

chair Jane Hoerster at: janehoerster@yahoo.com. Hopefully NOLA's own Dave Johnson will be there as well to autograph copies of his recent best-selling *The Mason County "Hoo Doo" War, 1874-1902*, published by the Univ. of North Texas Press.

### From the NOLA Mailbag

Dear Editor,

I am very pleased that the noted Nancy Samuelson now agrees with my findings that Professor James Starrs' 1995 exhumation and subsequent DNA testing of the purported grave of Jesse Woodson James in Kearney, Missouri, did not prove anything, much less where Jesse James is buried.

They say necessity is the mother of invention and necessity certainly led me to investigate each and every one of Starrs' findings, many of which I found to be misleading and erroneous. I pioneered that investigation simply because his touts caused my claim that Jesse faked his death and hightailed it to Texas under the assumed name of James L. Courtney to fall on deaf ears. As I told Nancy, I may not have yet proven that my great-grandfather was really Jesse James, but I did prove Starrs' 1995 exhumation to be tainted and that is one of my proudest achievements. [Duke, Betty Dorsett, *Jesse James Lived & Died In Texas*, Eakin Press, 1998; "Tainted Exhumation," 2000, *Wild West* magazine. October 2000; "The Story You Haven't Heard," NBC 8, KOMU-TV, Jim Riek, 2001].

Robert Jackson and Mark Nikkel were the mitochondrial

DNA (mtDNA) reference sources for the 1995 exhumation. The final outcome of whether or not Jesse James is buried in that questioned grave literally depends on their validity as true matrilineal descendants of Susan James Parmer, Frank and Jesse James' full-blood sister. When I traced their genealogy and found their validity to be highly questionable, I asked Jackson to submit a new DNA sample taken under strict chain of custody guidelines in order to eliminate the questions. However, he adamantly refused which raises red flags. (See letters below)

I again request that Robert Jackson submit a new blood sample for the purpose of comparing his mtDNA sequence to Susan Laura Hale's mtDNA sequence in order to prove his validity. If Jackson is who he claims to be, then their sequences should be an exact match because Hale is a valid DNA reference source. She donated a DNA sample taken under strict chain of custody guidelines which is now on file at a DNA's expert's office. Jesse James' true burial place is up for grabs because this age-old mystery has not been solved. His true burial place will reveal his true descendants.

*Wild West Magazine '02:*

Letter to the Editor,  
Published in October 2002 issue of *Wild West Magazine*:  
Jesse James and DNA

*Wild West readers following the Jesse James/DNA testing story (see articles in the June 1994 and October 2000 issues) please note: The 1995 exhumation*

*of the purported grave of Jesse James in Clay County, Missouri, and subsequent DNA testing have proved nothing. Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA, passed directly from mother to child) was chosen for that exhumation, but the project leader, Professor James Starrs, chose not to exhume Jesse's mother, Zerelda James Samuel, who is buried close by. Instead, Starrs used Oklahoma attorney Robert A. Jackson and Jackson's nephew Mark Nikkel as the mtDNA reference sources. However, Jackson's claim that he is a direct matrilineal descendant of Susan James Parmer, Jesse James' sister, has been called into question.*

*Jackson's mother, Dorothy Ann Rose, might not be the daughter of Feta Rose, Susan James Parmer's daughter. Feta's husband, Bert Rose, was married first to a woman named Katie who might in fact be Dorothy's mother.*

*The good news is that Jackson's lineage can now be verified beyond the shadow of a doubt. A valid mtDNA reference source has been located—90-something Sue Laura Hale, granddaughter of Susan James Parmer. Hale has submitted a DNA sample taken under strict chain of custody guidelines. If Jackson is a true matrilineal descendant of Susan James Parmer, his mtDNA sequence should match Ms. Hale's exactly. I have requested that Jackson submit a new blood sample for DNA testing (at my expense) in order to validate his lineage, but he refused. Should the results*