

Martha Ann Chaney, Frontier Stalwart

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Introduction

The following material is another installment in the continuing series of articles on the children of Christopher Chaney, Texas Patriot. Each article focuses on the family of one particular child, his or her spouse, and their children. The focus now is on the family of Martha Ann Chaney, another of his six known daughters. Hopefully, the following will provide some new and interesting family history for other researchers.

Coming of Age in Texas

1. Martha Ann Chaney was born circa 1830 in Washington County, Virginia, the daughter of Christopher and Rebecca Chaney.¹ She was just six years old when her father brought the family to Sabine County, Texas. After his death in 1836, life must have been hard on everyone, especially the children. Not much else is known about her early life on the family farm in Sabine County, Texas. It is presumed that she learned to read and write in the local schools, such as they were. When Martha was fifteen years old, the family again moved, this time to that part of Montgomery County that was split off to form Grimes County the following year.

It was there that she grew into a young woman. She met and married her neighbor Elias A. Burrell. Their marriage license was dated February 18, 1849.² In 1848, Elias first appears on the tax rolls of Grimes County.³ He was assessed only for two horses valued at \$160. The following year, Elias paid the taxes for a 547-acre tract of land, part of the Uriah Sanders Headright, valued at \$400. Yet no record of his purchase of the property has been found, probably because the county courthouse and most of the early records were destroyed by fire in 1848. In 1849, he paid his poll tax and was assessed for six cattle worth \$18 and hogs worth \$10. Thus, it seems that Elias had sold his interest in the 547 acres of land.

In 1850, E. A. Burrill was enumerated in the census.⁴ Elias is listed as 26 years old, but with no occupation. He owned no real estate and Alabama is given for his place of birth. Martha reported that she was 20 years old and a native of Virginia. Elias appears on neither the agricultural nor the slave schedules. The 1850 tax rolls on which his name partly appears is torn and difficult to read. Thus, it is not known for what property, if any, he paid taxes that year. Just how Elias Burrell earned a living for his

¹ *Christopher Chaney, Texas Patriot*, Texas State Genealogical Society Quarterly, *STIRPES*, Volume 41, Number 4, December 2001.

² Marriage Records, Grimes County, Texas, Marriage Book H, Page 11. Grimes County Courthouse, Anderson, Texas.

³ Real and Personal Property Tax Rolls, Grimes County, Texas, 1846-1901. All Texas real and personal property tax rolls at Texas State Library and Archives, Austin, Texas.

⁴ 1850 Census, Population Schedules, Grimes County, Texas, Page 726. All Texas census schedules at Archives, Division, Texas State Library, Austin, Texas.

family remains unknown.

On May 8, 1838, Elias A. Burrell, a single man, appeared before the Land Commissioners of Red River County and stated that he arrived in Texas on September 27, 1837 and was entitled to a 640-acre grant of land.⁵ The commissioners issued Conditional Certificate No. 7. The land was located and surveyed on September 22, 1843. The tract was in Upshur County, two miles north of Little Cypress and four miles east of the town of Gilmer. On February 19, 1848, a deed was recorded in Houston County in which Elias A. Burrell of Grimes County sold his interest in his 640-acre tract of land to Allen Urquart for \$320. The headright grant was approved finally and perfected on July 9, 1858.

No further record of Elias Burrell has been found. It is presumed that he died intestate circa 1853 or early 1854, probably in Grimes County. Thus, he could not have left his widow and young daughter any substantial means of support. Martha must have relied on her family for financial as well as moral support. Perhaps she moved in with her mother.

The children of Elias A. and Martha Ann (Chaney) Burrell were:

2. i. Josephine, was born February 19, 1853 in Grimes County, Texas.

Moving to Blanco County

On August 11, 1854, A. J. Harrelson issued a mortgage to Martha Ann Burrell in the amount of \$200 for \$100 worth of improvements to land on Jones Creek, a horse, and tools.⁶ Her brother Frank S. Chaney witnessed the mortgage that was recorded on August 19, 1854. It is presumed that the improvements consisted of their house or some other building. It is tantalizing to speculate on the precise nature of the improvements. Had the tools belonged to her late husband? Was he a carpenter, a blacksmith, or other skilled artisan? Unfortunately, no record has survived of Martha paying her mortgage. Nor does the mortgage indicate who owned the land on which the improvements were located.

