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McClellan Family Cemetery [2005]

Latitude 30° 13' 39" - Longitude 96° 37' 16"

Located on private property about 3 miles NNW of Burton, along 9200 Christian Cemetery Road

William Beavers McClellan was born September 8, 1804, in Rockingham County, North Carolina, the son of John D. McClellan and his first wife, whose name is unknown. Shortly after his sister, Martha, was born in 1805, their mother died. His father, John, then married Catherine Todd and they had seven children, all born in Tennessee. The family may have first lived in Williamson or Maury County, but by 1830, they were in Madison County, Tennessee.

In 1820, Juliet Lewis Smith was living with her family in Giles County, which is just to the south of Williamson County. Juliet was born September 29, 1804, the daughter of Bird Bowker & Rhoda (Ingles) Smith. William Beavers McClellan and Juliet Lewis Smith married in the early 1820s and lived in Madison County.

By the time that William B. & Juliet McClellan left for Texas in 1841, they had nine children. Juliet rode all the way from Tennessee to Texas on horseback with her baby daughter, assumed to be Rebecca, in her arms. William B. & his oldest son, John J., applied for land grants at which time they indicated that they had arrived in Texas in December 1841. William B. received 640 acres and John J. received 320 acres in Milam County. William B also received land in Ellis County, while John J. received more land in Navarro County. By 1846, William B. McClellan was listed on the tax rolls for Washington County. In 1850, John J. McClellan was living in Navarro County. According to McClellan descendants, there are two possible reasons why the McClellans moved to Washington County: (1) Juliet's nephew, John S. Jones was living in Washington County, or (2) Juliet was very concerned about the education of her children and this county had more educational opportunities.

According to a great grandson, the McClellans first lived in Sandtown and it was supposedly here that William McClellan established a general merchandise store. No documentation to establish that has been found during the research for this article. The deed for the purchase of the property on which the cemetery is located has not been found; however, there is reference to "_____ McClellan's line" in another deed for a property in the same league, the McHenry Winburn ¼ league, dated May 14, 1845. The purchases of the properties in what is believed to be the Sandtown area were in 1856 and 1858.

Once the McClellans settled on their land, William built a cedar home, which included cedar planks for the floor and cedar shingles for the roof. This appears to have been the home of William and Juliet for the rest of their lives.

Sometime after the home was built, William built a store, known as McClellan's Store in McClellan's Store Settlement. William has been described as "a man of stern integrity, efficient, far-seeing, strict in his business methods, a stay and a comfort to all about him". By 1851,

William's half-brother Bennett T. McClellan, along with his wife, Nancy, and their daughters, Louisa and Elinora, had arrived in Texas from Madison County, Tennessee. By 1853, B. T. and William were operating the store together.

In 1850, William B. McClellan owned 3 female slaves, ages 22, 3, and 1. This would suggest that the 22 year old probably worked in the household. In 1860, there were 3 adult slaves, 2 female and 1 male. There were 6 children and 2 slave houses.

McClellan's Lodge No. 159 was organized in 1855 at McClellan's Store due to William's efforts in petitioning the Grand Lodge of Texas. On January 11, 1855, W. B. & Juliet McClellan donated 3 1/10 acres in the McHenry Winburn ¼ League to the School Committee and for the McClellan Lodge for Masonic purposes; another 5 ¼ acres was donated by William P. Kerr. William McClellan was listed as a trustee for the school at that time.

Although the store, the school, and the Masonic lodge kept William busy, he also farmed 180 acres of which 70 acres were improved. In 1870, his farm production was \$1,300 including 10 bales of cotton. Juliet was raising their children, teaching them at her knee at an early age, and then sending them to school. She also obtained some medical books and learned about herbs and roots and how they could be used for medicinal purposes. She and the children would gather the plants from the woods and make a salve which was very effective. She became a person who was called upon to help others when they were ill and also served as a midwife in the community. Many times, this meant riding her horse during the middle of the night to help a mother deliver her child.

On March 4, 1876, seven people, including W. B. & Juliet, met in the school to organize a church in the community. One year later, there were 85 members. In 1879, William B. McClellan built a church and presented it to the congregation; the name became Bethany Christian Church. Juliet McClellan donated the church bell and the chandeliers.

Since education had always been a priority for the McClellan family, many of the grandchildren attended Add-Ran College in Thorp Springs in Hood County. Add-Ran later moved to Fort Worth and became Texas Christian University.

William B. & Juliet had ten children, nine of whom were born in Tennessee.

(1) John J. McClellan was born circa 1823 and married Susan J. Brown in Washington County, Texas, on July 9, 1846. In 1849, John, Susan, and son, William, moved to Navarro County where John had received 320 acres of land from his second-class headright as a single man. He was also serving as his father's agent for the 320 acres he had received in present-day Ellis County. The family moved to Washington County sometime in the 1850s. John and Susan had at least two more children, Sarah & Martha. John served with the Davis Mounted Rifles of the Confederacy and returned to the county to continue his life as a farmer. John died before 1870 and is buried in McClellan Cemetery.

