



TARRANT COUNTY

TXGENWEB

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Franklin Columbus Brown

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Franklin Columbus Brown was a Confederate veteran who lived his last years in Grapevine. He was a veteran of a Texas regiment. After living in Grapevine for a time around the turn of the century, he died in San Marcos, Texas and was buried there.

Mr. Brown was born in Maury County, Tennessee in May, 1828. Family sources at Ancestry.com say he was a son of McClintock Brown (1795-1874) and his wife, Margaret (King) Brown (1790-1860). These sources also say Franklin's wife was named Harriett Vincent.

By 1850 Franklin and his wife, Harriett, were living in Maury County, Tennessee's District 4. Harriett was born about 1823 in Tennessee. They had two children with them in that year, Sarah (born about 1847) and Martha (born about the end of summer in 1850).

About 1853 Franklin and his wife left Tennessee and moved to Texas. When the 1860 census was taken, this family was living in Precinct 8 of Palo Pinto County, Texas; Franklin was a stock raiser. His wife, "Hoyette" Brown, said she was born about 1825 in Tennessee; the children with them were Sarah (born about 1847), Martha (born about 1850), Eliza (born about 1852 in Tennessee), (Elizabeth born about 1853 in Texas), Josephine (born about 1856 in Texas), and Joseph (born about 1858 in Texas).

Unfortunately, Mr. Brown and his family were about to become part of the local lore of Palo Pinto and Parker County, Texas. Living as they did in an unprotected area when Mr. Brown left home to join the Confederate Army, his wife and daughters sadly became victims of an Indian raid.

One of the first printed accounts of the tragedy appeared in 1889 in J. W. Wilbarger's classic volume, Indian Depredations in Texas: "*Murders in Parker County, 1863-1873. During the year 1863, several families were living in the valley of Patrick's creek, in Parker county, the Rev. John*

Hamilton among the number. He owned, in connection with his farm, a small tannery. On one occasion he sent his sons, William and Stewart Hamilton, out into the woods to collect material for tanning purposes. While thus engaged the two young men were attacked by Indians. The frightened boys attempted to escape by running, but they were soon overtaken, their bodies pierced full of arrows. They were both killed and scalped, and before leaving, the heartless savages cut off one of the ears of Stewart, together with a portion of his head. During the same day either this or another party of the same band killed Mrs. F. C. Brown, who resided some four miles from Hamiltons, while standing in the yard in front of her door. Mrs. Brown had two daughters, Sarah, aged sixteen, and a younger daughter, whose name we do not know, about fourteen. These two young ladies had been over to visit their neighbor, Mr. Gatling, and were returning home when the merciless redskins fell upon them and seriously wounded both the young ladies with arrows. The eldest daughter, Sarah, died shortly afterwards from the effects of her wounds, but the younger one finally recovered...”

An article published in Frontier Times magazine offers more details of the the story; it appeared in September, 1924 (Vol. 1, no. 12). It was written by T. U. Taylor, principally from an interview with his friend, Joseph Shotwell Brown, Franklin Brown’s son and a survivor of the raid. The article is entitled “Indian Massacre of the Brown Family.” It also appeared in the same form in *The Weatherford Daily Herald* on August 20, 1924: *“At the banquet of the 40th reunion of the first graduating class of 1880 of the Sam Houston Normal College at the home of the president, Harry F. Estill, in June, 1920, Professor [Joseph Shotwell Brown, professor of Mathematics in the San Marcos State Teacher’s College] related briefly the events of this Indian raid and I have finally obtained his consent to chronicle the details for permanent preservation.*

“At the time of this raid I lived in Parker County, perhaps 28 miles from the scene of this disaster. Professor Brown and I met for the first time, however, in the fall of 1879 when we were students of the Sam Houston Normal at Huntsville, Texas, 16 years after the murder. I had heard of this Indian raid often but it was many years later that I met one of the survivors. Just after the war I went from my home on the Bear Creek in Parker County to Littlefield bend, and crossed Patrick’s creek near the scene of this terrible Indian massacre.

“At the time of the murder the family consisted of father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. F.C. Brown, seven girls, Sarah aged 16, Martha aged 14, Jane aged 12, Bettie aged 10, Moie eight years old, and Essie and Tennie who were twins. Joseph Shotwell Brown, four years of age was the only boy. The family had come from Maury County, Tennessee, with a party of emigrants to Collin County, then to Palo Pinto County, but finally located in Parker County, eight or 10 miles from Weatherford on Patrick’s creek. The nearest neighbor, the Gatlin family, lived about 300 yards away, while it was half a mile to the home of Ike Welch.