Presumably a widow, Martha Ann Burrell moved to Blanco County, Texas in 1858 or 1859. She has not been located in the 1860 Census, although the extant Blanco County schedules appear to be incomplete. She married William W. Hill, probably in Blanco County. Unfortunately, the courthouse and all of the county records were destroyed by fire in August 1876. Thus, no record of their marriage has survived. Based upon the date and place of birth of their son, it is presumed that they married in Blanco County circa 1859.

W. W. Hill does not appear on the 1860 Census population schedules. However, he does appear on the agricultural schedules.⁷ His farm, valued at \$300, consisted of just 8 acres of improved land and 152 acres of unimproved land. His livestock, which consisted of one horse, three milch cows, two hundred sheep, and one hundred swine, was valued at \$875. His sheep produced four hundred pounds of wool. William first appears in Blanco County records on the 1860 tax roll.⁸ That year, he paid taxes for one

⁵ Texas Land Grant Records, File No. 2-19 and File C-1147. Archives and Records Division, Texas General Land Office, Austin, Texas.

⁶ Land Records, Grimes County, Texas, Deed Book A-2, Page 474. Grimes County Courthouse, Anderson, Texas.

⁷ 1860 Census, Agricultural Schedules, Blanco County, Texas, Page 13.

⁸ Real and Personal Property Tax Rolls, Blanco County, Texas, 1858-1902.

negro valued at \$1,200, three horses valued at \$100, and one hundred sheep valued at \$100. He owned no real estate. His name is on the tax rolls again in 1861, but no entries were made for any property or taxes.

On August 24, 1861, William W. Hill served as a private in Captain George Freeman's Perdenales Home Guard Cavalry Company.⁹ The original muster roll indicates that the company was encamped at the Groom Springs Westbrook in Blanco County on that date. The only other extant muster roll dated September 7, 1861 indicates that he served with his brother-in-law Prue Stuckey. Apparently, they saw only intermittent service with the local home guard company that was raised to defend Blanco County from Indian depredations and invasion from “black republicans.”

As it became evident that the war would not be a short one, President Jefferson Davis called upon patriotic male citizens to defend their new Confederacy from the dreaded Yankee hordes. On March 19, 1862, William W. Hill along with his brother-in-law Prue Stuckey answered their country's call by enlisting as privates in Company C, Flournoy's Regiment of Texas Volunteer Infantry.¹⁰ Both men received a \$50 cash bounty in return for enlisting for the duration of the war. On the official company muster roll for May and June, 1862, William is listed as present. Yet, on another regimental return for June, he is listed as absent sick. For a Confederate private, his compiled service record is rather unique in that it contains a letter in his own handwriting.

*Camp Groce
July 28th 1862*

*To Capt M. H. Bowers Comdg
Co C Flournoy's Regt TVI*

The undersigned respectfully petitions to be transfered to Capt Claudius Busters Company C Elmore's Regiment Tex. Vol. Inft. now stationed at Camp Groce, near Hempstead, in exchange for G. M. Henvel, who wishes to be transferred to your Company & Regiment.

My reasons for wishing this transfer, are that Col. Flournoy's Regiment is to start in a few days for Little Rock. My Family are in a helpless condition & need my assistance for a few days after the Regt will move. They are convenient to Camp Groce & I can look after them if I am in Col Elmore's Reg. Mr. Henvel wishes to start for the seat of war, and I am anxious to accommodate him.

*Your obt Servt
W. W. Hill*

His request for transfer was approved by Captain Bowers. His was one case in which the camp gossip actually presaged the official orders. For it was on August 8, 1862 that Flournoy's Regiment and other regiments were ordered to Little Rock.¹¹ On July 31, 1862, W. W. Hill officially was attached to

⁹ Military Records, Confederate Muster Rolls, 1861-1865. Archives Division, Texas State Library, Austin, Texas. (Hereinafter cited as Texas Confederate Muster Rolls.)

