

Lance Family of Indiana

The earliest known member of this branch of the Lance family is **John Lance**. He was born in Kentucky about 1794. John's parents had entered the virtually untamed and heavily forested lands of Kentucky sometime in or before 1794. Kentucky had just gained statehood on June 1, 1792. It had been formed out of the western-most part of Virginia. It is not yet certain if John's parents settled permanently in Kentucky or were just passing through.

There were very few Lance families living in Kentucky around the time of John's birth. The primitive living conditions of the area produced only scant and sketchy records. Identifying the names of John's parents is proving to be very difficult. Tax rolls from 1789 through 1792 show two Lance families living in Fayette County. They were headed by Coonrod Lance and George Lance. In 1796, another Lance family appeared on the Fayette County tax rolls. It was headed by a John Lance. This family appears sporadically on the Fayette County tax rolls until 1803. In addition, from 1799 to 1805, a George Lance was mentioned on the tax rolls of Barren County, Kentucky.

The census records for 1790 and 1800 were somehow destroyed. The 1810 federal census shows only three Lance families living in Kentucky. They were headed by Martin Lance (Barren County), Coonrod Lance (Montgomery County), and George Lance (Warren County). The names of the other members of these three Lance households were not recorded. John would have been about 16 years old at that time. The 1810 census enumeration indicates all three Lance families had a male member aged at least '16 but under 26'.

Like his parents, John Lance must have had a restless spirit. He left his family as a young man and traveled north. He crossed the Ohio River and entered the wild Territory of the Northwest. This area, which included the lands between the Ohio River and the Great Lakes, was only sparsely inhabited by white settlers. However, it was thick with increasingly hostile Indians and wild animals. The lure of the open and unspoiled lands of the Northwest Territory was irresistible to an increasing number of American adventurers like John. On May 7, 1800, due to the increased white population, the Northwest Territory had been split into two smaller territories. The Indiana Territory was thus created.

Meanwhile, Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa (The Prophet), two sons of a Shawnee warrior chief, became determined to stop the advance of white settlement north of the Ohio River. Tecumseh believed it was vital that the Indians eliminate all forms of the white man's culture from their lives. It became his mission to convince the Indians to return to a state of purity and to live in their traditional ways. He also urged the Indians to forget their inter-tribal rivalries and unite in order to more effectively resist the steady American advance.

In 1809, the tribes in the Indiana Territory had ceded large portions of their land to the United States. Tecumseh protested these land sales to the territorial Governor, General William Henry Harrison, but to no avail. In the fall of 1811, Tecumseh traveled south to carry his message of purity, unity and resistance to the Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Creek nations. He vigorously and eloquently attempted to convince the southern tribes to rise up and join his confederacy of resistance.

Back in the Indiana Territory, Tecumseh had left his brother, The Prophet, in charge of the tribe at Prophet's Town, near Tippecanoe Creek. It was a wooded area seven miles north of Lafayette, Indiana. Prophet's Town had been established as a utopian village where the Indians practiced Tecumseh's principles. The Indians were drawn to follow The Prophet by his charisma and imagined mystical powers.

The white settlers of the Indiana Territory were becoming alarmed by the increasing activities and power of Tecumseh's followers. In the late summer of 1811, General Harrison organized a small army of

about 1,000 men. This regiment then marched north from the territorial capital of Vincennes towards Prophet's Town. General Harrison was hoping to destroy the town while Tecumseh was on his southern recruitment drive. The regiment arrived near Prophet's Town on November 6, 1811. During a discussion with a few of The Prophet's representatives, it was mutually agreed that there would be no hostilities until a formal meeting could be held on the following day. General Harrison's scouts then guided the troops to a suitable campsite on a wooded hill about a mile west of Prophet's Town. Upon arriving at the campsite, General Harrison warned his men of possible treachery by The Prophet. The troops were placed in a quadrangular formation. Each man was ordered to sleep fully clothed. Numerous fires were lit to combat the cold, rainy night, and a large detail was assigned to sentinel the outposts.

