

An Early Texas Lott Family

by John C. Barron

Introduction

The American frontier provided a aspect almost unique in recorded history: free land for the taking by ordinary men. Like a magnet, the promise of free land drew immigrants to frontier areas, but once they got there they realized that there actually was a price to pay. In too many cases that price turned out to be their blood or that of their families. For that reason, it took boldness and courage to settle the American frontier; and judging from the fact that they were always found on the frontier, the Lott family must have had more than it's share of each.

In this paper I will examine one of those frontier families: John Lott and his brothers. They were apparently the first of the surname to come to what is now the state of Texas. I will review the evidence concerning them and use it to reconstruct their immediate families as well as try to place them in the list of descendants of John Lott of Edgecombe Co., North Carolina. In so doing I will also make the case for them as descendants of John Lott "founder of Lott's Bluff" (now Columbia), Mississippi.

I suspect that most genealogists researching the Lott family would agree that Lott is one of their most difficult families. The penchant of the family to live on the frontier certainly adds to the problems. Most of the group in this study is indeed an enigma, almost setting a new standard for mystery even among the Lotts. This can be easily seen by checking the rolls of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas which is a society open to women who are descendants of persons who lived in Texas during the days of the republic. While several women have entered this organization as descendants of Robert A. Lott, to my knowledge, none have ever been admitted as a descendant of any of his brothers who had just as much if not more to do with the founding of the Republic of Texas as did Robert Lott.

It is hard to tell where to start with this investigation, but logic dictates working from the first known setting then proceeding backward and/or forward in time. The first earliest record that I found for the Lott family in Texas was where White reported that John Lott received a 1st class headright of a league and labor of land (about 4,600 acres in total) for having immigrated by December, 1834, which he later patented in Washington County in February, 1838.¹ White also showed that Arthur Lott located a similar amount of land in the same county the next month along with Robert A. Lott who patented a 2nd class headright of 1,280 acres there. According to documents from the Texas General Land Office, a 1st class headright with a league and labor of

¹ White, Gifford, *1840 Citizens of Texas, Land Grants*, volume 3, (Austin, Texas: Privately Published, 1988), p. 173.

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land was issued to married heads of households who arrived before March 2, 1836, and a 2nd class headright with 1,280 acres of land was issued to married heads of households who arrived between March 2, 1836, and October 1, 1837.²

Due to their close association, it has been reported that these three men were brothers. In his biographical paragraph on Robert A. Lott, Ray said "...they [Robert A. and John] must have been brothers..."³ On the other hand, Lehmann stated "Two of [John] Lott's younger brothers, *Dr.* [italics mine] Arthur Lott and Robert A. Lott"⁴ Although I have seen no primary evidence to confirm these relationships, I believe it is more than reasonable to assume they were brothers and have seen nothing to contradict this conclusion.

In the next few years, other Lott families immigrated to the Republic of Texas. I am familiar with the lineage of most of them including my own ancestor, Arthur Lott, who came to Harrison Co., but there are still some that I cannot place. Table 1, taken from White, shows a listing of 3rd class headrights issued to some of these Lott men.⁵

I will concentration only on those men who were shown as migrating to Washington County. The largest settlement in the county was Washington-on-the-Brazos which dated from 1822 and was located on the west side of the Brazos River just below the mouth of the Navasota.⁶ There was a

² Categories of Texas Land Grants, Texas General Land Office, online <<http://www.glo.tsl.state.tx.us>>, downloaded August 16, 1998.

³ Ray, Worth S., *Austin Colony Pioneers*, (Austin, Texas, and New York: The Pemberton Press, Jenkins Publishing Company, 1970), p. 150.

⁴ Lehmann, Bill, *Blood on the Bluebonnets*, (Guthrie, Oklahoma: Privately Published, 1994), unpaginated. I believe that Lehmann mistook Dr. Arthur Jenkins Lott who lived in Austin, Texas, in the 1850s for the early Arthur.

⁵ White, Gifford, *1840 Citizens of Texas*, volume 1, (Austin, Texas: Ingmire Pub., 1983), p. 153.

⁶ Sevidge, Maxine, "Washington-on-the-Brazos," in *The Handbook of Texas*, volume II, Walter Prescott Webb, editor-in-chief (Austin, Texas: The Texas State Historical Association, 1952), p. 865.

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ferry crossing there and the town grew up around it which by 1836 consisted of two hotels, and a population of about a hundred.

John Lott was operating one of these hotels where a delegation met in 1836 to draft the Declaration of Texas Independence. Lott's roll in the struggle consisted of providing provisions to the participants and there are some very interesting documents to verify this: one of which showed him providing such to David Crockett on his way to help defend the Alamo.⁷

Ancestors

Just who were these Texas pioneers? To adequately deal with this question, I need to digress this discussion and lay a foundation for making an identification. In an earlier paper, I reviewed the southern Lott family of John Lott of Edgecombe Co., North Carolina.⁸ I presented evidence to indicate that there were three John Lotts in Edgecombe Co. by 1750 with the youngest born about 1742. I believe that the early Texas Lott family is of this line.

