

*J. M. Callahan*  
*P471*

*A Brief History  
of My Life*



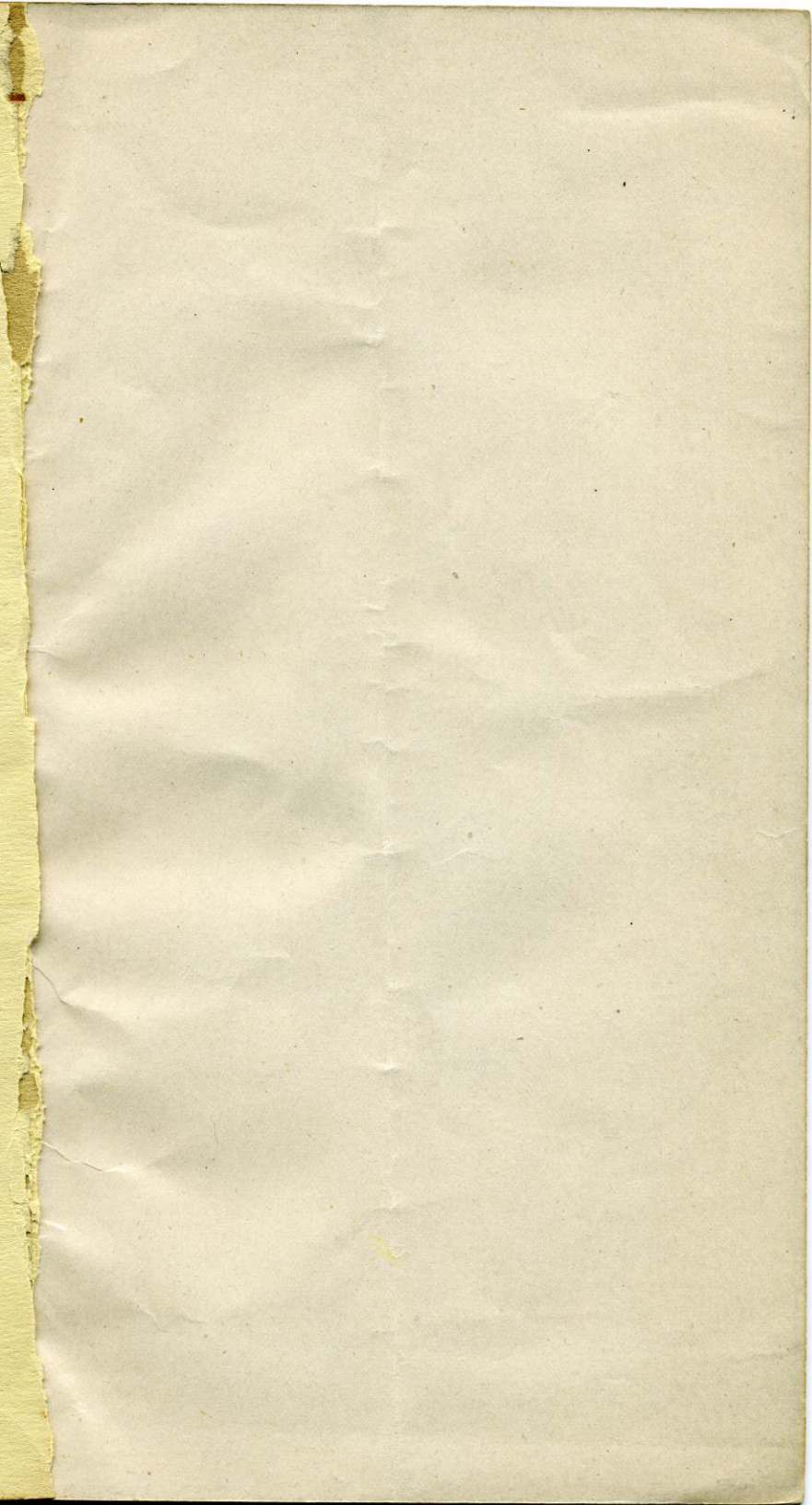
*J. M. Callahan*  
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*By Jesse Waugh*

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JESSE WAUGH AND WIFE

*A Brief History  
of My Life*

*By Jesse Waugh*

*A Brief History  
of the  
County of Gallia*  
By James H. ...

