

A HISTORY OF PANOLA COUNTY, TEXAS

1819-1978

EXCERPTS PERTAINING TO

VAWTERS
GRIGSBYS
DURKEES
WEIRS

WILLIAM L. DURKEE FAMILY

William L. Durkee, his wife, Mary Ann Weir Durkee, and their children, James A., Adolphus Gustavos, Mary Grigsby, William L., Jr., Hannah, and Luna Hester came to Grand Bluff, Panola County, Texas in 1847 from Chickasaw County, Mississippi.

William L. Durkee, a Civil Engineer and Surveyor, was born July 16, 1794 in Hampton, Windham County, Connecticut, the son of William Durkee and Margaret Loomis. William Durkee was a Revolutionary Soldier of Connecticut. William L. Durkee went to Virginia, where in 1830, he eloped with Mary Ann Weir.

Mary Ann Weir Durkee was born November 26, 1811 in Rockbridge County, Virginia, the daughter of Andrew Reid Weir Sr. and Mary (Polly) Grigsby, a sister of Dr. Andrew Reid Weir Jr. of Grand Bluff, Texas and a **distant cousin of William Barrett Travis, the Commander at the Alamo.** Andrew Reid Weir Sr. was a **Lieutenant under George Washington during the Revolution.**

William L. and Mary Ann Durkee acquired a small tract of land at Grand Bluff, where he died in 1848. Mary Ann Durkee continued to live here until 1855, at which time she bought land near Harmony Hill in Rusk County, Texas and moved there.

James A. Durkee, born 1831 in Virginia, was a Carpenter and married Percilla A. Sory in 1860. They lived in Marshall, Texas and their children were Katie, William, Mattie, Hannah, George, Luna, and Dorothy.

Adolphus Gustavos Durkee, born 1834 in Virginia, was a Captain of 10th Texas Regiment, Confederate Army, a Merchant and a Farmer. He died unmarried.

Mary Grigsby Durkee, born August 10, 1836 in Mississippi, was married March 23, 1852 in Panola County, Texas to John Milton Vawter by Lemuel Herrin, Minister of the Gospel; they lived at Grand Bluff for many years and their children were Edwin, Thomas Milton, Mary Luna, George Lewis, Frances Louisa, Eugene, Ella Octavia, John Milton Jr., and Katie. Their son, Thomas Milton, married Hannah Magnolia Carter and their son, Lewis Orin, and his son, Lewis Orin Jr., are now living in Marshall, Texas, Another son of Thomas Milton and Hannah, John Thomas has a son, William Thomas, now living in Mineola, Texas. William Thomas has a son, John Thomas II, now living in Austin, Texas.

William L. Durkee Jr., born 1838 in Mississippi, was a Bachelor. He gave his nephew, Thomas Milton Vawter, 500 acres of land.

Hannah Durkee, born 1840 in Mississippi, married H. F. King. They lived in Rusk County, Texas and had one daughter, Luna.

Luna Hester Durkee, born 1842 in Mississippi, married Kelsey Power. They lived in Marshall, Texas and their children were Kelsey, H.B., Willie and Mary. Among their living descendants are Jim T. Power of Marshall, Texas and Jack H. Power of Fort Worth, Texas.

DAVID AND LUCINDA VAWTER

In 1844, David Vawter, his wife, Lucinda Glover Vawter and their children, Alexander Lewis, Amanda, John Milton, Louisa, David M. and Martha came to Grand Bluff, Panola county, Texas (which was a part of Harrison County until 1846) from Caddo Parish, Louisiana. These children were all born in Indiana except Amanda and John Milton, both born in Kentucky. The Vawters were Baptists.

David Vawter, born 1800 in Kentucky, a Merchant and Steamboat Owner, was the son of Philemon Vawter and Anna Vawter, who were first cousins. Philemon Vawter was a Baptist Minister, who had Revolutionary Service in North Carolina. The Vawters descend from the Norman family, Vautort of Valletort, and the Vikings.

Lucinda Glover Vawter, born 1805 in Kentucky, was the daughter of Thomas J. Glover and Nancy West and Thomas J. Glover was a Revolutionary Soldier of Virginia. The Glover and West Families were English and came to Virginia in the 1600's.

David Vawter was licensed and bonded for \$1000 to establish and keep up a Ferry across the Sabine River at Grand Bluff, Harrison County, Texas, September 3, 1844. He died here, July 12, 1845, not owning control of the Ferry. November 8, 1845, Lucinda, his wife, traded their Louisiana land for the Ferry and land on both sides of the Sabine River at Grand Bluff. The Vawter family continued to own the Ferry until 1912, when a bridge was built across the Sabine River.