Tecumseh had warned his brother not to attack the white men until the Indian confederation was strong and completely unified. But the incensed Prophet lashed his warriors that evening with fiery oratory. He told them the white man's bullets could not harm them. The Indians believed in the power of The Prophet's magic. During the night, The Prophet led his men stealthily toward the army campsite. Just before daylight, from a high rock ledge west of the camp, he gave an order for his warriors to attack. The ensuing vicious fight, often hand to hand, has ever since been called 'The Battle of Tippecanoe'.

The Americans struggled valiantly to repel their attackers. After heavy losses on both sides, the Indians were finally compelled to withdraw. To their dismay, they saw that the soldier's bullets were, in fact, deadly effective. They silently retreated back to their village. General Harrison expected Tecumseh to return soon with another large band of Indians. He quickly fortified his camp during the day and no man was permitted to sleep the following night. However, after taking care of their dead and wounded, the demoralized Indians had evacuated Prophet's Town and left the area. When General Harrison's men attacked the village on November 8, 1811, they found only an aged squaw. She had been left behind to attend a wounded chief. After burning the town, the small American army began their painful march back to Vincennes.

After Tecumseh's return from the south, he joined the British against the Americans in the War of 1812. Britain enjoyed the advantage of support from her Indian allies, while the Indians had a final opportunity to strike at their old enemy without having to stand alone. As a brigadier general, Tecumseh led 2,000 warriors. He fought at Frenchtown, Raisin River, Fort Meigs, and Fort Stephenson.

October 5, 1813. General Harrison crossed the Detroit River into Canada in pursuit of Tecumseh's warriors and the forces of British General Proctor. At the Battle of the Thames, Tecumseh was killed while leading his braves. British General Proctor had fled further into Canada, leaving the Indians to fend for themselves. The Americans now had firm control over the frontier areas south of the Great Lakes which Tecumseh had sought to protect. By January 1815, the war was over.

This was the atmosphere which our young John Lance encountered as he ventured north into the Indiana Territory. He settled in Gibson County where, on June 8, 1815, he married Sarah Lathom. She passed away the following year after giving birth to a son, Olley Lathom Lance. On October 5, 1816, John re-married to Eleanor Lemasters. They remained in the area and followed farming the rest of their lives. Indiana became the 19th State in the Union on December 11, 1816. John and Eleanor (Nelly) eventually became the parents of 11 children. Many of their numerous descendants remain in southern Indiana to this day. All are undoubtedly endowed with a bit of the restless spirit that was handed down from the original John Lance of Indiana and his parents.

John Lance (1794-1872)

John Lance was born in Kentucky about 1794. Just after the War of 1812 ended, John was found in Gibson County, as a young man. On June 5, 1815, he and Sarah Lathom were united in matrimony in Gibson

County by Reverend Alex Devin. She was a daughter of William and Nancy (Norman) Lathom. A son, **Olley Lathom Lance**, was born to John and Sarah the following year. Sarah probably passed away during childbirth or shortly thereafter.

John was quick to re-marry. On October 5, 1816, he and 'Nelly' Lemasters were wed in Gibson County. She was born on January 10, 1801 in Kentucky and was a daughter of Benjamin and Mary (Langston) Lemasters. They became the parents of 11 children – **Mary Ann, Benjamin, Finas Euen, Simeon, Sarah Jane, Margaret, George, Ruth, Eleanor, Martha** and **Nancy Lance**.

In 1820, according to census records, John Lance was a 25-45 year old farmer living in rural Gibson County with his wife (Eleanor Lemasters), age 20-26, and a young son (Olley Lathom Lance) under age 10 (Indiana census pg 239, line #5).

In 1830, on Indiana census page 132, line #13, John was enumerated at 30-40 years old and still living in rural Gibson County. He was living with his 20-29 year old wife, and 3 children: 1 son and 1 daughter under 5 years old (probably twins Simeon and Sarah Jane); and 1 daughter 10-15 years old (probably Mary Ann). It is not clear why sons Benjamin and Finas Lance were not also enumerated with the Lance household. They would have been about 10 and 5 years old.

