

Clodfelter (Gladfelder), Jesse ^[1]

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by Whaley W. Batson, 1979

b. 12 July 1804

Jesse Clodfelter (Gladfelder), cabinetmaker, was the first child of Maria Magdalena Walk and John Gladfelder (the spelling was changed later) of the Friedberg community, now a part of [Forsyth County](#) ^[2]. John worked there as a hatter, and so it is assumed that Jesse was born in the community. Little is known of Jesse Clodfelter's life, but it is recorded in the [Davidson County](#) ^[3] court minutes for the May term in 1831 that he took Levi Roads "apprentice to the cabinetmaker's trade." There are several pieces of furniture—one corner cupboard and three chests of drawers—signed and dated by Clodfelter between the years 1834(6) and 1844. The chests of drawers relate in both visual comparison and construction details to the work of John Swisegood of Davidson County, and it is probable that Clodfelter was at one time apprenticed to Swisegood.

Deed transactions in 1830 for 81 3/4 acres "on waters of Frys Creek" and in 1839 for 87 or more acres "lying on Walk's Creek" are on record in Davidson County. In an estate voucher of 13 Jan. 1844, Clodfelter was paid for two coffins for Jack Mock (coffins were frequently furnished in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by cabinetmakers). From the amount of land owned by Clodfelter, it seems that he probably supplemented his cabinetwork with farming. However, on 10 May 1848, he sold both tracts of land to Adam Nifong.

Clodfelter was married three times. His first wife was Magdalena Hege and his second Anna Rosina Fischell. If there were children by these marriages, they are not known. The third marriage, to Maria Hartman, occurred on 30 July 1830, and seven children were born to this union. Maria died 17 Apr. 1845. As the marriage and birth records are from the Friedberg Church Book, it seems safe to assume that the family was [Moravian](#) ^[4]. Clodfelter's death date and burial place are unknown.

References:

Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (Winston-Salem), for references from research files.

The Swisegood School of Cabinetmaking (1973).

Additional Resources:

Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts. *Journal of early southern decorative arts [serial]*. [Winston-Salem] Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts. 1975. <https://archive.org/details/journalofearlyso03muse> ^[5] (accessed May 10, 2013).

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Authors:

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Origin - location:

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[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[12]

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