Alexander Lewis, born 1824, was a Merchant, married Martha Weir. Their daughter, Sara Julia, married Dr. Major Dowell Sterrett.

Amanda, born 1826, married August 14, 1845 at Grand Bluff, C. F Lewis, a resident of Grand Bluff, and they had five children.

John Milton, born March 25, 1828, a Merchant and a Postmaster at Grand Bluff, a Justice of the Peace, a County Commissioner and large land owner of Panola County, married Mary Grigsby Durkee in 1852 and they lived in his parent's home at Grand Bluff, until it burned in 1865. Their children were Edwin, Thomas Milton, Mary Luna, George Lewis, Frances Louisa, Eugene, Ella Octavia, John Milton Jr. and Katie King. Their son, Thomas Milton married Hannah Magnolia Carter and their children were, John Thomas, May, Alexander, Luna, Lewis Orin, Octavia, Carter, Dee and Wesson. Lewis Orin and his son, Lewis Orin Jr., are now living in Marshall, Texas. William Thomas, son of John Thomas, is living in Mineola, Texas now and John Thomas II, son of William Thomas, is living in Austin, Texas now.

Louisa, born 1830, married Edward Fink and they had one child.

David M., born 1833, a Doctor and large land owner, married Mrs. Nancy Weir and their daughter, Martha Lucinda, married John W. Cook, President of the First National Bank of Carthage, Texas.

Martha, born 1836, married J. C. White; they had four children.

Eugene F. was born 1846, Grand Bluff, Harrison County, Texas. He died young.

THE VAWTER/STERRETT FAMILY

Mrs. Lucinda Vawter, widow and head of a large family, arrived at the renamed town of "Grand Bluff" in Oct 1845 and purchased the "Brewster's Bluff" ferry operation.

A. L. Vawter, son of Lucinda Vawter, operated a mercantile store at Grand Bluff. His mother became a victim of county commissioners demands in 1848, to construct a bridge across the slough just west of Grand Bluff.

A. L. Vawter married Martha Ann Weir, daughter of Andrew Reid Weir, Jr. and Sarah George Ann Shepherd in 1849. To them was born two children, Sarah Julia and Alexander Lewis Vawter, Jr. The little son born in 1852 died in 1854. The father died in 1856. After her husbands death Martha Ann with her small daughter went to live with her father at Harmony Hill, where she died in 1860. When her grandfather died in 1866, Sarah Julia came back to Grand Bluff to live with her Uncle John M. Vawter and Mary Grigsby (Durkee) Vawter. On one of her visits home from St. Vincents Academy in Shreveport, La., Uncle John and Aunt Mary introduced Julia to a young doctor from Alabama, who was also a cripple confederate veteran. His name was Major Dowell Sterrett who had just located Grand Bluff in 1867. "Poor as a church mouse", Dr. Sterrett was well educated and, most important to John Vawter, thoroughly sound in Baptist Doctrine. The couple was married in the Vawter home on Jan. 19, 1870. Grand Bluff was the Sterretts home for the next 12 yrs. In 1882 the doctor moved his family to Mahon so the children could attend the excellent school in Harris Chapel, by Professor Joseph Leroy Harris. In 1889 the family moved to Beckville, a new village on the recently completed railroad from Longview to Gary, which was the Texas Sabine Valley and Northwestern Railroad, known locally as the "High, Dry and Windy".

In addition to having seven children of their own Julia and her husband reared and educated 4 orphans and 3 grandchildren. Other children who needed more schooling than could be obtained in their localities were able to have such by temporarily living in the Sterrett home, and more than one boy or girl was enabled to continue in school after the 4 months of free school came to an end because a friend had paid their tuition.

Dr. Sterrett died Oct. 24, 1919 and Julia died Sept. 1, 1934, buried at Beckville, Texas.

The children of Dr. Major Dowell Sterrett and Sarah Julia (Vawter):

(1) Mary Alphene (Allie), b. 10-27-1870, d. 9-30-1905, married Edward Marshall, 4 daughters, Julia Ferrell, Hennie Dee, Ester Lee Marshall; 2nd. Marriage 1902 to William Benjamin, 1 child b. 1903, Allie Benjamin.

(2) Martha Elizabeth (Mattie), b. 2-21-1872, d. 3-13-1950, married Seaton J. Bell, 6 children, Donie Dowell, Robert Ashley, Richard Lewis, Major Townsend, Seaton Jr., and Allie Bell.

(3) Polly, b. 1874, d. 1875 of diphtheria.