¹⁰ Compiled Military Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations From the State of Texas, W. W. Hill, Private, Company C, Sixteenth (Flournoy's) Regiment of Texas Infantry. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

¹¹ *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I, Volume IX, Page 729-730. U. S. War Department, Washington, DC, 1893. (Hereinafter cited as *Official Records*.)

Company C of Elmore's Regiment of Texas Volunteer Infantry.¹² The private was fortunate. He was able to stay behind to assist his young family, at least for awhile. His brother-in-law Prue Stuckey marched off to fight the Yankees. The regimental muster roll for July and August indicates that William Hill was absent at home on sick leave for twenty days from August 15th. It is unclear from the meager extant records whether or not Private Hill returned to his regiment, but it is assumed that he did. On September 25, 1862, Colonel X. B. Debray commanding at Houston filed a report concerning the pending action at Sabine Pass.¹³

"I sent an express to Colonel Elmore at Hempstead to move with his regiment to Houston by an extra train which I sent to him. I expect them to-night, and should the reports which I await by the Beaumont train at 5 o'clock confirm the news of the presence of the enemy, I shall start with that regiment for Sabine Pass to-night by a train which I ordered to be kept in readiness.

"Elmore's regiment arrived at 6 p. m., 700 strong. This, the men of Griffin's battalion, and some citizens of Liberty and Beaumont, said to have moved forward, will give me a force of about 900 men, exclusive of Wilson's battery. I start at 12 o'clock to-night with Elmore's regiment. My impression is that an attempt has been made by the enemy to destroy the fort and the shipping at the mouth of the river, and that all the harm contemplated has been done and that the enemy has withdrawn. Still, should he have taken hold of Sabine Pass, I shall endeavor to retake it. It has proven to be our most important seaport."

On September 28th, Colonel Debray returned to Houston from Sabine Pass in company with the 20th.¹⁴ By September 30th, the regiment was back at Camp Groce near Hempstead. To his commanding general, Colonel Debray commented on the fitness of the regiment upon its first exposure to military action at Sabine Pass.¹⁵

"Elmore's regiment has an excellent composition of men, but is poorly officered. In fact they have no notions of discipline or military instruction. I could never imagine that a set of men could be terrified as they were by a remote apprehension of the yellow fever. I was so harassed by the objections and remonstrances of the lieutenant-colonel in command at my taking them so close to an infected place that I was compelled to forbid him to mention the word yellow fever before me."

On September 30th, the regiment returned to Camp Croce near Hempstead but did not stay there for long. On October 5th, the regiment was ordered to Virginia Point to oppose the advance of the enemy that had just landed on Galveston Island. The rigors of active service in the field caused Private Hill to succumb to illness, as the regimental muster roll for September and October 1862 indicates that he again was absent at

¹² Compiled Military Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations From the State of Texas, W. W. Hill, Private, Company C, Twentieth (Elmore's) Regiment of Texas Infantry. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

¹³ *Official Records*, Series I, Volume XV, Page 143-144.

¹⁴ *Official Records*, Series I, Volume XV, Page 814-815.

¹⁵ *Official Records*, Series I, Volume 15, Page 815-816.

home on sick leave for thirty days from October 22nd. This time his illness continued to worsen. The muster roll for November and December indicates that he was absent without leave at his home from December 20th. The first muster roll for the first two months of 1863 indicates that Private Hill remained absent without leave since December 20, 1862. Apparently he was quite ill, as the muster roll for March and April 1863 indicates that he was discharged by a medical board at Houston for disability on April 27, 1863.

At the time of his medical discharge, W. W. Hill received his pay of \$42.90 for his service from January 1st through April 27th. He also received a \$23.50 payment for his travel of 235 miles from Houston to his home in Blanco County. His medical discharge papers state that he was born in Maury County, Tennessee and was 27 years old. Also, he was described as five feet, ten inches tall, with blond complexion, blue eyes, and dark hair. His occupation was stock raiser. His medical condition is described as "*Phlhis Incipicus & Dibility.*" Unfortunately, no modern medical reference defines any such condition. Could he have succumbed to the dreaded yellow fever?

