

# Asa Lovelace of Cleveland County, North Carolina When Was He Born?

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Asa Lovelace spent his adult life in Cleveland County, North Carolina and the part of Rutherford County that became Cleveland County in 1841. The following table outlines the birth data in those census listings in which he is found as head of household. The only birth information included in these census listings is his age.

Census Year	Name	Age given on census	Calculated birthdate
1850 <sup>1</sup>	Asa Lovlace	33	1 June 1816 - 31 May 1817
1860 <sup>2</sup>	Asa Lovelace	43	1 June 1816 - 31 May 1817
1870 <sup>3</sup>	Asa Lovelace	63	1 June 1806 - 31 May 1807
1880 <sup>4</sup>	Asa Lovelace	62	1 June 1817 - 31 May 1818

All four of these census records list Asa's age on the census date of 1 June in each census year. The ages given in the 1850 and 1860 censuses indicate a birth date between 1 June 1816 and 31 May 1817. Asa's age in the 1870 census differs from those earlier census listings by a decade, resulting in a calculated birth date 10 years earlier. Given the uncertainty of the informant for that age data (Asa, his wife, a child, or a neighbor?), it is possible that the incorrect age was supplied to the enumerator. It is also possible that the enumerator mis-heard the age or recorded the wrong age. Yet another possibility is that the clerk who copied the original information misread or miscopied the age. With the 1880 census, the age is only off by a year, resulting in a calculated birthdate a year later than the initial two census listings. It is likely, assuming Asa was the informant, that at an age of over 60, he was a year off on his age. Given that the 1850 and 1860 census listings were closer to his birth, they are more likely to be correct. Asa was probably born between 1 Jun 1816 and 31 May 1817.

<sup>1</sup> 1850 U.S. Census, Cleveland County, North Carolina, no stated township, p. 296 (penned), p. 381 (stamped, back), dwelling 471, family 471, Asa Lovlace; digital image, Ancestry.com (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 20 July 2013); citing NARA microfilm publication M432, roll 625.

<sup>2</sup> 1860 U.S. Census, Cleveland County, North Carolina, no stated township or post office, p. 129 (penned), p. 381 (stamped), dwelling 924, family 924, Asa Lovelace; digital image, Ancestry.com (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 20 July 2013); citing NARA microfilm publication M653, roll 893.

<sup>3</sup> 1870 U.S. Census, Cleveland County, North Carolina, population schedule, Mooresboro Post Office, Township #2, p. 3 (penned), 131 (stamped), dwelling 18, family 18, Asa Lovelace; digital image, Ancestry.com (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 20 July 2013); citing NARA microfilm publication M593, roll 1131.

<sup>4</sup> 1880 U.S. Census, Cleveland County, North Carolina, population schedule, Township #2, p. 2B (numeral penned, letter stamped), enumeration district (ED) 66, dwelling 18, family 21, Asa Lovelace; digital image, Ancestry.com (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 19 July 2013); citing NARA microfilm publication T9, roll 958.

A marriage bond was entered for Asa on 11 March 1840, prior to his marriage to Mary "Polly" Green.<sup>5</sup> They married on the same day.<sup>6</sup> According to North Carolina law enacted in 1741 and still in effect in 1840, the minimum age for a man to marry without parental consent was 21.<sup>7</sup> Based on his marriage date, the latest possible date for Asa's birth was 11 March 1819. Asa's birth date as calculated from the 1850 and 1860 census listings agrees with this latest possible birthdate, putting him at about age 23 at the time of his marriage. These marriage dates are taken from abstracted records. Given that they are copies of the original records made long after the event, they are subject to copying errors.

A death notice for Asa published on 2 February 1887 states that "Mr. Asa Lovelace ... died at his residence yesterday ... He was about 65 years of age ..."<sup>8</sup> The transcript of that newspaper item, taken from a microfilm copy of the original document, is subject to copying error. The informant supplying his age for this notice is unknown and, based on the other collected information, appears likely to be in error.

Neither the marriage record transcripts nor the death notice transcript are reliable enough to give an accurate date for Asa's birth. A search for the original records is needed to determine the accuracy of the transcriptions. However, even if the original records confirm their accuracy, the documents are still insufficient in determining Asa's birth date. Of the two, the transcriptions of the marriage records, if copied correctly, point to a birth date before 12 March 1819. This date is in closer agreement to the date determined from the ages given in the 1850 and the 1860 census listings. Because those age values were given much earlier than the age at time death, I will use the date interval of "between 1 Jun 1816 and 31 May 1817" as the primary birth date in my database. If asked for Asa's birth date by other researchers, it is this date I will choose to share.

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<sup>5</sup> W. D. Floyd, "Rutherford County, NC Marriage Bonds Index," *W.D. Floyd Website on CD*, CD-ROM #1 (Forest City: The Genealogical Society of Old Tryon County, 2005).

<sup>6</sup> Brent H. Holcombe, *Marriages of Rutherford County, North Carolina, 1779-1868* (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1986), 93, Asa Loveless-Polly Green; digital image, Ancestry.com (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 18 July 2013).

<sup>7</sup> Walter Clark, editor, "Acts of the North Carolina General Assembly, 1741," *The State Records of North Carolina*, 16 vols., (Winston and Goldsboro: State of North Carolina, 1895-1907), 23:159; digital images, *Documenting the American South*. (<http://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.html/document/csr23-0012> : accessed 28 July 2013).

<sup>8</sup> Wanda Rabb, "Death Notice - Asa Lovelace - 1887," *Lovelace*, discussion list, 12 April 1998 (<http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/LOVELACE/1998-04/0892425159>); citing article originally printed in "The New Era" weekly, Shelby, Cleveland County, North Carolina, 1887-1888 and microfilmed on North Carolina State Archives microfilm publication ShERA-1.