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## *A Brief History of My Life*

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I, Jesse Waugh, a citizen of the County of Mason and the State of West Virginia, was born in the County of Gallia, State of Ohio, on the border of the Ohio River opposite Eighteen Mile Creek, June 5, 1832.

About March 1, 1833, father left Ohio and bought a farm of 200 acres two miles from the mouth of Eighteen Mile Creek. A few years later we moved to this farm and he bought 150 acres more adjoining.

As soon as I was old enough to work a little (about 8 or 9 years old) I was put to work. Tobacco was the principal crop for me. I have caught and killed enough tobacco worms to make a good mess if they were all together. We raised wheat, oats, hemp, flax, potatoes, beans, cabbage, turnips, etc. We worked from sun up to sun down. Father kept from two to four horses, two to four cows, one yoke cattle, hogs, sheep, chicken, geese, turkeys and ducks. We had plenty of wholesome food and had good health while we were young, but we didn't use much coffee or sweet bread. That was for Sunday and visitors. There were plenty of deer and some bear, wild turkeys, pheasants, quail and plenty of squirrels. I have seen ten to twenty turkeys in the corn-fields. They were so plentiful that we paid very little attention to them, as they could be killed at most any time. I heard father say that in his time he killed twenty-five or thirty deer a year

for several years. The last time I remember him killing deer, he killed three in one day. Venison was common with us. I have seen from eight to twelve at once. Rabbits were scarce in those days, as the foxes and catamounts kept them cleaned out.

Those early days and years of my life were happy ones for me, although past and gone, yet they often come up in my mind and it does me good to think them over.

About the year 1843 I went to school for the first time, going a mile and a half through the woods. There was no road or path until the girls and myself made a sort of a path, when father blazed the saplings so we could find our way. The school house was of logs, with a fireplace eight feet wide in one end and we boys had to get the wood to build the fires at play time. We did not play much. I went about two of the three months school. It was taught by a good teacher, Creed Wray, who was well liked by his pupils. I learned at that school to read, write and spell. I only attended school one year altogether, though I learned more at home than I ever did at school, I have been almost through the arithmetic once or twice, but studied geography very little, so my education is somewhat limited.

I next went to timbering and made some money at it. A short time before I quit this I took a notion to get married. This happened November 2, 1854. I was past twenty-two and my wife eighteen. She was Permelia F. Smith, a daughter of William and Elizabeth Smith, living on Little Hurricane, two miles back of Winfield, in Putnam County, Virginia. After my marriage I came home to my father's and the next undertaking for me was flat-boating. I made four trips from the Kanawha Salt Works to Cincinnati and to Aurora, twenty miles below. These were the pilots on the different trips: 1st, Joseph Nibert; 2nd, James Christy; 3rd, McDaniel; 4th, George Young. This was all the flatboating I wanted in mine.

After this I timbered for myself and others. We sold timber in logs and would sell to the mill by cube or foot.



We cut saw logs all winter and hauled them to the creek and about March 1st there was a raise in the river and I sold mine to Paskel Hawthorne at 9¼c a foot, running measure. They rafted the timber and run it to Maysville, Kentucky and sold it for 6½c. There was eleven thousand but in the raft and he lost money, although I made some.

I next rented a small farm from my wife's grandfather, William Elmore and raised six hundred bushels of corn and sixty bushels of potatos. There was no sale for them and nobody but myself and wife to eat them. Most of them went by the board; a loss on me. I then rented my father's farm and moved on it. I raised big crops of corn, wheat, oats and potatos, and done very well. I stayed two years. I left that house, moved to another house on his farm, stayed there about a year and farmed some more.

In 1858 I bought a small farm of thirty-five acres next to father's, paying \$150 for it. I farmed and improved the land, raising corn and tobacco, and done very well. In 1859 or 1860 I was elected Constable. I held this office until the Civil War broke out. It got most too hot for me then and I quit. I had made and lost money. When I quit I had \$61 due me from the state of Virginia and sent the claim to Richmond for my pay, but never received one cent and have never heard from it.