“At the time of the massacre, the father, F.C. Brown was in the Confederate army, where he had been for the past year and a half. On 12 August 1863, about noon, the shouts and cries of an approaching band of Indians were heard. By the time that the Indians came in sight the mother and all the children, except little Joe, were on the creek playing with a neighbor boy (Ike Welch) where his mother and father were washing wool. At the time the alarm was given, Ike and Joe were playing quite a way up the creek. Ike’s mother was seen coming hurriedly toward the boys, her long black hair was steaming down her back and as she cried excitedly “Com on Ike,” they

ran up the creek and Joe wondered vaguely what it was all about. Left along he started toward the Brown house and soon heard the war whoop of the Indians. At first he thought it was the neighbor children playing, for he did not discover the Indians until he was within 50 yards of the house. He turned as quickly as possible and ran toward the creek, but the Indians had seen him and two of them pursued him. Small as he was he realized that he must hide somewhere. The creek was nearly dry, but he ran a short distance along the creek and darted over an over hanging rock that jutted out from the bank. The two Indians passed and he heard them talking but they did not discover him. He stayed in his hiding place until dark.

“Meantime, the two older sisters had gathered up the twins at the first alarm and had fled towards Mr. Gatlin's. The mother was running with the other children when she made inquiry about one of the small children, and it is supposed that she thought one child had been left before for she turned and went back into the house, which was by that time completely surrounded by Indians. She was seen to enter the house, to return to the outside for a minute, and later to start again towards the Gatlin's. However, she was not allowed to go, but was shot with nine arrows there in the yard, and was finally clubbed to death with the butt of a rifle.

“All the girls reached the Gatlin home and assisted in barricading it as best they could. When Indians finished ransacking the Brown home they went to Gatlin's. There were 14 women and children in that one house, then included the Brown and Gatlin families and some visiting girls, the men being away. A low rail fence surrounded the place. With a terrible war whoop the Indians came racing to the Gatlin house, jumped the fence, ran around in front intent upon murdering all that were in the house. but the sister, Martha, who was only 14 years old had found an old gun barrel, the stock of which had been broken. With this in hand, she planted herself at the door, changed her voice to imitate that of a man, talked to the leader through a "port hole," and told him that if he got down from the horse, she would "blow his brains out." The leader consulted with his men, they rode around the the house again and with another war whoop, jumped the fence and were gone. The strain had been so great for Martha that she collapsed and it was several days before she was again herself. It was a clever ruse which had saved all those women and children.

“The little sister Betty was captured by the Indians but somehow she escaped from them and she returned holding an arrow which she had drawn from a wound in her own flesh. Sarah, the oldest sister, was wounded twice in the back while she was running with one of the twins in her arms, and an Indian, not satisfied with having inflicted that much pain, ruthlessly broke off both of the arrows, leaving the points buried in her flesh. She never recovered from these wounds and died within two weeks. One of the twins, Essie, also died in about two weeks for it would not take nourishment. The results of the raid were that the mother and two sisters were killed and the home entirely broken up.

“When the father was informed of the terrible tragedy that had befallen his family, he asked for a furlough so he might go home to arrange for his children. General Bankhead refused to grant the furlough. Mr. Brown then told him that he would leave camp in spite of all the military regulations, and that he would go that night on the best horse that the camp could provide. Mr. Brown also informed the pickets of the hour that he planned to leave, in order that they might have their back turned at that time if they so desired. At the appointed time he rode past the

pickets without being halted. When the father reached home he found the children scattered among the neighbors who, with true western kindness took care of the motherless children. The neighborhood had at last been aroused and had driven away all the Indians; but, so far as it is known, none of them were ever brought to account for the murder of the mother, nor for the killing of William and Stuart Hamilton, sons of Reverend John Hamilton of the Christian church, whom they had killed on the same day at a tanyard on Patrick's creek, a mile or so below.

“As soon as the father had arranged for his family he returned to camp. True to form, General Bankhead called him up for court martial, asking him, “What is one man's family to the whole Confederacy?” He even threatened to have father tied up by the thumbs, but sentiment in camp was so strong in favor of Mr. Brown that his punishment was lightened and he was placed in the guard house for a term. He told General Bankhead that later when the war was over, they would meet on equal footing and then an account would have to be rendered for his lack of mercy. However, that meeting never came about for General Bankhead was killed on the streets of Memphis, Tennessee by another man who had served under him during the war.