(2) Jane "Janie" McClellan was born circa 1827. She married Haynie Armstrong Gilliland on Dec 28, 1847, in Washington County. During the 1850s, they lived in various places, but mostly were in Washington County, where they were still living in June of 1860. In July 1861, when Janie died, they were living in Brown County; she is buried near Byrd's Store. The Gillilands had at

least six children: (1) William Eli, (2) James, (3) Jennie, (4) Juliette "Judy", (5) Albert G., and (6) Samuel Houston. After Janie's death, Haynie brought the children to Washington County where William B. & Juliet took the children into their home. Haynie served as a nurse in Nelson's Regiment of Infantry, Confederate States of America. In 1864, while serving east of Little Rock, Arkansas, Haynie contracted a fever and died.

(3) Martha "Mattie" McClellan was born circa 1828. She married Charles H. Dunn, on October 27, 1848 in Washington County. Mattie and Charles had at least four children: (1) James B., (2) Alexander A., (3) Thomas, and (4) Charles. In 1850, Mattie & Charles were living in Burleson County where he was teaching school, and, in 1860, they were in Navarro County where Charles was farming. Charles was killed in the Civil War and Mattie also died during this same time period in Navarro County. The children came to Washington County to live with their grandparents, William B. & Juliet McClellan.

(4) Susan E. McClellan was born circa 1832. On August 3, 1848, she married Abraham "Abram" A. McCain, son of James J. & Sarah (Allen) McCain. Susan and Abram had at least seven children: (1) Sarah M., (2) George A., (3) James, (4) Mary "Mollie", (5) Jefferson Davis, (6) James J., and (7) Stanton "Sam" Harold. Sometime after June 1860, the family moved to Brown County, where Abram died between 1865 and 1867. Susan and the children came back to Washington County to live with her parents, William B. & Juliet McClellan. By the end of 1870, Susan had died, and is possibly buried in McClellan Cemetery.

(5) Albert Gallatin "Ab" McClellan was born circa 1832. He married Amanda C. "Manda" Thomason on May 29, 1856, in Washington County. In 1860, the family was living with his parents. By 1874, Albert and his family were living north of Ledbetter in Lee County, where he served as a county commissioner on several occasions. Albert and Manda had at least 7 children: (1) William Beavers, (2) James Thomas "Tom", (3) Albert B. "Ab", who is buried in McClellan Cemetery, (4) Mattie, (5) George, (6) Milton, and (7) Howard. Ab served in the Davis Mounted Rifles of the Confederacy during the Civil War. It is believed that Ab moved to Hood County sometime after 1885 and died there on December 26, 1892. His tombstone in Thorp Spring Cemetery indicates he was born in Madison County, Tennessee, and was 60 years, 6 months and 60 days.

(6) Thomas Benton McClellan was born circa 1834. He was living with his parents in Washington County in 1850. He died by 1860, and may be buried in the McClellan Cemetery.

(7) Samuel H. McClellan was born May 5, 1837. In April 1860, he married Adeline "Addie" Hackworth, daughter of William Wilborn & Mary Eliza Jane (Pennington) Hackworth. Samuel lived with his family in the Ledbetter area; he was a farmer and a freighter before the coming of the railroad. Later, Samuel became a tie and wood contractor to the railroads. Samuel and Addie had at least six children: (1) John Albert, (2) Frank Samuel, (3) Walter R., (4) George W., (5) Edward, and (6) Ethel. Like his brothers, Samuel served in the Davis Mounted Rifles of the Confederacy. Samuel died in 1877 and Addie died in 1931. They are both buried in Ledbetter Cemetery.

(8) Mary C. McClellan was born in January 1840. On May 6, 1861, she married George William Ratliff, the son of William & Susan (Collier) Ratliff. George had been a "forty-niner" in the

California Gold Rush. He joined his McClellan brothers-in-law and enlisted in the Davis Mounted Rifles of the Confederacy. George and Mary had at least 3 children: (1) George William, (2) Charles C., and (3) Samuel Raymond. In 1870, Mary's family lived in the Evergreen area of Washington County; that area later became Lee County. By 1880, they were in the Ledbetter area of Fayette County. Sometime between 1880 and 1900, Mary and her family moved to Coleman County. By 1900, she and George were living in Fort Worth, where they both died, Mary in February 1906 and George in 1924. They are buried in Coleman Cemetery.

(9) Rebecca McClellan was born about 1841. She died before 1850 and is possibly buried in the McClellan Cemetery.

(10) William Robert McClellan was born May 5, 1846, in Washington County, Texas. On May 22, he married Louisa Elizabeth Ratliff, the daughter of Thomas R. Ratliff. William was a partner in the McClellan Store in 1870 and he and Louise were living in his father's household. William and Louise had the following children: (1) Mary L., (2) Seth, (3) Lelia D., (4) Claud, (5) Eula, (6) Branch C., and (7) Mildred L. In 1880, the family was living in the Town of Ledbetter where William was a dry goods & grocery merchant. By 1900, the family was living in the Town of Coleman in Coleman County, where William was a successful banker and farmer. He served three terms in the Texas Legislature and was active in the Democratic party. William died September 26, 1922, and Louisa died October 7, 1932; they are both buried in Coleman City Cemetery. William's tombstone indicates that he was in Co. F., Texas Cavalry, Confederate States of America.