That was not, however, the end of William's military service. On January 30, 1864, he enlisted as a private in Captain R. J. Irving's Company, Blanco County, Third Frontier District, Texas State Troops.¹⁶ The company was raised to help defend the frontier from Indian depredations. William served for a total of eight days and was paid \$16 for his service. Even though he was frequently away from home while serving the army, his name continues throughout the war to appear on the tax rolls back home.

In 1862, W. W. Hill paid taxes for a 160-acre tract of land valued at \$200, one negro valued at \$1,000, and two hundred sheep valued at \$780. The 160-acre tract was part of the J. W. Smith Headright. In 1863, he paid taxes on the 160-acre tract of land valued at \$320 and personal property worth \$1,475. That year, personal property was not listed separately. In 1864, he paid taxes on the same 160-acre tract valued at \$320. The livestock was not listed separately, but valued at \$1,055. In 1865, he paid taxes on the 160-acre tract valued at \$300 and livestock valued at \$500. Because William Hill appears on no other rolls after 1865, it is presumed that he died circa 1865. As a result of the courthouse fire no probate records for his estate, if any were filed, have survived. Also, the location of his grave has not been found.

The children of William W. and Martha Ann (Chaney) Hill were:

3. i. William Henry, born February 1860, probably in Blanco County, Texas.

Life for Martha must have looked difficult. She was a widow, not once, but twice in less than a decade. Alone out on the frontier, she had two young children to raise. At the close of the War, the Texas economy was in shambles and the frontier was subject to continued Indian raids and depredations. But, Martha was a strong-willed woman. She did not retreat. Rather than rely on others for succor, she determined to support her family herself.

Mrs. Martha Hill first appears on the Blanco County tax rolls in 1868. That year she paid taxes on one town lot valued at \$150 and one horse valued at \$50. Her town property consisted of Lot 3, Block 9 in Pittsburg. The location of the now defunct town of Pittsburg is uncertain. In 1869, she paid taxes on her town lot valued at \$150, one horse valued at \$50, and ten cattle valued at \$30. In 1870, she appears neither on the census schedules nor on the county tax rolls. The 1871 tax rolls are incomplete. But in 1872, Mrs. Martha Hill paid taxes on her town lot valued at \$150 and sixteen cattle valued at \$85. In

¹⁶ Texas Confederate Muster Rolls.

1873, she paid taxes on her town lot valued at \$150 and ten cattle valued at \$50.

Where was Martha Hill in 1870 and 1871? Why had she disappeared from the official records for those two years only to appear again in 1872? The intriguing answer may be found in the probate records of Johnson County.¹⁷ It seems that Mrs. Hill left Blanco County to visit her relations in July of 1869. She visited her sister Elizabeth Humphreys in Johnson County and her sister Evaliza Cauble in Hill County. She also spent time with her brother Frank Chaney and her niece Elvira B. Matthews who lived in Johnson County. Her brother Frank took ill that fall. For awhile his sister Elizabeth stayed with him. But, Martha soon moved in to nurse her brother. She stayed with him until his death in March of 1870. Thus, Martha was not able to return to her home in Blanco County until after the tax rolls for the year were completed. Her unexpectedly long trip also explains her absence on the census schedules.

On August 11, 1873, Martha A. Hill purchased a 6-acre parcel of land in Lampasas County from R. W. Farquhar for \$500.¹⁸ The 6-acre parcel was part of Survey 45 from the John Burlison Headright located one mile east of Lampasas. However, she continued to reside in Blanco County, where she is listed on the tax rolls. In 1874, her town lot in Pittsburg was valued at \$200 and ten cattle were valued at \$50. The tax rolls for Blanco County in 1875 are missing.