I still kept the farm and after the Civil War was over I took up the carpenter's trade. I had worked at the trade some before and could handle tools quite well, so I went to contracting. My first job was repairing the dwelling of Harrison McAllister and the next for David George I worked for \$1 a day. Then I bid in a log school house for \$490. I furnished the material and worked two hands beside myself and made \$4.40 a day. Since then I have built nine more in Hannan Township and repaired several others. I have built seven churches: three for the Missionary Baptists; three for the Methodists and one for the Christian Church. I also built a trestle bridge one hundred feet long by sixteen feet wide across Eighteen Mile Creek, furnishing all material, for \$495 and made good

money. I also put the woodwork on the piers across Sixteen Mile Creek and built twelve large barns by contract and by the day. I give the names of those I built for. 1st, two for W. J. Keister; 2nd two for Albert Menager; 3rd, one for Henry Clark, 4th, one for John Porter; 5th, one for Charles Hogghead; 6th, one for Anthneal Gwinn; 7th, one for Fletcher Carter; 8th, one for James George; 9th, one for James A. Richardson; 10th, one for James Ball. I also built ten stores—John Ball, one; John Hughes, one; Charles Hogghead, two; James Ball, one; Ed. Neal, one; Gus Hanley, one; W. J. Keister, one; Clutts and Fisher, two; James Richardson, one; and one warehouse. I do not know exactly how many dwelling houses I have built, as I have not kept exact count, but at least forty or fifty. I have made about two hundred and fifty or three hundred coffins and have wished many a time that I had kept the names of all those I built them for, but I neglected to do so until it was too late. I have made several new wagons—I mean the wood work. Also three or four buggies. I have done a large amount of repairing on houses and barns, more than I can ever do again, but I havn't altogether quit yet, as I still do light work such as painting wagons, buggies, plow stocks and harrows.

I sold my thirty-five acre farm that I paid \$150 for and received \$285. Then I bought two acres and paid \$35. Since I have traded or swapped with one William Blazer and got twenty-seven rods more from him than he got from me, making me over two acres, twenty-seven rods, more or less, and all paid for. I have four dwelling houses, one corn crib and a shed by the side of it. There are three good gardens on the place well paled and wired, and one good well. I have eighteen stands of honey bees, fifty chickens, household goods, a full chest of carpenter's tools, some farm implements and one good buggy. I am glad that I can say I owe but \$6.75 and this will clear me of everything I owe in this world to anyone. I am glad I can say so much of truth.

I will now tell of my travels. I have been in four states: West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana. I have never been farther down the river than Aurora, or farther up than the Fair Grounds above Pt. Pleasant. Have been up Kanawha as far as Malden, above Charleston and back in Ohio as far as Patriot. I have been in Kentucky in some of the border towns and have been in most of the river towns between Pt. Pleasant and Aurora.

I will tell some more about my childhood. As before stated, I was born June 5th, 1832. When I was ten years old I learned that both father and mother belonged to the Missionary Baptist Church. Father was a licensed preacher and they wanted him to be ordained but he refused the ordination. I have heard him say that he didn't feel competent or worthy to fill such a high office in the church, I have heard mother say that he preached forty years. He was also licensed to marry and I have seen him solemnize several marriages myself. He was eighty years old when he died. Mother lived three years longer, dying at the age of eighty-four. I found them both to be strictly religious at all times. They were a good father and mother to me and the rest of the family. I trust that I will meet them again some sweet day in that city beyond death.

There were twelve in our family; four boys and eight girls. They are all dead but three; myself and two girls. We were married November 2, 1854 and were blessed with eleven children. Two died, one at the age of four and the other at ten. Five of them were boys and six girls. The three boys living are carpenters and are married and live by themselves. The girls are all married and gone and we are keeping house by ourselves once again.