At least two of the above Johns sojourned to the British held territory of West Florida in 1775 at the beginning of the American Revolutionary War giving every indication that they were Tories or British sympathizers. The elder John was dead by 1778, but both received royal land grants in what is now Mississippi and one of these grants is of vital importance in the quest for identity of the Texas pioneer Lotts.

When West Florida was seized by the Spanish in 1780 conditions became uncomfortable for the pro-British inhabitants. At that time, the remaining John Lott abandoned his claim and by 1784 he appeared in South Carolina. Once again, however, there were two of them: a John Lott Sr. and John Lott Jr. In her application for membership in the Daughters of the Republic, Francis Blich cited the younger of the two as a revolutionary soldier who died in 1810 at age 68.

These men appear to be the John Lotts who had earlier in 1764 received land grants in what is now Burke Co. Georgia. Although I have not been able to document this, I feel that this property had been confiscated during the war due to their political leanings. The family does not seem to have been further penalized, however, and by the late 1780s most of them had begun to return to Georgia where they re-acquired land and resumed their place as leaders in the community. It is

⁷ Audited Republic Claims (microfilm reel 62), Texas State Archives, Austin.

⁸ Barron, John C., "A Review of the Southern Colonial Lott Family," online in *John Barron's Home Page* <<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~jcbarron/>> 28 June 1998.

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noteworthy, however, that none received Revolutionary War land grants in Georgia.

The Lotts made innumerable land records in Burke, Washington, Effington, and Montgomery Counties in the 1790s and early 1800s. A year after Tattnall County was created from Montgomery in 1801, the following Lotts were listed on the tax roll: John, Luke, Absalom, Arthur, Josiah [probably Jesse], Nathaniel, Nathan, Robert, Simon, and William. Deed records from the same year indicate that a John Lott Jr. was there too. The following figure shows the location of selected members of the Lott family in Tattnall Co., Georgia, and in the several decades thereafter in Marion Co., Mississippi, Florida Territory, and the Republic of Texas.

Of the two John Lotts noted above, the elder must have been the John reported by Blich to have been born in 1742 and his assumed son probably born about 1765.⁹ The Luke, Robert, and Jesse in the above group are also assumed to be sons of this elder John. The Arthur, Absalom, Nathan, and William are thought to be brothers of the elder John, while Simon may have been a son of Arthur and Nathaniel a son of Nathan. Evidence for John's family associations will be presented later.

In the next few years, John Lott, Jr. and his brothers began to have various legal troubles in Tattnall Co.¹⁰ In 1803, John Lott, David Brown, Robert Scott, and Joshua Sharp posted bonds to guarantee a court appearance concerning a felony charge by Lott against Matthew and/or Martha Jones. Brother Robert Lott sued Hinke Holeman for damages concerning the death of his horse.

⁹ Blich, Frances Smith, DAR Application of John Lott, Jr.

¹⁰ "Miscellaneous Tattnall County, Georgia Records, 1801-1805", *Georgia Genealogical Magazine*, vol. 8, # 3.

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Table 1. Listing of 3rd Class Headrights Issued to Lott Men in Texas.

Name	Immigrated	Acres	County	Issued	County	Patented
Lott, Absalom	18 Dec 1839	640	Sabine	18 Dec 1839	Sabine	18 Dec 1839
Lott, Arthur		640	Harrison	4 Dec 1839	Rusk	15 Sep 1845
Lott, Hiram	post 10 Oct 1837	320	Washington	30 Dec 1839	Limestone	10 Jan 1848
Lott, Husted [should read Arthur]	1 Jul 1838	320	Washington	14 Mar 1839		
Lott, Jackson	18 Dec 1839	640	Sabine	18 Dec 1839		
Lott, John	Jan 1840	640	Harris [should be Harrison]	21 Apr 1841	Harrison	1 Dec 1847
Lott, John	Dec 1839	320	Harrison	Jan 1840		
Lott, John Jr.	post 10 Oct 1837	320	Washington	30 Dec 1839	Limestone	10 Jan 1848
Lott, John W.	23 Jul 1839	640	Galveston	10 Aug 1839		
Lott, Robert		320	Washington	2 May 1839		
Lott, Solomon J.	1 Dec 1839	320	Harrison	Jan 1840		

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Table 2. Location of Lotts in Tattnall Co., Georgia, Marion Co., Mississippi, Florida Territory and the Republic of Texas during the years 1800-1840.