Moving to Lampasas County

Martha Hill moved to Lampasas County sometime around 1875, when she first appears on the tax rolls as Mrs. M. A. Hill.¹⁹ That year, she paid taxes on her 6-acre tract of land valued at \$400, three horses valued at \$70, seven cattle valued at \$42, and various tools and machinery valued at \$50. On July 4, 1875, Mrs. Martha A. Hill married J. C. Edwards in Lampasas County, Texas.²⁰ Very little is known about J. C. Edwards. In 1870, John C. Edwards is listed as the head of household in the census.²¹ The 42-year-old house carpenter was born in Tennessee. He valued his real estate at \$600 and his personal property at \$200. Keeping house for him was the 61-year-old Jane Edwards, who is presumed to have been his mother.

In 1876, J. C. Edwards paid the taxes on his wife's 6-acre tract of land. Unfortunately, portions of the tax rolls that year are missing; thus, no valuations for her land or other property in Lampasas County survive. From the meager extant evidence, it is not possible to determine definitively just where Martha and her new husband lived. They owned land in both Blanco and Lampasas Counties. Of course, it is easy to conclude that they lived in town and either farmed or leased their country lands. But it would have been just as easy for them to have lived on one of their country tracts and lease their town lot. On November 1, 1876, Rufana Smith and her husband John H. Smith re-conveyed land in Blanco County to Martha A.

¹⁷ Probate Records, Johnson County, Texas, Probate Papers, Docket No. 212, File No. 2. Johnson County Courthouse, Cleburne, Texas.

¹⁸ Land Records, Lampasas County, Texas, Deed Book A, Page 479. Lampasas County Courthouse, Lampasas, Texas. (Hereinafter cited as Lampasas Deeds.)

¹⁹ Real and Personal Property Tax Rolls, Lampasas County, Texas, 1856-1897.

²⁰ *Marriage Records, Lampasas County, Texas, Marriage Books A-D, 1873-1892*. Compiled by Norma Rutledge Grammer, Published Weldon I. Hudson, Fort Worth, Texas, 1985, Page 2.

²¹ 1870 Census, Population Schedules, Lampasas County, Texas, Page 389.

Edwards, the surviving wife of W. W. Hill.²² The 160-acre pre-emption grant, located on Caps Creek about 24 miles northeast from Fredericksburg, previously had been sold to W. W. Hill in late 1860 or early 1861 for \$300. It is presumed that the deed was recorded a second time in order to perfect legal title to the land.

In 1877, J. Calvin Edwards paid taxes in Blanco County for three tracts of land. The first was the 160-acre part of the John H. Smith Headright valued at \$80. The second was the 160-acre pre-emption grant valued at \$80. The third was the town lot in Pittsburg valued at \$75. He also paid taxes for one carriage, buggy, or wagon valued at \$40, five horses valued at \$100, seven cattle valued at \$165, and miscellaneous property valued at \$15. That same year, J. C. Edwards appears on the Lampasas County tax rolls charged with the taxes for the 6-acre part of the John Burleson Headright valued at \$250, but with no other property.

In 1878, Mrs. M. A. Edwards paid taxes in Blanco County for a 160-acre tract valued at \$100, three town lots in Pittsburg valued at \$60, one carriage, buggy, or wagon valued at \$10, nine horses valued at \$135, fourteen cattle valued at \$90, two hogs valued at \$4, and miscellaneous property \$38. The 160-acre tract had been granted originally to J. D. Waldrope. That year, J. C. Edwards paid the poll tax for himself, but paid taxes on no real nor personal property.

In 1879, J. C. Edwards paid the taxes in Blanco County for the 160-acre tract valued at \$100, three town lots valued at \$75, twelve horses valued at \$175, thirty two cattle valued at \$210, and miscellaneous property valued at \$86. In 1879, Mrs. Martha Edwards paid the taxes in Lampasas County for the 6½-acre tract valued at \$300 that was part of the old Burleson Headright. Because no further record of him has been found, it is presumed that J. C. Edwards died intestate circa 1879, probably in Blanco County. On November 14, 1879, Martha A. Edwards of Blanco County purchased a 30-acre parcel out of her father's headright, located just north of Cleburne in Johnson County, from Andrew Young.²³ It is unclear why she purchased that tract. Did she intend to move to Cleburne? Did she see the opportunity for a business investment? The records are unclear.