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(4) Robert Alphonzo Sterrett, b. 10-26-1876., d. 7-21-1908, graduate of University of Texas School of Medicine 1897. While practicing in Jefferson, Tex. married Etta Davis 1901. 3 children, (a) Roberta b. 1902, d. 1935, (b) Meade Dowell, b. 1904, married Winnie Mae Harvey 1929, Meade Dowell, Jr. (3 children, Cheryl Ann, Robert Eugene, Donald Lynn), Robert Harvey (2 children, Russell Edwin and Randall Alan), Ida Merle Sterrett, b. 1942, d. 1947. (c) David Haskell Sterrett, b. 1907, d 1925.

(5) Sarah Julia and Carrie Bell Sterrett, twins, b. 10-4-1885. Sarah died at 6 wks, Carrie married Jerry Dewitt Harrell, 1 child Jerry Dewitt Harrell, Jr.

(6) Davie Lewise (Davailou) Sterrett, b. 1892, married Charles E. Lowe 1924, no children.

Submitted by Robert E. Sterrett

CAPTAIN ROBERT WILLIS WEIR

Robert Willis (“Bob”) Weir, son of Andrew and Sarah George Strickland-Weir, was born September 6, 1835, at Columbus, Mississippi. He came to Panola County, Texas with his family in 1846, and they settled at Grand Bluff.

The Andrew Weir, (Sr. ?), family came to Grand Bluff in the spring of 1846, coming via Little Rock, Arkansas. They crossed Red River at Shreveport, Louisiana when it was a very small village. – “only two little stores and a few families; -- Mr. Shreve was living there and the town took its name from him.” The mother, Sarah, had died in Mississippi in 1842 and was buried there.

Andrew Weir, Sr., accumulated quite a fortune while living in Columbus, Mississippi; and when he moved to Texas, he brought a good many slaves and \$140,000.00 in money. Nine children were born to Andrew and (Martha ?), two girls and seven boys; and those children came to Texas .

Grand Bluff as a thriving village and the busiest River Ferry Crossing in the area; and the sons of this Weir family became prominent business men. Andrew W. Weir, Jr., became a Mercantile Merchant; Dr. George S. Weir practiced medicine in different parts of Panola County, including Fairplay; Bob was a Steamboat Pilot before the Civil War; and Martha Ann became the wife of Alexander Lewis Vawter, merchant at Grand Bluff.

Robert Willis (Bob) Weir married Eliza M. Barbee after he returned from the Civil War. They had eight children, six of which survived to become adults:

Sarah Elizabeth, born 1868; Mary Frances, born 1869, married W. F. Smith; Charlie H. born 1870, married Nancy Trulock; Martha Clementine, born 1872 – died 1873; William Robert, born 1874, married Margaret Yarboro; Laura Jane, born 1876, married John Reuben Dunn; Effie Lou, born 1879, married Joe C. Harris; Andrew King, born 1882, died 1885.

Bob Weir and five brothers served in the Civil War. Bob and Richard, his youngest brother, enlisted December 26, 1861, as Cavalrymen in Company C, 14th Regiment, Texas Cavalry. They went to Little Rock, Arkansas, and were dismounted there; and their horses were sent home. They then took a Mississippi River Steamboat to Memphis, Tennessee, where they got railroad transportation to Corinth, Mississippi.

Capt. Bob’s own words explain their experiences from Cornith: “There our troubles began. Our Company C was in the 14th Texas, Ector’s Brigade, which was in many hard fought battles. We had hard battles in Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee. We went out with 117 men in our Company and only sixteen ever got back home.”

Four other brothers of Capt. Bob Weir were in the War, too. Andrew W. Weir and his brother Henry were in R. N. Cumby’s Company which was organized at Henderson, May 7, 1861, several months before Bob’s Company. Charles was in a different company, but the title of that company is not known. Dr. G. S. Weir, another brother, was a surgeon in the Virginia Army.

Mr. Weir made several references to his Civil War experiences in letters and newspaper articles of his day.