In 1840, John Lance was enumerated on the Indiana census (page 462, line #13) at 40-49 years old and farming in rural Pike County, Indiana. His family included: his 40-49 year old wife; and their 6 children - 1 girl under 5 years old (probably Ruth Lance); 1 girl and 1 boy 5-10 years old (probably Margaret and George Lance); 1 boy and 1 girl 10-14 years old (probably Simeon and Sarah Lance); and 1 boy 15-19 years old (probably Finas Lance).

On October 1, 1850, John was a 56 year old farmer living in Monroe Township in Pike County. He was farming with his 50 year old wife, 'Elenor', and their 6 children - Sarah, George, Ruth, Ellenor, Martha, and Nancy Lance. Their married son, Finas Euen Lance appears to have been living on the same property with his wife and 3 children. John's son, 'Simon' Lance, was 21 years old and had recently married and was farming next door with his wife, Elizabeth. The 1850 Indiana census (pg 168, family #72) also indicates John reported Kentucky as his place of birth and their real estate was valued at \$830. On June 2, 1860, John was 66 years old and continued to farm in Monroe Township with: his 60 year old wife, Eleanor; their 2 teenage daughters - Martha and Nancy Lance; and their 32 year old unmarried and mentally retarded daughter, Sarah Jane Lance. The 1860 Indiana census (pg 6, family #46) also shows: John again reported Kentucky as his place of birth; he could not read or write, their real estate value had increased to \$1,500, and their personal property was worth \$1,000. John's 26 year old married son, George Lance, was living next door with his wife, Rachael, and their baby son, Samuel Lance. The next 2 farms were occupied by John and Eleanor's 2 married daughters - 18 year old 'Elenor Rayny' with her husband, Larkin 'Rayny', and their baby daughter, Miline 'Rayny'; and 41 year old widow, Mary 'Harger', with her 5 children - Jasper, Elenor, Harvey, George, and Lydia Harger.

On August 6, 1870, John was 76 years old and still farming in Monroe Township with his 69 year old wife, 'Elenora', and their 40 year old unmarried daughter, Sarah Jane Lance. The 1870 Indiana census (family #317) also indicates: John once again reported Kentucky as his place of birth, he still could not read or write, their real estate value had decreased to \$1,000, and their personal property value had also declined to \$375.

On August 24, 1872, John signed (with his 'X' mark) a handwritten Last Will & Testament which states (with original spelling): "I, John Lance of the State of Indiana and County and by Occupation a Farmer make this my Last Will.....I give Devise and bequeath my Estate and Property Real and Personal as follows that is to Say I wish.....my Daughter Mary A. Wire to have no Part haveing here to fore Provided for Her and Margret Harger my Daughter I Wish her to have and Equal Part of One third of my Personal Property.....and Euen Lance my son to have and Equal Part of one third of one third of all my Personal Property to be come theirs at my Death.....I wish my Beloved wife Ellen Lance to have two thirds of all my Personal Property.....Ruth Roberts my daughter to have nothing have been Provided for.....George Lance my Son to have nothing.....Martha Rainey my Daughter I Wish to have nothing.....Nancy Davis my Daughter to have nothing.....Benjamin Lance my son to have nothing.....Olly Lathen Lance my Son to have nothing....I wish the Heires of Simeon Lance my Son Deceased to have no Part of my Estate....I Devise all my Real Estate held in my name to my Beloved Wife Ellen Lance.....I wish my Daughter Sarah Lance to

have nothing Where fore she is Provided.....In Witness Wherof I have Signed and Sealed and Published and Declared this instrument as my Will at my Residence On the 24th day of August in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Seventy Two.....John (his X mark) Lance.....The Said John Lance at said County of Pike and the State of Indiana at his Residence on Said 24th day of August 1872 Signed and Sealed this instrument and Published and Declared the Same as and for his Last Will and Wil at his Request and in his Preasance and in the Preasance of Each other, have here unto Writen our names as Subscribing Witnesses.....Ratliff B. Fleener, Jacob Holton, Martan (his X mark) Turpen". This will was certified and recorded into the Pike County Records of Wills by J. W. Richardson, Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas of Pike County on January 27, 1873.