Her choice of surname is unusual in that she continued to use the surname Edwards in some records, but appears in many other later records as Martha Hill. In fact, she appears as merely M. A. Hill in the 1880 Census of Blanco County.²⁴ Keeping house, she is listed as a 52-year old widow born in Texas. Both her parents are listed erroneously as born in South Carolina, thus indicated that Martha may not have been the source of information recorded by the census enumerator. That also may explain why she is listed as 52 years instead of 50 years old. Living with her was her son W. H. Hill, a 20-year-old stock raiser. On the 1880 tax rolls, she appears as Mrs. M. A. Edwards. She paid taxes on the 160-acre tract valued at \$100, three town lots valued at \$75, one carriage, buggy, or wagon valued at \$25, eight horses valued at \$80, and seventy-five cattle valued at \$450.

On July 1, 1881, M. A. Edwards of Blanco County appointed D. C. Thomas of Lampasas County her

²² Land Records, Blanco County, Texas, Deed Book 10, Page 452. Blanco County Court House, Johnson City, Texas. (Hereinafter cited as Blanco Deeds)

²³ Land Records, Johnson County, Texas, Deed Book S, Page 340. Johnson County, Courthouse, Cleburne, Texas. (Hereinafter cited as Johnson Deeds.)

²⁴ 1880 Census, Population Schedules, Blanco County, Texas, Enumeration District 24, Sheet 11.

attorney to sell the 30-acre parcel in Johnson County previously purchased from Andrew Young in 1879.²⁵ She signed the power of attorney at Lampasas with her mark. On November 7, 1881, Martha A. Edwards granted a 100-foot right-of-way across her 6-acre parcel of land in Lampasas County to the Gulf, Colorado & Sante Fe Railroad Company for \$75.²⁶ From 1881 and thereafter, her son William H. Hill paid the taxes on her real and personal property. On January 8, 1884, M. A. Edwards sold that portion of her 6-acre parcel in Lampasas County located south of the railroad right-of-way.²⁷ On February 15, 1885, M. A. Edwards, formerly Hill, of Blanco County sold Lots 1, 2, and 3 in Block 9 of the Town of Pittsburg to Mrs. Kate Bahn of Travis County for \$75.²⁸ She had previously purchased the lots from Mrs. Ann Pitts. She signed the deed with her mark. On March 7, 1885, M. A. Edwards of Blanco County sold 16½ acres from her portion of her father's headright in Johnson County to H. W. Barclay for \$700.²⁹

On April 5, 1887, M. A. Edwards, a femme sole, and W. H. Hill and his wife Carrie, all of Blanco County, sold the 160-acre tract of land to J. W. Harrington, Sen. and J. W. Harrington, Jun. for \$1,250 in cash and notes.³⁰ All three of the grantors signed the deed. The two Harrington men paid their notes and, on July 15, 1891, the liens were released and a final deed executed.³¹ That act of sale may mark our subject's move from Blanco County to Llano County. Her son first appears on the tax rolls there in 1886.³²

It is presumed that she moved to Llano County with her son in 1886 or 1887. In any event, her move there took place before December 3, 1890, when Mrs. M. A. Edwards purchased a small tract of land in Llano County from R. F. M. Sawyers and his wife.³³ She paid \$400 for the 15-acre part of the old William Preusch Headright. In 1900, Martha A. Hill appears on the census schedules of Llano County.³⁴ She reported that she was a widow and was born June 1835 in Virginia. Apparently, she shaved about five years from her age. She also reported that her father had been born in Kentucky and her mother had been born in Virginia. She reported no occupation and no children.

The census enumerator missed her in 1910, but found her in 1920.³⁵ She was living alone and reported that she was a widow 87 years old and had been born in Virginia. This time, she subtracted just three

²⁵ Johnson Deeds, Book W, Page 251.

²⁶ Lampasas Deeds, Book G, Page 331.

²⁷ Lampasas Deeds, Book I, Page 493.

²⁸ Blanco Deeds, Book 8, Page 628.

²⁹ Johnson Deeds, Book 30, Page 267.