DR. ANDREW W. WEIR AND FAMILY

Dr. Andrew W. Weir and Nancy Raycroft (Reicroft) Weir. She was born January 12, 1833, in Tennessee, the daughter of Caswell Raycroft. (Reicroft) He was born 1819, in North Carolina. Nancy Raycroft was one-half Cherokee Indian. The enforced 1,200 mile trek of the Cherokee's "Trail of Tears" began in 1838 in the Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee, and led Westward to Indian Territory. The March cost the Cherokee's nearly one-third of their population. Nancy Raycroft married Andrew W. Weir, a Physician, July 25, 1852. He was the son of Andrew Reid Weir and Sarah George Ann Shepherd Weir, born March 13, 1826, Christian County, Kentucky. Died Sept. 27, 1889. Buried in Harmony Hill Cemetery, Rusk County, Texas. Andrew Reid Weir attended Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia 1817-1818. Sarah Shepherd Weir died in Mississippi in 1842, and was buried there. Dr. Andrew Reid Weir brought his family to Texas, settling at Grand Bluff in 1846. They were: 1. Robert Willis (Captain Bob) Weir, 2. Richard Weir, 3. Henry Weir, 4. Dr. George Shepherd Weir, 5. Andrew W. Weir, 6. Charles Weir, 7. Martha Ann Weir married Alex Lewis Vawter a merchant. There was another son and daughter. Their father had accumulated quite a fortune while they lived in Columbus, and he brought \$140,000.00 dollars in money and a number of slaves with him, when he moved to Grand Bluff. Andrew W. Weir was a Physician, and also owned a Mercantile Store at Grand Bluff. Dr. George Shepherd Weir practiced Medicine in different parts of Panola County. Captain Bob Weir was a steamboat Pilot before the war. He stated, on page 22, Lawson Lacy's Genealogy book, that the first steam boat that ever came up the Sabine River was the old Buffalo, commanded by Capt. Bob Patton, in 1848, and owned by Alexander Louis Vawter, U. P. Dickson, and Captain Bob Patton. There were no steamboats on the Sabine River after the Civil War, in 1860. Henry Weir was run over and killed by a switch engine, at Longview Junction, Dec. 26, 1887. Andrew W. Weir and five of his brothers served in the Civil War: Robert Willis Weir, Dr. George Shepherd Weir, Henry Weir, Richard Weir and Charles Weir. Dr. Andrew W. Weir, 4th Sgt, in Captain R. N. Cumby's Company of Rusk County, Texas. Dr George Shepherd Weir was a Surgeon in the Virginia Army. Dr. Andrew W. Weir owned a Drug Store at Harmony Hill and land on Martin Creek, after the War. Buried at Harmony Hill Cemetery. He married Nancy Raycroft (Reicroft) July 25, 1852. Their only child: Belle Weir, born August 8, 1853, at Grand Bluff. She died March 12, 1915.

Dr. Andrew W. Weir married second; Mary A. Griffin. Their children; 1. Lillian Weir 2. Beulah Weir 3. Lela Weir 4. Elsie Weir 5. Lola Weir. One Adopted daughter, raised by David M. Vawter and Nancy Raycroft (Reicroft) Weir Vawter; Mosie Lee Cain. Lillian Weir married Henry U. Sims. They had one daughter; Verda Sims. Henry U. Sims died in Longview, and is buried there.

Submitted by Frances H. Tiller

AMANDA LUCINDA VAWTER

She was the daughter of Thomas J. Glover and Nancy West Glover. Born July 8, 1805, in Virginia. Died Dec. 20, 1857, at Grand Bluff, Panola County, Texas. She was the granddaughter of John West and Susanna Robinson West. Thomas J. Glover and John West were both Virginia soldiers of the Revolution and are buried in Indiana. Amanda Lucinda Glover married David Vawter on April 27, 1823, the son of Philemon and Ann Vawter. They were married by Jesse Vawter, P.G. in Jefferson County, Indiana. He was born in Kentucky on Jan 21, 1800. Died July 13, 1845, at Grand Bluff, Texas. Philemon Vawter was a Primitive Baptist Preacher. He was also a good singer, a farmer, a chair maker, and a maker of spinning wheels. David and Lucinda Vawter lived on both sides of the Ohio river in Indiana and Kentucky. He was a trader, and in 1832 built his own steamboat, the "Bravo", which sailed down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans, up the Red River to Natchitoches, Louisiana, where he lived and operated steam boats from Jefferson, Texas, to New Orleans, until 1844, at which time he sold out and bought a plantation on the Sabine river at Grand Bluff, Panola County, Texas. He built his home on the high cliff, on left side of road, around one-hundred or two hundred feet from the Sabine River. This original home burned in the 1860's. Another house was built on this site. David Vawter was bonded to operate a Ferry at Grand Bluff, Texas, on Sept. 3, 1844. At his death on July 13, 1845, Lucinda Vawter operated the Ferry. In 1847, she was licensed to keep a Ferry at Brewster's Bluff, later known as Grand Bluff, on the Sabine River. Court Records show that she was still operating the Ferry in 1848, 1849, 1852, 1854, 1856, and 1857. She was left with six children to provide for when David died in 1845, their ages being 9 years, 12 years, 15 years, 17 years, 19 years, and 21 years. She died Dec 20, 1857. David and Lucinda Vawter are buried in the old Estate Cemetery at Grand Bluff. They were members of the Baptist Church at Old Macedonia.