John's tombstone stands to the right the tombstone of his 2nd wife, Eleanor, in Log Creek Church Cemetery (photo at left). Both tombstones contain inscriptions pertaining to John's birth and death dates - and they conflict with each other and with the date of his Will.

His tombstone inscription reads: "John Lance - Husband of Ellen Lance - Died Jan 12, 1872 - aged 77 Y, 10 M, 13 D".

Eleanor's tombstone reads: "Ellen Lance - Born Jan 10, 1801 - Died Nov 9, 1885" and on the reverse side (facing John's marker) is another inscription which reads: "John Lance - Born Mar 25, 1797 - Died Jan 12, 1872".

The age at death information on John's tombstone indicates that he was born in the year 1794 (rather than 1797 as shown on Eleanor's tombstone). Also, John's age bracket of 25-45 on the 1820 census would indicate he was born prior to 1795. His age reported on the 1850, 1860, and 1870 census

records all seem to indicate he was born in 1794. John's actual date of death had to be later than January 12, 1872 (as shown on the 2 tombstones) since he signed his Will on August 24, 1872.

John's Log Creek Cemetery mention in the book: 'Pike County, Indiana Cemetery Records - Monroe Township', page 65, compiled by Joan Woodhull, 1979....includes 2 separate entries: 1) Lance, John, d. 1-12-1873 - 77 yr 10 mo 13 da - hus. of Ellen [from John's tombstone] and 2) Lance, John, 3-25-1797 - 1-12-1872 [from Eleanor's tombstone].

"On February 13, 1873, Administrator John J. Fleener took an inventory of (deceased) John Lance's Personal Estate. The inventory included (with original spelling): one zeki of cattle - \$75.00, Red Cowe - \$18.00, White Cowe - \$20.00, Brindle Cowe - \$22.00, 13 head of hogs - \$13.00, one wagon - \$30.00, one bead & beading - \$30.00, one bead & beading - \$25.00, one bead & beading - \$25.00, 3 coverlets - \$12.00, 4 quilts - \$4.00, 7 quilts - \$17.00, 4 cotton sheets - \$3.00, 2 blankets - \$2.00, 1 Beaureau - \$10.00, 1 Dining Table - \$6.00, 2 Tables - \$3.00, 1 Cupboard - \$5.00, 1 Clock - \$1.50, 1 Looking glass - \$0.50, 9 Chairs - \$5.00, 1 chest - \$3.00, 1 Kettle - \$3.00, 1 Kettle - \$1.00, 1 Shot Gun - \$6.00, Spinning Wheel - \$2.00, 1 Loom - \$4.00, Flax Wheel - \$2.00, 1 half Bushel - \$0.50, Cupboard ware - \$8.00, 1 Coffee Boiler - \$0.50, Water Buckett - \$0.30, Cucking utencils - \$2.00, 1 Linen Bed Tick - \$1.00, 1 Glass Lamp - \$1.00, 1 Plow - \$1.00, 1 note W. T. Sprinkels - \$1.00, 1 note Larken Raney - \$99.40, 1 note Ruth Roberts - \$17.91, 1 note George Lance - \$1.25, 1 note William Taylor - \$11.30 doutfull, 1 note R. R. Fleener - \$54.60, 1 note W. C. Richardson - \$41.66, 1 note Ruth Roberts - \$23. 65, 1 note Joseph Powers - \$7.85 doutfull, 1 note J. J. Fleener - \$105.00, 1 note Larken Raney - \$3.50, 1 note David Grissom - \$2.85, 1 note William Taylor - \$5.40 doutfull, 1 note Elijah Roy - \$79.70, 1 note H. D. Gosser - \$37.40, 1 note John Ferguson - \$374.08, 1 note J. J. Fleener - \$108.40, 1 note J. J. Fleener - \$85.66, Cash on hand - \$8.05, note Henry Ferguson - \$38.50, Copper Kittle - \$0.50.....Signed by us, this 13 day of February, 1873. J. A. Shepard and Thomas McClery - Appraisers.