³⁰ Blanco Deeds, Book 10, Page 478.

³¹ Blanco Deeds, Book 12, Page 476.

³² Real and Personal Tax Rolls, Llano County, Texas, 1856-1898.

³³ Land Records, Llano County, Texas, Deed Book V, Page 603. Llano County Courthouse, Llano, Texas. (Hereinafter cited as Llano Deeds.)

³⁴ 1900 Census, Population Schedules, Llano County, Texas, Enumeration District 127, Sheet 3.

³⁵ 1920 Census, Population Schedules, Llano County, Texas, Enumeration District 151, Sheet 6.

years from her correct age. Both of her parents were reported as having been born in Virginia. She reported no occupation. At the April, 1925 Term of the Llano County Probate Court,

"Now comes Mrs. Grace H. Lindsey and respectfully shows to the court that she resides in Llano County, Texas, and that Mrs. M. A. Hill, who was also known as Mrs. M. A. Edwards, is deceased; that she died at Liberty Hill, in Williamson County, Texas, on the 26th day of December, 1924, that at the time of her death her domicile and fixed place of residence was in Llano County, Texas, and that her principal property was, at the time of her death, situated in said Llano County, Texas, and that the said deceased was a Grandmother of the Applicant herein." ³⁶

Martha Hill left the following will:

No. 655

State of Texas,

County of Llano. Know all men by these presents, that I, Mrs. M. A. Hill, feme sole, of the County of Llano, and State of Texas, being at this present time of sound mind, memory and discretion, in view of the uncertainty of life, and the certainty of death, do hereby expressly revoke all former wills, heretofore made by me at any time, and do hereby make, publish and declare this to be my last Will and Testament as follows, to wit

First,

I hereby give and bequeath to my Daughter Mrs. Josephine Bryson, all my Household and Kitchen furniture.

Second,

I hereby give and bequeath to my son William Henry Hill all of my Real Estate, and personal property, or any property of any nature that may be due me from any source except as above mentioned.

Third,

I hereby appoint my beloved son, William Henry Hill to be the Executor of this my last Will and Testament, and hereby direct that he shall not be required to give any bond, as such, and that there shall be no other proceeding in any court or courts in reference to this will necessary except to have the same duly probated and return a perfect inventory of my said estate.

In testimony whereof I, Mrs. M. A. Hill, have hereto signed my name on this the 5th day of July, 1915 in the presence of the two subscribing witnesses hereto to-wit: Clyde Haile and J. L. Harwell, who have signed the same as such at my request.

M. A. Hill

Martha was buried next to her son William at the Kingsland Cemetery in Llano County. She appears as Martha A. Hill, 1830-1924, on her tombstone. Unfortunately, no death certificate was filed for her. It is presumed that her correct birth year was 1830 as shown on her tombstone and as implied by her age in the 1850 Census. It is interesting to note that her age in subsequent census schedules does not agree.

Conclusion

³⁶ Probate Records, Llano County, Texas, Probate Minute Book 10, Pages 246-249. Llano County, Courthouse, Llano, Texas.

Martha Ann indeed was a frontier stalwart. She married and was widowed three times. In spite of that, she raised her two children successfully out on the Texas frontier. In the face of threatened Indian depredations and during severe economic conditions, she managed her own farming and ranching operations. She took the time to nurse her brother during his final sickness. Obviously, she was determined and strong-willed, yet tender. She possessed the right traits to be successful on the Texas frontier.

The foregoing article summarizes all that is known about Martha Chaney and her three husbands, Elias Burrell, William W. Hill, and J. C. Edwards. The author is indebted to the staff of the Texas State Land Office, the Texas State Library and Archives, the Courthouses of Grimes County, Blanco County, Lampasas County, and Llano County, the Dallas Public Library, and the Clayton Library in Houston for their patience, knowledge, and assistance. Unfortunately, the author has not met any of his cousins from this branch of the Chaney family tree. The author invites comments, questions, as well as suggestions for further research from all readers. Of course, it is hoped that another researcher will step forward with new information on this branch of the Chaney family in Texas.

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