Their children:

1. Alexander Lewis Vawter. Born Jan 24, 1824, in Indiana, he was married in 1848 to Martha Weir. Born Feb. 14, 1827, in Mississippi, Died Sept. 5, 1860. She was a sister of Andrew W. Weir. Lewis Vawter was engaged in the Mercantile Business at Grand Bluff. He died Jan. 31, 1856.
2. Amanda Melvina Vawter. Born Feb. 24, 1826, married 1845, to Francisco Lewis. He was born May 5, 1822.
3. John Milton Vawter. Born March 25, 1828. Died Feb.. 9, 1909. Married 1852, to Mary Grigsby Durkee. Born 1836, Died 1918.
4. Louisa Vawter. Born 1830, married 1845 to Edward Fink.
5. David M. Vawter. Born Jan. 17, 1833, Madison, Indiana. Died around 1900. He was a Physician, and operator of the Grand Bluff Ferry for a number of years. Buried at Grand Bluff Cemetery.
6. Martha Vawter. Born Sept. 16, 1836. Married Dec. 1852, to J. C. White.

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Dr. David M. Vawter married Nancy Raycroft (Reicroft) Weir, a widow with one child, Belle Weir. (See Nancy Raycroft (Reicroft) Weir history.) He saved silver dollars he collected as Ferry fare, and had them made into a silver service for his wife. They were members of the Baptist Church at Old Macedonia.

Their only child: Martha Lucinda (Chic) Vawter, also called Mattie Lou Vawter. She was born July 8, 1875, at Grand Bluff, Texas. Died Jan. 15, 1946. While living at Grand Bluff as a small child "Chic" Vawter, and Nancy Hensley, her niece, three months younger than Chic, would slip off from their parents and swing on over the Sabine River on a grape vine swing!

Dr. David M. Vawter moved to Carthage, Texas around 1881. He bought the first house ever built in Carthage for their home. Original site was at 301 North St. Mary Street. Fred A. Dulaney SR. bought the house a number of years ago and had it moved to 106 West College Street, now the home of Mrs. Fred A. Dulaney Sr. Dr. David M. Vawter bought the first sewing machine ever brought to Carthage for his wife, invented by Elias Howe, first Patent issued in 1846, last one issued in 1878. Martha Lucinda (Chic) Vawter attended Baylor College in Waco, Texas, around 1893-1896. She received the highest honors in Education, and received a medal, also a trip to Memphis, Tenn., on a Special Railroad Coach. (As told to her great niece, Frances Hull Tiller.)

She married John William Cooke of Pembroke, Kentucky, on Jan. 6, 1897. He was born July 30, 1870. Died Feb. 20, 1952. Their only child, David Vawter Cooke. Born Oct. 16, 1897. Died Dec. 22, 1903. The Carthage Circulation Book Club was organized in 1907. Mrs. C. C. Comer was the Founder and first President, followed by Mrs. Arch Knight and Mrs. J. W. (Chic) Cooke.

John William Cooke and "Chic" Vawter Cooke raised two foster children, Mary Moss Cooke and Jack Vern Cooke. Mary Moss Cooke was an accomplished pianist, violinist, and had a lovely, trained singing voice. She was Choir Director at First Methodist Church in 1935. She sang an operatic song over Radio Station W. F. A. A. in Dallas, around 1923, and received high praise in the Dallas Morning News for her excellent rendition of the difficult number.

Submitted by Frances H. Tiller.

The comment about **Mary Ann Weir** being a “distant cousin” to William Barrett Travis led to this research:

- 1 **John Grigsby** b: Aug 08, 1624 in Maidstone, Kent England d: Oct 11, 1730 in Stafford Co. Va.
- . +**Sarah Jane Prosser** b: Abt. 1656 in Essex, England d: Bef. 1709 in Stafford Co. Virginia
- .. 2 **Charles Grigsby** b: 1682 in St. Paul's Parish, Stafford Co. Va d: November 11, 1740 in Stafford Co. Va
- +**Sarah Wilkerson** b: 1697 in St. Paul's Parish, Stafford Co, Virginia d: 1756 in Stafford Co, Virginia
- 3 **John "Soldier John" Grigsby** b: 1720 in Stafford Co. Va d: April 07, 1794 in Rockbridge Co. Va.
- +Rosana Etchison b: 1735 in Orange Co., Virginia d: 1762 in Rockbridge Co., Virginia
-4 **James Grigsby** b: November 10, 1748 in Virginia d: February 1835 in Bledsoe, TN
- +Frances Porter b: Abt. 1747 in Orange Co. Virginia d: Abt. 1779
-5 **Mary (Polly) Grigsby** b: May 27, 1774 in Virginia d: 1816 in Virginia
- +Andrew (Wier) Weir b: February 13, 1755 in Rockbridge Co., Virginia d: Dec 29, 1821
- 6 **Mary Ann Weir** b: Nov 26, 1811 in Rockbridge Co. Va. d: 1883 in Rusk County, Texas
- +William L Durkee b: July 16, 1794 in Windham Co. Conn. d: 1848 in Grand Bluff, Tx
- 7 **Mary Grigsby Durkee** b: August 10, 1836 in Mississippi d: June 22, 1918 in Timpson, Tx
- +John Milton **Vawter** b: March 25, 1828 in Kentucky d: Feb 09, 1909 in Timpson, Tx
- 8 **George Lewis Vawter** b: Nov 22, 1862 in Panola Co, Tx d: Feb 20, 1944 in Pipe Creek, Tx
- +Junie Ettie Dickerson b: 3-8, 1870 Johnson co, Nebraska d: 7-19, 1950 in Pipe Creek, Tx
- 9 **Francis Edwin Vawter** b: 3- 30, 1909 in Pipe Creek, Tx d: 4- 28, 2002 in Pipe Creek, Tx
- + Thelma Jeane Johnson b: March 28, 1914 in Wagoner, Ok d: Sept 18, 2002 in Bandera, Tx
- 10 **Patricia Jeane Vawter**
- +Gary Gene Charles Johnston
- .. *2nd Husband of Patricia Jeane Vawter:
- +Tom Renton
- .. 10 **Frances Joy Vawter**
- +Tom Richter
- 8 **Edwin Vawter** b: May 07, 1855 in Grand Bluff, Panola County, Texas
- +Vesta Sears b: August 29, 1848 in Marshall, Texas
- 8 **Thomas M. Vawter** b: May 08, 1857 in Grand Bluff, Panola County, Texas
- +Nolie Carter b: February 04, 1857
- 8 **Mary Luna Vawter** b: July 13, 1859 in Grand Bluff, Panola County, Texas
- +Lemuel M Vickers b: March 04, 1851 in Alabama
- 8 **Frances Louisa Vawter** b: January 07, 1867 in Marshall, Texas
- +John B. Noble b: February 07, 1863 d: December 10, 1898
- 8 **Ella Octavia Vawter** b: May 31, 1872
- +A. S. Victory b: January 14, 1868
- 8 **Katie King Vawter** b: May 15, 1877
- 8 **John Milton Vawter, Jr.** b: 1874 in Panola Co., Texas d: 1890 in Bandera, Texas
- 8 **Eugene Vawter** b: 1869 in Panola Co., Texas d: 1882 in Panola Co., Texas
- 7 **James A. Durkee** b: Abt. 1832
- 7 **Adolphus Gustavos Durkee** b: Abt. 1834
- 7 **William L Durkee, Jr.** b: Abt. 1838
- 7 **Hannah Durkee** b: Abt. 1840
- 7 **Luna Hester Durkee** b: Abt. 1842
- .. 2 **Mary Ann Grigsby** b: Abt. 1675 in Stafford, VA d: April 23, 1747 in Stafford, VA
- +Benjamin Newton b: 1669 in York, England d: Abt. 1710 in Stafford, VA
- 3 **Margaret Newton** b: Abt. 1702
- +John Travis d: Aft. November 1724 in Stafford, VA
- 4 **William Travis**
- +**Margaret Smallwood**

.....5 **Barrick Travis** d: 1814
..... +Anne Butler
..... ..6 Elizabeth Travis
..... ..6 Sarah Travis
..... ..6 Catherine Travis
..... ..6 Mary Travis
..... ..6 Prior Smallwood Travis
..... ..6 **Mark Butler Travis** b: 1783 in Edgefield, SC d: September 1836 in Sparta, AL
..... +Jemima Stollworth b: September 1783 in Edgefield, SC d: 1867
..... 7 **William Barrett Travis** **b: 8-9, 1809 in Saluda, SC d: March 06, 1836 in San Antonio, Tx**
..... +Rosanna E Cato b: May 1812

