about the building was placed a guard.

There was breathless stillness-not a sound-
Never a person the reason had found.

Now stood before them in haughty mein,
The King's representative, rather tall and lean.

He said that it was his Majestie's decree,
That every Frenchman there should be

Immediately transplanted to other lands.
He was sorry but it was the King's commands.

'Tis sad indeed-the most heartless way,
These innocent people were treated that day.

They were taken direct to the water's deep,
Into row boats they were loaded like sheep.

A boat would move on with load complete.
Families were parted never again to meet.

Some boats sailed one way some another,
Separating children from father and mother.

One boat with rather an interesting fate,
Carried an Asay and his dear mate.

On the Isle of Jersey this boat did land.
The Asays sprang from these parents, grand.

Joseph Asay crossed to New Jersey's shore.
Two sons they had and possibly more.

Isaac at Trenton a gardener became.
Joseph at Camden attained a like fame.

The land was, rich, was made by the sea.
For gardening it was as rich as rich could be.

These fore-parents settled here in 1775.
They clustered together like bees in a hive.

It is said that the Asays are of worthy descent,
Industrious, honest, and of well meaning intent.

In those early days valuable land they got,
For to create town sites this land later was bot.

Not all were farmers so we are told,
Some were ministers-Christian teachers bold.

Some had trades---some wealth allowed.
As a family they were said to be rather proud.

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Restless youth at length came west.
The first to come, his faith to attest,

Was our grandfather Joseph and Family, all.
They had gladly heeded the missionary call.

Westward others got the moving craze.
Into many states the trails they did blaze.

Into Illinois Alford moved his worthy dame,
While to Iowa Richard and his wife came.

Out to Colorado moved Sol, Richards brother.
While the attractions of South Dakota lured another.

Two Asay brothers established a trading post,
In Nebraska, the state by them liked most.

The Asays are today all over the union.
Our organization hopes to get into communion

With all the branches, scattered everywhere,
And add them to our family tree, now quite bare.

A purpose of this union of Asays here,
To not only unite those living near,

But to include in our great family tree
All of our name, wherever they may be.

And not only the living but also the dead
We hope to seal to our great family head.

Mortal time will at last be done away,
We will all know each other at some future day.

No one is happy for to live all alone.
When, beyond, at the foot of our Father's throne,

We will join with the family both far and near.
Our joy will be complete in a circle so dear.

It is a call made of each one, a call from above,
To search for the records of those whom we love.

The noblest labor asked of you and of me,
Is helping to establish one's own family tree.

***NOTE:** Much of our information about our family history came from Helen Asay Cubberly, Kankakee, Illinois. (deceased). The information is compiled by John C. Houston, January 23, 1948, Lovell, Wyoming.