“F. C. Brown died in San Marcos at the home of his son four or five years ago. Martha married Dallas Thomason and died in 1878. Elizabeth Jane married George Newton Pickard and lived in Weatherford at this time. [her husband was a Confederate soldier] Bettie married Mr. Gillesie in Fayette County, near Waelder. She died a few years ago leaving two sons: Frank and Joe. Moie lives with her brother, Joe, at San Marcos. Tennie married Will Phillip and is living in Fayette County, Texas.”

Another account, written partially from interviews with survivors of the raid, appeared in Joseph Carroll McConnell, *The West Texas Frontier....*, published in 1939 in Palo Pinto, Texas: *“Savages Storm the Home of Mr. and Mrs. F. C. Brown—F. C. Brown and family lived about one and one-half miles east of Parson J. J. Hamilton's home, and in the same community. Mr. Brown, serving as a soldier in the Confederate army, was gone. Mrs. Harriette Brown, his wife, and their eight children remained at home. The children's names and approximate ages were Sarah, 16; Martha Ann, 13; Jane, 11; Elizabeth, 10; Moie, 8; Joseph, 5; and twin babies, ten months old, named Tennessee and Estell.*

“During the preceding night Sarah dreamed the Indians killed her mother; and so strongly was she impressed with the dream, Sarah prevailed on Mrs. Brown to have their neighbor, Mr. Gattling, a gunsmith, who lived about 300 yards north, to repair a broken rifle. Mrs. Brown took the gun to the Gattling home early in the morning. But since Mr. Gattling was away, the mother left the rifle at the Gattling residence.

“While the Indians were killing Wm. and Stewart Hamilton, they were seen by Mrs. Brown and some of her children. But at the time [they] only thought the Indians cowmen. Joseph Brown was a short distance from the house, on Patrick's Creek, watching Wm. Welch and family wash wool.

“Shortly afterwards, the Indians came to the Brown residence and for the first time the citizens knew the horsemen were warriors instead of cowmen. Mrs. Brown sent Elizabeth down to the creek to notify Mr. Welch and family, and Joseph. But Mr. Welch had already discovered the savages, scattered his family, and made himself and two negro boys conspicuous for the purpose

of decoying the red men away. The savages followed them for a distance, and then returned back for what they considered a more valuable prey.

“When Elizabeth attempted to return home, she was captured by the savages and placed on a horse behind an Indian.

“As the savages approached, Sarah started toward the home of Mr. Gattling with Tennessee, one of the ten months old twins, and was followed by the Indians, who shot her with an arrow under the right shoulder, near the spine. Sarah then quit the road and went into a nearby thicket, and in her wounded condition finally reached the Gattling home with the twin baby. Jane Brown, who is now Mrs. Newt Pickard, of Weatherford, had already preceded Sarah, with Estell, the other ten month’s old twin. Martha Ann and Moie had also gone to the Gattling home. Sarah knew that Jane was ahead with the other twin. But Mrs. Brown did not, and thinking, perhaps, her infant baby, Estell, was still sleeping on the bed, Mrs. Brown turned back toward their home to get the other baby. Sarah, too, could have reached the Gattling home without being injured. But she lingered behind and was repeatedly telling her mother the other twin was ahead. Mrs. Brown however, in her dilemma did not hear, but hurried back toward the Brown home. This pioneer mother was shot nine times, and killed almost instantly. The savages, however, did not scalp her, perhaps because she had black hair.

“Since all Indians are black-headed, as a rule, they are much less inclined to scalp a person whose head is covered with hair the color of their own.

“After Mrs. Brown had been killed, and the house vacated, the savages ripped open feather and straw beds, took the ticking, bed clothes, and such other trinkets that happened to suit their fancy. While this was being done, an Indian said to Elizabeth, ‘Good Barbeshela.’ Elizabeth, however, a few seconds later realized her opportune time had come, so she jumped from behind the Indian, and started in a run toward the Gattling home. One Indian exclaimed, ‘She is gone! She is gone!’ So this little girl, 10 years of age, was followed by a savage, shot in the hip, but made her escape.

“There were approximately ten Indians in this raiding party, and they next appeared at the Gattling home.

“A war-widowed daughter of Mr. Welch, a Mrs. Ellis who, also had a baby, a baby of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Welch, and Mrs. Gattling and her daughter, Sif, were already at the Gattling residence with no men to protect them, for Mr. Gattling was away.

“Martha Ann Brown, a girl 13 years of age, had always heard that the savages would not enter a house when the door was shut and guns drawn. And since Mr. Gattling was a gunsmith, she picked up an old gun barrel and stuck it through a port hole beside the door. She then cursed and told the Indians that if they did not leave, she would shoot their brains out. Before she made the statement, the Indians had already begun to dismount. But after the savages saw the gun barrel and heard what she said, they again mounted their horses and rode away.