..... 7 Emalene Travis b: 1812
..... 7 Prior Smallwood Travis b: 1817
..... 7 Nicholas Travis b: 1819
..... 7 Sarah Ann Travis b: 1820
..... 7 Alexander Travis b: 1824
..... 7 Mark Butler Travis b: May 18, 1827 d: 1864
..... 7 James Calloway Travis b: August 05, 1829
..... 6 Alexander D Travis
.....5 Mary Grigsby Travis
..... +William Brown
.....5 Eleanor Travis
.....5 Lucy Travis
..... 4 Margaret Travis
..... 4 Letitia Travis
..... 3 Letitia Newton b: Abt. 1704
..... 3 Benjamin Newton b: Abt. 1706
..... 3 Mary Newton b: Abt. 1708

To Jesse Grimes

March 3, 1836

Do me the favor to send the enclosed to its proper destination instantly. I am still here, in fine spirits and well to do, with 145 men. I have held this place for ten days against a force variously estimated from 1,500 to 6,000, and shall continue to hold it till I get relief from my country or I will perish in its defense. We have had a shower of bombs and cannon balls continually falling among us the whole time, yet none of us has fallen. We have been miraculously preserved. You have no doubt seen my official report of the action of the 24th ult. in which we repulsed the enemy with considerable loss; on the night of the 25th they made another attempt to charge us in the rear of the fort, but we received them gallantly by a discharge of grape shot and musquetry, and they took to their scrapers immediately. They are now encamped in entrenchments on all sides of us. All our couriers have gotten out without being caught and a company of 32 men from Gonzales got in two nights ago, and Colonel Bonham got in today by coming between the powder house and the enemy's upper encampment....Let the convention go on and make a declaration of independence, and we will then understand, and the world will understand, what we are fighting for. If independence is not declared, I shall lay down my arms, and so will the men under my command. But under the flag of independence, we are ready to peril our lives a hundred times a day, and to drive away the monster who is fighting us under a blood-red flag, threatening to murder all prisoners and make Texas a waste desert. I shall have to fight the enemy on his own terms, yet I am ready to do it, and if my countrymen do not rally to my relief, I am determined to perish in the defense of this place, and my bones shall reproach my country for her neglect. With 500 men more, I will drive Sesma beyond the Rio Grande, and I will visit vengeance on the enemy fighting against us. Let the government declare them public enemies, otherwise she is acting a suicidal part. I shall treat them as such, unless I have superior orders to the contrary. My respects to all friends, confusion to all enemies. God Bless you.

To David Ayers

March 3, 1836

Take care of my little boy. If the country should be saved, I may make for him a splendid fortune; but if the country be lost and I should perish, he will have nothing but the proud recollection that he is the son of a man who died for his country.

The letter to David Ayers is the last known letter written by Travis before the fall of the Alamo on the morning of March 6, 1836.

William Barret Travis died at his post on the cannon platform at the northeast corner of the fortress. He was 26 years old.

p.s – Jesse Grimes also had a son to perish in the Alamo – Alfred Calvin Grimes
Jesse Grimes is brother to Esther Grimes Branch

The letters of Jesse Grimes (including one from Sam Houston) are available on the internet, thru the Duplin Co. NC website and thru the State of Texas archives.

Another connection to William Barrett Travis.

- 1 **James Smallwood** b: 1639 in England d: Abt. 1714 in Charles County, MD
- . +**Hester Evans** b: 1640 in England d: Bef. 1693 in Charles County, MD
- .. 2 **Thomas Smallwood** b: 1675 in Charles Co. Maryland d: May 04, 1734 in Charles Co. Maryland
- +Alice Godfrey b: 1678 in Charles Co. Maryland d: Bef. September 1735 in Charles County, MD
- 3 **Sarah Smallwood** b: 1708
- +Thomas Robey b: Abt. 1692 d: 1774 in Rowan, North Carolina
- 4 **Sarah Robey** b: Abt. 1731 in Maryland d: Bef. October 08, 1796 in Rowan, North Carolina
- +Charles Lovelace b: Abt. 1745 in Prince George, MD d: October 08, 1796 in Iredell Co, NC
-5 **Sarah Lovelace** b: December 21, 1777 in NC d: March 24, 1852 in Iredell, NC
- +Asa Johnson b: September 11, 1775 in Maryland d: February 18, 1846 in Iredell, North Carolina
- 6 **Asa Simpson Johnson** b: April 18, 1813 in NC d: December 14, 1899 in Cherokee County, AL
- +Nancy Agnes Allison b: Jan 07, 1820 in Statesville, Iredell, NC d: Nov 03, 1889 in AL
- 7 **Julius Tillett Johnson** b: October 22, 1849 in NC d: Abt. 1931
- +Mary Emma Brown b: May 05, 1855 in Milan, TN d: May 23, 1942 in Ark
-8 **Edward Asa Johnson** b: June 03, 1883 in Pottsville, Ark d: Sept 23, 1968 in Bandera, Texas
- +Bessie Sheppard b: Sept 23, 1888 in Webber Falls, I.T.d: Dec 20, 1969 in Bandera, Texas
- . 9 **Thelma Jeane Johnson** b: March 28, 1914 in Wagoner, Ok d: Sept 18, 2002 in Bandera, Tx
- . + Francis Edwin **Vawter** b: March 30, 1909 in Pipe Creek, Tx d: April 28, 2002 in Pipe Creek, Tx
- 10 **Patricia Jeane Vawter**
- +Gary Gene Charles Johnston
- .. *2nd Husband of Patricia Jeane Vawter:
- +Tom Renton
- .. 10 **Frances Joy Vawter**
- +Tom Richter