Name and Year of Birth	1800.....+1810.....+1820.....+1830.....+1840
Absalom (1758)	...G.G..G....G..MMMM...M.....+.....+.....+.....+
Arthur (1750)	...GGG..G.G.GG.G..+.....+.....+.....+.....+.....+
Arthur (1788)	...+.....+GG.GM..MM...MM.....+M..M.....+.....+
Arthur (1795)	...+.....+M...+...MM.M..M..M..+F...+M.....+TT.T
Elizabeth (1780)	...+.....+GM..+.....+.....+.....+.....+.....+.....+
Elizabeth (1795)	...+.....+M...+.....+.....+.....+.....+.....+.....+
Fanny (1800)	...+.....+M...+.....+.....+M..+.....+.....+.....+
Jesse (1766)	...+.....+GGGMM+M.....+.....+.....+.....+.....+
Jesse (1805)	...+.....+M...+.....+.....+.....+F..F.....+F...F
John (1742)	...+G..G.G..+.....+.....+.....+.....+.....+.....+
John (1765)	...+G.GGGGMMMM..M+...M..M..+M..+.....+.....+.....+
John (1790)	...+.....+M...+...MMM...MM..MFFF..+...TTT.T+
John (1792)	...+.....+.....+.....+...MM+M.M.MMM..M.....+.....+
Luke (1770)	...G.G.GG.MMMMM..MMM.MMM.....+.....M.....+.....+
Luke (1802)	...+.....+M...+.....+.....+.....+F...+F...+
Mark (1769)	...+G..G.G..G.....+.....+.....+.....+.....+.....+
Nathan (1760)	...G.G..+.....+M.GMMM..M.....+.....+.....+.....+
Nathanial (1785)	...+G..G.....+G.M...M...M.M..M.....+.....+
Robert (1775)	...+G.GGGMMM+M...+...MM.....+M..M.....+.....+
Robert A. (1797)	...+.....+M...+.....+.....+M...+FF.F+F...+TT..T
Sarah (1795)	...+.....+M...+.....+M.....+.....+.....+.....+
Simon (1781)	...+G..G....G.G.MM.M..M.....+M..M.M..+.....+
William (1755)	...G.GG.G..GGGM..MMMM.M+.....+.....+.....+.....+
William	...G.....+G.GGMG.MMM..MM.....+MM.M.....+.....+

G = Tattnall Co., Georgia
 M = Marion Co., Mississippi
 F = Florida Territory
 T = Republic of Texas

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Table 3. Tax roll entries of Lott in early Texas.

Year	County	Name	Acres	Grantee
1837	Washington	Arthur Lott	-	-
	"	John Lott	265	-
	"	Robert A. Lott	300	-
	"	Andrew Miller	2733	-
1838	Washington	Arthur Lott	-	-
	"	Ro. A. Lott	-	-
	"	Jno. Lott	666	-
1839	Washington	R.A. Lott	490	-
1840	Washington	Robt. A. Lott	490	-
1841	Washington	R.A. Lott	490	-
1842	Washington	Robt. A. Lott	1770	-
	Montgomery	Absalom Lott	320	-
	"	John Lott	740	-
	"	John Lott, guard. heirs A. Miller	7000+	-
1843	Washington	R.A. Lott	490	-
1844	Washington	Robt. A. Lott	490	-
	Montgomery	John Lott	5000+	-
	"	Sela Lott	1040	-
1845	Robertson	John Lott, Jr.	-	-
1846	Limestone	John Lott, Jr.	-	-
	"	Arthur Lott	-	-
	"	John Lott, Sr.	-	-
	"	Celia Lott, guard. L. & M. Miller	-	-
	"	Jesse Lott	-	-
1847	Limestone	Hiram Lott	-	-
	Grimes	Sela Lott, guard. L. & M. Miller	-	-
	"	Jesse Lott	-	-
1848	Limestone	Hiram Lott	-	-
	"	Jesse Lott	-	-
	"	Mrs. Ceely Lott	-	-
	"	John Lott	-	-
1849	Limestone	Susan C. Lott (non-resident)	1475	John Belden

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Year	County	Name	Acres	Grantee
1850	Limestone	John Lott	-	-
	"	Mrs. Selia Lott, guard L. Miller	-	-
	"	Jesse Lott	-	-
	"	Hiram Lott	-	-
	"	Robert T. Miller	-	-
1851	Freestone	B.F. Edwards	320	Hiram Lott
	"	Hiram Lott	-	-
1854	Freestone	T.T. Evans	330	Jesse Lot
1855	McLennan	S. Lott	-	-
1856	McLennan	Stephen Lott	-	-
	"	P.S. Black	-	-
1857	McLennan	Stephen Lott	-	-
	"	P.S. Black	-	-
1858	McLennan	S. Lott	-	-
		Martin Lott	-	-
		P.S. Black	320	Black Pre-emption
1859	McLennan	Stephen Lott	-	-
		P.S. Black	320	Black Pre-emption
1860	McLennan	S.F. Lott	-	-