“The next appeared at the home of Mr. Beachman, who lived a short distance below Parson J. J. Hamilton’s tanning vat. Here the warriors killed Mr. Beachman’s dog, but did no further damage.

“Elizabeth recovered from her wound, but Sarah died about five weeks later.

“The frontier citizens of this settlement were greatly bewildered after this catastrophe occurred. Mrs. Welch, with a child of her own, and a child of her step-daughter, Mrs. Rebecca Ellis, came to the Gattling home before the Indians were hardly out of sight. Mrs. Ellis, also, went to the Brown home and hid with her child under the floor. But the Indians had already done their dirty work and [were] rapidly riding away. Note: Before writing this section the author personally interviewed Mrs. Jane (Brown) Pickard, who carried Estell, the 10 month’s old twin; James and Sam Newberry; George Hill; and several others who were living in Parker County at the time.”

The story has recently been excellently retold by Doyle Marshall in *A Cry Unheard: The Story of Indian Attacks In and Around Parker County, Texas, 1858-1872*, published by the Annetta Valley Farm Press in Parker County. At the end of his account, he wrote: ***“In a pasture of the Hubert Bennett farm on the Old Brock Road, north of Patrick’s Creek, are the graves of Harriett Brown and her two daughters, Sarah and Essie. For many years the graves were unmarked. But in recent years a cut stone marker was placed at the burial site in honor of this brave, undefended pioneer mother whose life came to an abrupt end on that fateful day in August 1863—and her two daughters who shortly followed her in death.”*** Their old neighbor, William Welch, survived until 1875 and was buried beside them.

The 1870 census taker found Mr. Brown a widower living in Precinct 1 of Fayette County, Texas. With him were three of his children: Betty (born about 1853 in Texas), Moseley (probably the Josephine listed in 1860, born about 1856 in Texas), and Joseph (born about 1859 in Texas).

By 1880 Franklin Brown and his family had moved to District 79 or Precinct 3 of Lavaca County, Texas. With him in that year were his daughter, Margaret E. Brown (born about 1853 in Texas...probably Margaret Elizabeth); Moseley J. (born about 1856 in Texas... probably Moseley Josephine); and Tennie P. Brown (born about 1863). Also living with the family was Brown’s son-in-law, G. M. D. Thomason, and four of Thomason’s children.

Mr. Brown moved to Grapevine about 1888. When the 1900 census was taken, he was living in Grapevine in the home of his son, Joseph Brown (who was born about 1858 in Texas). Joseph’s occupation is shown as “Professor College.” Also in the household was another of Franklin’s children, Maie Brown, (born in September 1855 in Texas).

Franklin Brown applied to the State of Texas for a Confederate pension in 1899 while he was a resident of Grapevine. He said he was seventy-one years old. He claimed service in Co. D, Hardeman’s Texas Regiment. No record of his service has survived in that regiment. His pension file contains no other pertinent information.

Shortly after 1900, Franklin moved to San Marcos in Hays County, Texas with his son, who moved there to be a professor in the teacher's college. Family sources report that Franklin died in San Marcos in the home of Joseph Brown on November 24, 1904. He lies buried in San Marcos.

Eliza Jane Brown Pickard's death certificate says she was born in Tennessee on November 21, 1851. She died at 110 Cousts Street in Weatherford, Texas at 1:45 a.m. on April 29, 1938. She was buried in Spring Creek Cemetery.

Joseph Shotwell Brown's death certificate gives his birth date as April 8, 1858 in Parker County, Texas. He died of influenza at 10 a.m. on July 28, 1929 in San Marcos, Texas, and was buried there.

Another of Mr. Brown's children was Tennie P. Brown (November 15, 1861-September 15, 1926). A portion of her obituary from the La Grange Journal of September 23, 1926: "***...Mrs. Philips was born in Parker County, November 15, 1862, a daughter of Franklin C. and Harriett Brown and removed to Fayette County when a small child. She was united in marriage with Wm. L. Philips on August 18, 1884 at Stellar. To this union was born eleven children, nine of whom survive. These are: Vincent of Waco, Thompson of Marshall, James T., Clyde, Walker and Mrs. F.M. Rauch of La Grange, Mrs. T. F. Cook of Houston, and Vastine and Mrs. Louise Smith of Beaumont. One brother and two sisters: Prof. J.S. Brown and Miss Moie Brown of San Marcos and Mrs. Jane Pickard of Weatherford. Deceased united with the Christian Church at the age of thirteen years, and was an active member during her life after that. We commend her spirit to the Good Lord and bid her rest in Peace.***"