- 8 **Clyde Johnson** b: February 1885
- +Ethel
- 8 **Hershel Johnson** b: April 1882
- 8 **Valter Johnson** b: Abt. 1877 in Arkansas
- +Sarah
- 8 **Twiggs Johnson** b: April 1878 in Arkansas
- 8 **Ottis Johnson** b: Abt. 1888 d: April 1901 in Van Alstyne, Tx
- 8 **Joy Johnson** b: April 1892 d: 1936
- +Earl Pierce Bell
- 8 **Herbert E. Johnson** b: Nov 28, 1893 d: Dec 30, 1977 in Wickenburg, Az
- +Helen
- 8 **Idus Charles Johnson** b: March 10, 1899
- +Lillian
- 7 **Panthea Johnson** b: December 04, 1842 in Iredell Co. N.C.
- 7 **James Johnson** b: June 07, 1845
- 7 **Sarah J. Johnson** b: August 08, 1847
- 7 **Raleigh Johnson** b: Abt. 1862
- 7 **Wm. S. Johnson** b: Abt. 1859
- 7 **Allison S. Johnson** b: May 27, 1852

..... 3 James Smallwood b: Abt. 1698 d: Abt. 1775
..... 3 Thomas Smallwood d: Abt. 1778
..... 3 Pryor Smallwood d: Bef. 1742
..... 3 Elizabeth Smallwood
..... 3 Esther Smallwood d: Abt. 1776
..... 3 Charity Smallwood
..... 3 Mary Smallwood
.. 2 John Smallwood b: 1666 d: 1694
.. 2 James Smallwood b: 1668 d: 1723
.. 2 Mary Smallwood b: November 02, 1670
.. 2 Matthew Smallwood b: April 1673 d: Bef. 1712
.. 2 William Smallwood b: Abt. 1674 d: 1706
.. 2 **Prior Smallwood** b: Abt. 1680 d: 1734
..... +Elizabeth Stone
..... 3 William Smallwood b: 1725 d: March 1782
..... +unknown
..... 4 Ann Smallwood b: Abt. 1749
..... 3 **Margaret Smallwood** b: Abt. 1726
..... +William Travis
..... 4 **Barrick Travis** d: 1814
..... +Anne Butler
..... 5 Elizabeth Travis
..... 5 Sarah Travis
..... 5 Catherine Travis
..... 5 Mary Travis
..... 5 Prior Smallwood Travis b: Abt. 1781
..... 5 **Mark Butler Travis** b: 1783 in Edgefield, SC d: September 1836 in Sparta, AL
..... +Jemima Stollworth b: September 1783 in Edgefield, SC d: 1867
..... 6 **William Barrett Travis** b: 9-9, 1809 in Saluda, SC d: March 06, 1836 in San Antonio, Tx
..... +Rosanna E Cato b: May 1812
..... 6 Emalene Travis b: 1812
..... 6 Prior Smallwood Travis b: 1817
..... 6 Nicholas Travis b: 1819
..... 6 Sarah Ann Travis b: 1820
..... 6 Alexander Travis b: 1824
..... 6 Mark Butler Travis b: May 18, 1827 d: 1864
..... 6 James Calloway Travis b: August 05, 1829
..... 5 Alexander D Travis
..... 4 **Mary Grigsby Travis**
..... +William Brown
..... 4 Eleanor Travis
..... 4 Lucy Travis
..... 2 Benjamin Smallwood d: 1737
..... 2 Bayne Smallwood d: 1709
..... 2 Leadstone Smallwood b: Abt. 1687 d: 1755
.. 2 Sarah Smallwood d: Aft. 1736

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