



JESSIE MAE (FENSTERMAKER) DICKINSON-BRECKENRIDGE (1908–1990)

QUICK FACTS

- Born: 9 May 1908, Dos Cabezas, Cochise County, Arizona
- Died: 7 July 1990, Wickenburg, Maricopa County, Arizona
- Burial: Wickenburg Cemetery, Section 3, Row Q, Grave 8
- Parents: Joseph Albert Fenstermaker Sr. & Mary Ellen Waughtal
- Spouses: Edward "Eddie" Lee Dickinson; Henry Frank Breckenridge
- Children: Dixie Mae Dickinson Baxter; Frank Lee Dickinson; Nova Jean Dickinson Brown
- Siblings: Walter, Edna, Ralph, Joseph Jr., Hubert
- Find A Grave: [Jessie Mae Breckenridge Memorial](#)

BIOGRAPHY BY CODY ALAN GREENE (2026)

Jessie Mae Fenstermaker was born May 9th 1908 in Dos Cabezas, Cochise County, Arizona. Her father, Joseph Albert Fenstermaker Sr., was born to a Pennsylvania Dutch family. His parents, Daniel and Catharine (nee Shollenberger) Fenstermaker hailed from Lehigh County, Pennsylvania. Jessie's mother was named Mary Ellen Waughtal, born in Arizona to Daniel Boone Waughtal and Harriet (nee Davis). Daniel was also of Pennsylvania Dutch stock while Harriet's family had roots in Tennessee. Jessie was named after her aunt, Jessie Elnora Fenstermaker Duncan Lay.

Jessie's father was a miner. My great grandmother referred to him as 'Uncle Bert.' He had quite the western experience after his family left Pennsylvania. His father died unexpectedly in Kansas around 1880. Bert was farmed out to a cruel family to pay for the debts of his father. Finally, he was able to escape and make his own way west. He was in Texas long enough to fall madly in love with Bitsie Mama. Bert was a miner in the Bitterroot Mountains of Montana. He stared death in the face when he narrowly survived the Black Plague in Mazatlán, Mexico. Finally, he decided to start his own family in the booming mining town of Dos Cabezas in southern Arizona.

After the tragic separation of the Fenstermaker family in 1880 Kansas, siblings Sadie Fenstermaker Cook, Adda Katherine Fenstermaker Smith (my 2nd Great Grandmother), Bert Fenstermaker, and Jessie Elnora Fenstermaker Duncan Lay were finally united in the beautiful Verde Valley of Arizona.

Jessie Mae Fenstermaker married Edward 'Eddie' Lee Dickinson (born 20 Feb 1906-died 4 Jul 1968). They ran a meat market in Cottonwood, Arizona for several years with the help of their children: Dixie Mae Dickinson Baxter, Frank Lee Dickinson, and Nora Jean Dickinson Brown. In 1955 Jessie and Eddie moved south to Wickenburg. Two years after Eddie passed away, Jessie remarried a man named Henry Frank Breckenridge.

The information included was provided to me by my Great Grandmother, Ella Rose Smith Heydorn, first cousin to Jessie Mae Fenstermaker Dickinson.



Jessie on the right. Her father, my Uncle Bert on the left and Aunt Mamie in the middle. Aunt Mamie was not her mother. Jessie's mom passed when she was 10 years old.

🌿 Legacy

Jessie Mae (Fenstermaker) Dickinson-Breckenridge left a legacy of resilience, family loyalty, and Arizona pioneer spirit. Born into the mining world of Dos Cabezas and shaped by the hardships and triumphs of her Pennsylvania Dutch and Arizona-territory roots, Jessie carried forward the strength of the Fenstermaker and Waughtal families into her own life.

With Eddie Dickinson, she raised three children — Dixie Mae Dickinson Baxter, Frank Lee Dickinson, and Nova Jean Dickinson Brown — Through them, Jessie's legacy continues into multiple generations of grandchildren and great-grandchildren who preserve her story, photographs, and family history.

This page is part of the DickinsonFamily.us historical archive. Every pioneer has a story worth preserving.