When I was eighteen years old I had a good voice for singing and went to singing school for one term of twelve lessons. The master's name was Benica McAllister. I walked six miles every Sunday morning and took a great delight in the singing and learned fast. After the school was out the young men got me to start a school in our own

neighborhood and I had twenty scholars. I taught the school out and gave good satisfaction and I followed up singing for several years with good success. The last school I taught after the close of the Civil War I had about thirty scholars and a hundred spectators every Sunday for twelve Sundays. The scholars paid me like gentlemen. The last day Ed Couch made a speech and took up a collection and he got \$7 or \$8 extra for me. We all had a splendid good time. This was the last school I taught, yet I did not give up singing. I have led the singing in many protracted meetings and still sing and expect to as long as I can, although my voice is not as clear as it used to be in my young days. It is a consolation to realize that I can sing and talk a little yet, though my health is about all gone and I can't speak my words as well as I wish to. I have always been a dear lover of vocal music.

I have held the following offices during my life: 1st, Constable, 2nd Member Board of Education; 3rd, Secretary of the Board; 4th, Township Clerk; 5th Overseer of Roads; 6th, Trustee of School House; 7th, Ordained Deacon in the Missionary Baptist Church. I have held the last for thirty odd years and it is the greatest I ever held and should be the most sacred. But the greatest gift I ever received was the gift of God in this poor heart of mine, near Glenwood, W. Va., when I was about sixteen years old and I still hold that blessed gift. Although it has been about sixty-one years ago, yet I have never lost sight of Heaven and immortal glory, the home of the Soul in that City beyond death's sea. A verse I love:

"I have loved ones in that city, those who left me years ago;  
They with joy are waiting for me where no farewell tears e'r flow,  
In that city, bright city, soon with loved ones I shall be  
And with Jesus live forever, in that City beyond death's sea."

I now give my age in full up to June 5, 1907, when I was seventy-five years old. 75 years, 900 months, 27,707 days, 664,968 hours, 1,660,980 minutes, 99,658,800 seconds.

We have nine children living and two dead, sixty grand children, and six great-grand-children, with four

grandchildren dead. I have been called to the bedside of men and women at all hours of the day and night and have heard them express themselves in regard to their prospects of heaven and immortal glory. I have noticed a great difference between them; some were willing to go and some were not. Some died happy—others did not. It is an awful thing to live without preparation for the World to come, when we know that we must die. Let me advise you not to put off your return to God any longer than you can bow down before him and ask him to help you before it is too late, for the word of God will tell you that today is the time, the accepted time, for we do not know what tomorrow may bring forth. Be ye also ready, for inasmuch as ye think not the Son of Man cometh. God is ready to hear the prayers of anyone who will come to Him aright. He said "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and the doors shall be opened unto you." Heaven is worth contending for. There is joy and happiness in the service of God. I realized it years ago and I want to still continue while I am permitted to live in this world and when life and its labors are over I want to live with God and his angels and with the redeemed in Glory in that City in that House made with Hands Eternal. That is the place where my hopes are stayed and my heart, my treasure is there, where virtues and blossoms never fade and fields are eternally fair. That blissful place is my Father's Land and by faith I can see it afar in that Home that is prepared for the people of God.

I will now say to the little boys and girls—be good children to your parents and teachers and obey your Creator in the days of your youth and to make bright and shining ornaments in society and a fit subject for the Kingdom of Heaven. A few words to my christain brethren who are in Christ. Walk in the light of God and keep an eye single to the glory of God and for the advancement of his Kingdom. I can't say that I have no enemies, but if there is one or more I do not know it. But I think I have

as many relations as any in the county, for most every-one I meet or see calls me Pa, or Grandpa, or Uncle Jess. I am glad I have so many friends. God bless them all, young and old, rich and poor. May we so live as to honor our profession and keep on the sunny side until we are called to leave this world and the Lord will say "It is enough. Come up here and sit down in my Kingdom." Then we can sing

"Oh happy day, that fixed my choice  
On thee, my saviour and my God.  
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,  
And tell its rapture all abroad.  
Oh happy day, oh happy day,  
When Jesus washed my sins away.  
He taught me how to watch and pray  
And live rejoicing every day.  
Oh happy day, oh happy day  
When Jesus washed my sins away."

