

## Family AJ

### Elon Jeffcoat's Family Tree

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#### Introduction

Our knowledge of this family came initially from Donald Jeffcoat of Auckland, New Zealand. He told us that his ancestry came from an Elon Jeffcoat from Nuneaton, or thereabouts. We were fairly sure that we had never seen this name in our records, but nevertheless carried out a search of my information. We were pleasantly surprised to find, in the 1851 census for Stockingford, an entry for a Clon? Jeffcoat. We had clearly had a problem with the handwriting of the document, but this must surely be Donald's ancestor. He was shown to be living with his parents Thomas and Hannah, together with a brother and two sisters. This is the entry:

P33 Scrap Cottage					
Thomas Jeffcoat	H	M	62	Ag Lab Land Drainer	Nuneaton
Hannah Jeffcoat	W	M	55	Dressmaker	Buxton Derby
Tamar Jeffcoat	D	U	23	Plain Sewer?	Buxton Derby
Ann Jeffcoat	D	U	19	Dressmaker	Nuneaton
Thomas Jeffcoat	S	U	17	Land Drainer	Nuneaton
Elon Jeffcoat	S	U	16	Land Drainer	Nuneaton

Donald's initial letter is shown on the following page and it gives us an insight into what a remarkable man was Elon Jeffcoat.

We replied to his letter and, a short while afterwards, we were contacted by Colleen Tiller, who had done a substantial amount of research into the family, as well as other good works. From Colleen's information, we put together the family tree, shown later in this section. She also sent other details regarding assorted emigrants, which we have reproduced in other sections of this book.

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#### Elon Jeffcoat

Elon was born around 1835 in Nuneaton, Warwickshire. He must have emigrated to New Zealand, shortly after 1851, presumably to seek his fortune. He married in Auckland in 1859 and appears to have been responsible for what became a large Jeffcoat family.

A little of Elon Jeffcoat's life in New Zealand is detailed in a book written by the present day inhabitants of the Coromandel area. I have extracted some of the information as follows:

Elon and Jane Jeffcoat arrived in Cabbage Bay in 1870 with their five daughters. Their only son, Alfred Elon was born in Cabbage Bay in 1872. Elon ran a sawmill in the district which he ran until the late 1880s. In 1883 Elon opened the first Post Office and he was also rather well known for his remedial medicines.

Joseph Bridle and his family emigrated to New Zealand in 1875. When they first arrived, they happened to meet Elon, who offered Joseph a job when he learned that Joseph could make bricks and bake bread. Elon took the family to Cabbage Bay where Joseph built his own oven and baked bread for the mill workers.

Robert Cashmore married Elon's sister Ann. They arrived in New Zealand in 1863, with their children (one of the boys was named Elon). Robert purchased a large amount of land and acquired the necessary machinery for a sawmill. He worked with his brother in law. Elon's sawmill burned down in the late 1880s.

Elon was appointed postmaster in 1895, which would have led to him taking less of an interest in the timber, cattle and sheep business. His son was doing well in the area, acquiring a thoroughbred stallion and bull and setting them up for stud services.

A newspaper article dated 1892 stated that 'Mr Jeffcoat complains that he annually loses 20% of his sheep due to the ravages of a lot of mangy, half starved Maori dogs.'

In 1901 an advertisement stated:

"For Sale: Twelve working bullocks and gear, also a number of good milking cows. Store cattle wanted. A.E.Jeffcoat."

In 1909:

"The first cattle sale will be held on Mr E Jeffcoat's property."

In 1910:

"Mr Jeffcoat has imported a fine thoroughbred stallion, Alarm and will place him at the service of breeders during the coming season. If inducement offers, the horse will be brought to Coromandel periodically."

Later in 1910, salesmanship was in full swing with:

*"To stand the season at Cabbage Bay, the thoroughbred stallion, Alarm, a dark bay horse, rising five years, standing sixteen hands high and has a good reputation on the turf. Terms £2.10s.0d per single mare, 2 or more by arrangement. A E Jeffcoat.*

*To breeders. Go in for a better class of horse. You have a chance of getting a Cup Winner or a Great Northern Hurdle horse, all for £2.10s.0d. Some say 'What rot. Put another £2.10s.0d and buy a Holstein Heifer.' I say buy 20, as I have a purebred Holstein bull; one of the finest in the country. Terms 7s.6d. Send your cows along with your mares. Good grazing at 1s.3d per week. Get a Holstein herd ready for our Coromandel Butter Factory. If your horse will not win, put him in your sulky to drive to the factory to collect your cheque, which will not be small, if you will only go in for Holsteins and plenty of good grass. A E Jeffcoat."*

A survey of sheep numbers listed Elon Jeffcoat as owning 47 in 1887 and 42 in 1888. His son Alfred Elon Jeffcoat had 362 in 1887 and 201 in 1888.