William Beavers McClellan's half-brother, Bennett T., was born circa 1818 in Madison County, Tennessee. He was the son of John D. McClellan and his second wife, Catherine Todd. B. T. married Nancy in about 1840 and they had two children: (1) Louisa Frances, born circa 1842, married Alexander McCausland in 1860, and (2) Elinora, (shown as Elvira Luzenia in her father's will) born circa 1847. By 1851, the family had moved to the McClellan Settlement. Nancy died within the first few years of their arrival in Texas and she may be buried in this cemetery. On June 18, 1853, B. T. married Alice McCausland. They had three children: (1) James T. McClellan, born circa 1854, married Ula Awalt in 1882, (2) John, born circa 1857, and (3) Florence, born circa 1861, married A. F. Jones in 1882. On February 3, 1862, a letter written by James S. Jones stated: "B. T. McClellan is dead and his family have moved back here." Although Bennett T. McClellan owned several lots in the Town of Union Hill, one of which is mentioned as his homestead, he wrote his will in Kerr County on August 26, 1861. However, there is a probate record in the Washington County Courthouse, so it is assumed that he was in Washington County at the time of his death. It is possible that B. T. is buried in this cemetery.

William B. McClellan died October 15, 1880 and Juliet McClellan died April 21, 1885. They are both buried in the Christian Church Cemetery across the road from the McClellan property.

The will of William B. McClellan indicates:

- That he leaves to Juliet "his homestead on what I now reside together with all the fixtures, teams, tools, crops and stock for her natural life". It was then to be divided equally between his lawful heirs.

- “The merchandise that I may have on hand at the time of my death together with all notes and accounts that may be due me at that time shall be taken charge of by my executors and in the discretion of said executors, they may continue the mercantile business in my name and behalf for such a length of time as they may consider for the best interest of my heirs and shall proceed to collect all sums of money due me.
- “My executors should sell the two tracts of land in Lee County belonging to me, known as the Thigpen and the Laurence tracts at either private or public sale....”
- His sons, Albert G. and William R. were named executors.
- The will was handwritten by another person, and William B. McClellan signed his name at the bottom. The will was dated March 20, 1880.

At the time that William and Juliet died, 1880 and 1885 respectively, only three of their children were still living, Albert G., Mary, and William R. On October 22, 1885, A. G. & W. R. McClellan sold 151 acres to Cornelius Gerdes. The property was known as the home tract of W. B. & J. L. McClellan and $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre known as the family burying ground was reserved from the sale.

In a later transfer of property, dated June 30, 1898, the following statement was found: “this being the north corner of a $\frac{3}{4}$ acre lot used formerly as a graveyard.” Thus, we can assume that burials were no longer taking place by that time.

There is evidence of many more graves in this cemetery; thus, this may have been used by other families within the McClellan Settlement. Sources: ancestry.com, various documents; History of Burton, Vol 1, by Annie Maud Knittel Avis, 1974; History of Burton, Vol II, by Annie Maud Knittel Avis, Henington Publishing Company, Wolfe City, Texas, 1985; The Circle Goes Unbroken, by Sue Patterson, http://homepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~bearraid/current/thecircle_tableofcontent.html; Washington County, Texas, Deed Records; Washington County, Texas, Probate Records; U. S. Census Records, various years.

Burials:

McClellan, Albert B., b. Mar 1, 1862, d. Jul 20, 1882, son of Albert Gallatin & Amanda C. (Thomason) McClellan.

McClellan, John J., b. circa 1823, d. before 1870, husband of Susan J. Brown, son of William Beavers & Juliet (Smith) McClellan.

Possible Burials (indicated by italics):

McCain, Susan E. (McClellan), b. circa 1832, d. circa 1870, wife of Abraham “Abram” A. McCain, daughter of William Beavers & Juliet Lewis (Smith) McClellan.

McClellan, Albert Gallatin, b. circa 1832, d. after October 22, 1885, husband of Amanda C. “Manda” (Thomason) McClellan, son of William Beavers & Juliet Lewis (Smith) McClellan.

McClellan, Bennett T., b. circa 1818, d. shortly before February 3, 1862, husband of: 1st Nancy, 2nd Alice McCausland, son of John D. & Catherine (Todd) McClellan.

McClellan, Nancy, d. circa 1851-1853, 1st wife of Bennett T. McClellan.

McClellan, Rebecca, b. circa 1841, d. before 1850, daughter of William Beavers & Juliet Lewis (Smith) McClellan.

McClellan, Thomas Benton, b. circa 1834, d. before 1860, son of William Beavers & Juliet Lewis (Smith) McClellan.