Then we can sing for ever and ever with that great number who washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and with loved ones who have gone before. A happy meeting that will be.

I have omitted one thing I wanted to tell about. I was the first man to make a cross-tie in Mason county. I mean a railroad tie. I took a contract to get out twelve hundred for Andrew Hunter. I didn't know what a tie was. I had never seen one and would not have known one if I had met it in the road, but I modeled one after making some inquiries and then closed the contract and made them satisfactorily. I also raised the first sugar-cane in Mason County. The seed was sent to my wife's mother, Mrs. Smith, by John Bowyer, her uncle, while he was a legislator at Richmond, Virginia. I planted the seed in fifteen short rows. After it got ripe the next thing was to find a way to make it up; whether to pound the stalks or boil them in water. Here I had to put on my thinking cap and invent some sort of a machine to get the sap out of the stalk. So I planned up one and picked up my ax and saw and went to the woods and found a black gum tree, something that lightning hardly ever strikes, cut it down and sawed off one

roller  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet long and one 4 feet long and compassed them round. I cut journals on them and set them in a bench, spaced and bored holes in them, and made wooden pins and drove them in one roller. I sawed them off, leaving them extend  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches, so they would match the holes in the second roller like cogs. I put it together and it worked all right. When I put the horse on and started to grinding I waked up the neighbors all around me. You could look in my direction and see them coming to see what it was. They did not fancy the music very much but we had lots to talk about for a while. To boil the juice I rigged up a furnace with kettles in it. My wife attended to the boiling and used a table spoon for a skimmer. We made fifteen gallons of sorghum, the best I ever tasted. Now, this is so, because it was the first I ever tasted. Then a new field was opened to me. Cane mills were wanted and I contracted to build them. I laid my first mill aside and got up an improved one that would press all the juice out of the stalk. The rollers were from eighteen to twenty inches through; I sold them for \$10 each and made same money. The next fall when cane grinding started up, you could hear them from early in the morning till late in the evening, in the valleys and on the hills. You could tell when the cane manufacturers were at work by the music they made and it was not vocal music either. They only carried one part and that was something similiar to a hog squealing. But they made the molasses all the same. Some think they are all the go, but I prefer something better. But enough on this subject.

I have been a great hand to hunt wild bees, as some call them, although they are no more or less than tame bees like we keep in stands around our homes—I have found many a tree with bees in it. Some of them were much richer than others. I will tell you of one of the best. There were nine of us at the cutting of the tree and I felled it on some saplings and then cut the saplings and eased the tree to the ground. I took the honey out and we all ate all we wanted and the balance weighed ninety-seven pounds.

There was over a hundred pounds in the tree. I saved the bees and made George Young a present of them and in a few years he had a good many stands from them. I also gave him half the honey. I now have eighteen stands of bees and only one young swarm up to June 1, 1907; seventeen yet to swarm.

I want to say a little about my garden. I expect that I will have to brag a little on it. I have about one-quarter of an acre. I have planted in it one bushel early Irish potatoes and I must say that they are fine. They had young potatoes on the vines June 1st. I have sweet potatoes, garden peas, garden beans, poles beans, butter beans, radishes, beets, cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, lettuce, strawberries, currants, gooseberries, etc. and they are all looking well. My wife says for me not to brag on myself so much, but let the neighbors' do it for me. The neighbors say I have the best garden they have ever seen. I do have a disposition to brag a little.

I love my wife and children and my grandchildren and great-grandchildren and neighbors enough to treat them the best that I know now. If I have any enemies I would be glad to talk to them for a while and I think I could convince them that it is wrong for us to live that way in the world. If we can't forgive each other, we will stand a poor show in the world to come. For myself I hold no malice against any one and if I have ever wronged anyone I would be glad to have the privilege of asking their forgiveness.

Today, June 5th, 1907, is my birthday and I am seventy-five years old. I expected to finish this little history of mine today, but I am disappointed. I have been writing it piece-meal at leisure times.