Elon's great grandson, Trevor, owned a portable mill in 1981 and milled radiata pine for seven years. Following in the footsteps of his great grandfather, Trevor was successful in the purchase of the Rural Mail Run which services the peninsula north of Coromandel.

The details in the book give a fascinating insight into how New Zealand developed its trade and industry and the important part that the Jeffcoats played.

The cemetery records show that Elon was buried in May 1906. A true pioneer!

(569)

15th February 1989.

Dear Jess

The New Zealand Jeffcoats should come to the party and try to be helpful to you, Richard Smith & Barbara King, for all of our forebears and we today should be thankful for your perseverance and efforts.

Several years ago, in a vivid dream, there appeared this elderly chap in oilskins on a chestnut horse driving his cattle down the Cape under the huge flowering Poliotukaiva trees. He stopped, and, leaning on his droving stick said "unless you get it down, we're all going to disappear". I'm not a nut but I guess it was a very vivid dream.

I'm going to write to Richard Smith & Barbara King and thought that out of respect for your endeavours I should write to you first. There are Jeffcoats from young toddlers to my father (78), the last of the four brothers. Dozens of us. We all originate from Elon (most unusual) Jeffcoat who came out in 1850 to bring his sister Margaret out. She had married a Cashmore and had a son Robert born at Cotton Chilvers [Chilvers Coton]. Elon Jeffcoat originated from the Nuneaton area.

Elon Jeffcoat was the Patriarch of Cape Colville. His talents were diverse - a surveyor, a horse doctor, a preacher in his old life, a fixer of arms out of joint, tooth-ache, etc. etc. We have original medicine bottles, with labels of potions. There are a pair of silver fox-whips in the possession of a cousin of mine, he had 5 or 6 daughters and then one son - my grandad Alfred, by a Jane Gee he married in Auckland. (Her sister is buried in the graveyard at Brant Broughton near Newark - I took a photo of it in 1985). He buried her at midnight, so the story goes, and married his housekeeper, a Priscilla Woods, a member of closed Brethren family. Yet there is a vague rumour he was named in UK before the came out and where did his medical skills come from? One shipping list names him as Jeffcoat, another as Jepheste!

We have a family story that a Thomas Jeffcoat/e did something 'terribly wrong in family eyes' and that it is possible the old chap changed his name by dropping the 'e'. Or are we the black sheep side and did Thomas add an e? A thought for you - did some of the 'religious' families of our wide name variety deliberately change their name spelling. It would not be unknown.

All Jeffcoats in New Zealand can be traced to Elon. I have a 1864 diary in which he sails his cutter Grayling each day noting barometer reading and wind direction. No mean feat. So we have a seaman - woodsman - sawmiller - surveyor - medical man - singer who at the age of 80 had a testimonial published in the local paper by the residents - settlers of Cape Colville.

There is a story that the old chap went back to England concerning legal settlements after a family death, ended up penniless in Naples and waited while cattle were sold back here to fund his passage home. He is surrounded by stories.

I should paint for you a background of mountain ranges, bush, sandy beaches and breakers swelling in. Elon Jeffcoat trading up and down the coast and writing poetry to his wife, 'Kiss The Little Ones Goodnight For Me'. I have a poem he wrote to his mother in England but no mention of a father. Families of Cape Colville can trace their foundations back to when great grandad in Auckland met destitute people. Can you make bricks? Loaded onto his cutter and off across the Hauraki Gulf to Cape Colville. If you can imagine Swiss Family Robinson trees, isolation, no roads in then, travelling 80 miles plus 'to get your likenesses taken' you've got it.

Alfred and Elon seems to give clues to family names. I would be most interested to find where we 'fit into your jigsaw puzzle'. Should any on the wide name be coming this way on holiday or be considering immigration, if skilled, don't hesitate to get in touch.

Kindest regards

Donald Jeffcoat.



Elon  
Jeffcoat



Jane Jeffcoat  
(née Gee)  
wife of Elon Jeffcoat



Clara, Jessie and Holly  
Mrs George Ward, Mrs James Adams and Mrs Elon Cashmore



Alf Jeffcoat  
son of Elon Jeffcoat

The Jephcott Family – Chapter 6 – Family

AJ

JEFFCOAT