This is July 18th, so I will write a little more. My bees have increased since I last told of them and I now have twenty-nine stands—eighteen young swarms and I saved them all and have plenty of honey to sell and eat. I forgot to say that I owned a threshing-machine, the first one on Mercer's Bottom. I bought it and commenced thresh-



ing the first time I was on Mercer's Bottom. The first work was for Edward Menager, the old gentleman. I used to commence early and never stop until cold weather. I got five cents a bushel for wheat and three cents for oats and made some money. I paid \$100 for it, used it one season and sold it for what I paid for it. The people I threshed for would come and get it and move it with their own teams and clean their own grain with wheat fans run by man-power. The next threshing I done was with a separator. The owner run it two years and sold it. I run others off and on for seven years. I then bought a shingle machine put up by Andrew Hunter and brother John and run by attaching to the horse-power of threshing machine. One horse was all that was needed to run the machine. There were four of us on the machine and that was all that was necessary. We bought poplar timber to cut the shingles out of and it made fine ones. It cost us from fifty cents to one dollar a tree and we cut our trees, sawed our blocks, split them up in proper sizes, hauled them to the machine, cut them into shingles and baled them ready for the market. We made six or seven thousand a day and called this a day's work. We sold the shingles on the yard for \$4.50 a thousand. We also shipped up and down the Ohio, and Kanawha Rivers. We had an agent at Point Pleasant, Hutch McDaniels who sold hundreds of dollars worth for us on commission. I must say he worked faithfully for us, settled square and fair, as all men should, if we would have a better world, for right wrongs no man:

I forgot to say that I was Lieutenant in the Militia when we were mustered here in Mason County. We used to drill at Pt. Pleasant once a year and I received my commission from Gov. Wise, of Virginia, laid it away and have it yet and expect to while I live. When I look at it, it makes me think of good old times. During the war a great many were drafted into the service and one of them wanted a substitute. He lived in Ohio and sent a man to see if I would take his place, but he missed it. He offered

me \$1300 in cash, but though I liked money, I didn't like bullets and I did not have the grit, so I refused to accept it. He finally found a man to go for \$1100. I was told that when he was mustered into the service, the Company only got down the river as far as New Richmond, where he was discharged and got back home with his \$1100 safe and sound. That was his luck. So I didn't cost the government very much. I thought a good deal of the government, but thought more of Jesse than I did of the government about that time.

Before I close this history I will tell you more about my bees; on June 5th I had eighteen stands. Two died, but since then there have been thirteen swarms and I saved them all. I have taken out seventy-five pounds of honey. Come friends, and eat honey with me. I am raising the second crop in my garden and it looks fine. I have a cucumber in the garden that is 10½ inches long and twelve inches around.

Now I must close by giving you some advice. I have lived in this world a long time, but I have never learned to play cards, I don't know one card in the deck and never would allow anyone to show me. I never swore but very little, never danced a reel, and made it a practice to avoid bad company as much as possible. By leaving these things alone we have less trouble and more pleasure in this world and also in the next. We are told that he who knoweth his Master's will and doeth it shall not be beaten with many stripes. We can all find plenty of trouble without looking for it. When your playmates ask you to go to a dance turn the joke on them and beg them not to go. Tell them it is wrong to dance, that they may catch cold and have a spell of sickness, something worse. Not only that but it causes your parents to lose sleep worrying about you. You can dance all your life and not get rich or get any credit for it. Let me advise you to lay all these things aside and do all you can to make your parents happy. Obey them and if they are not Christians tell them you would be

glad to have them such. If you are not a christian, don't rest until you are. Don't wait until tomorrow. Right now is the time, the accepted time. God is waiting for you to come to him and be saved. Oh, hear the proclamation, Come, whosoever will, salvation's free for all that will accept it.

I will close by writing you a verse of poetry, a favorite piece of mine and my heart's desire:

"On the happy golden shore,  
Where the faithful part no more,  
Where the storms of life are o'er,  
Meet there where the night dissolves  
Into pure and perfect day;  
I am going home to stay."

Meet me there. This is my request to one and all.  
Good-bye.

JESSE WAUGH.

A. D. [illegible] [illegible]

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