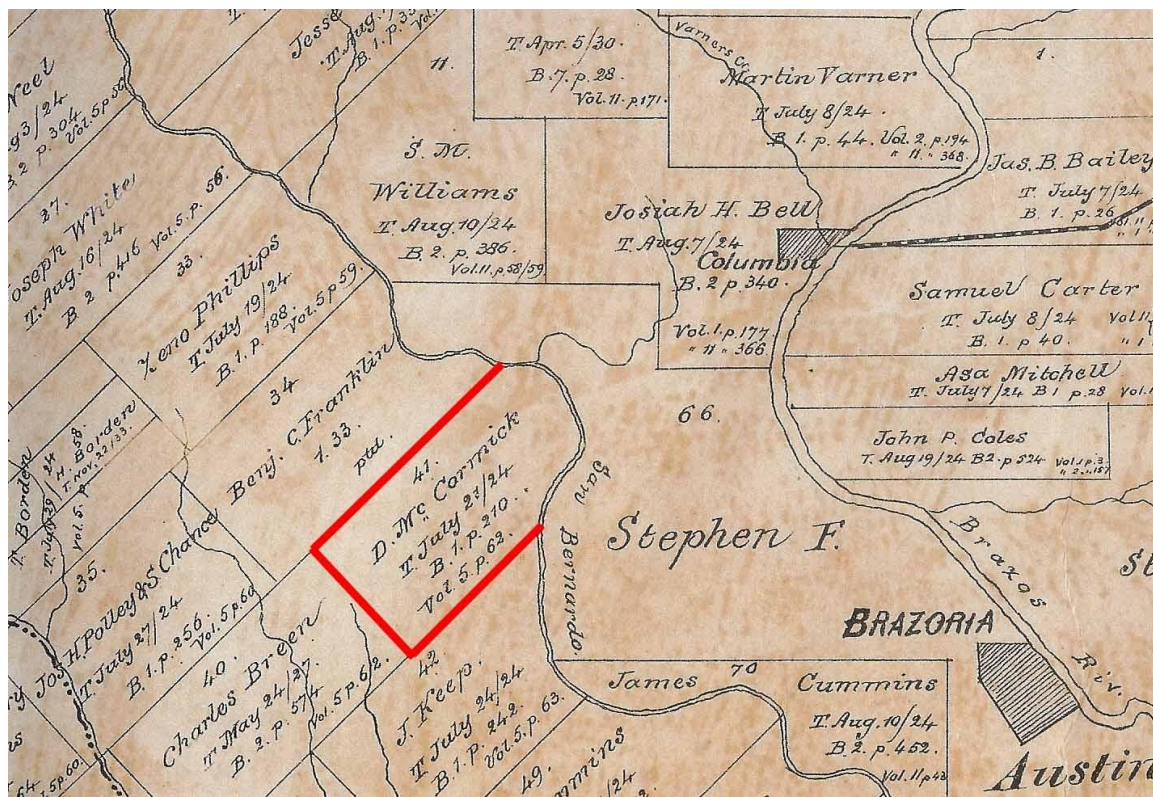


David McCormick/Joseph M. McCormick/James E. Black Plantation & Ferry  
Brazosport Archaeological Society



David McCormick League

David McCormick as one of Stephen F. Austin's 300 families received title to a league of land west of the San Bernard River near the towns of Brazoria and Columbia in Brazoria County in July 1824. He lost his wife and children before they could move to Texas. David invited his nephew Joseph M. McCormick to come to Texas and reside on his league of land. After the death of David McCormick in 1836, Joseph M. McCormick became owner of the league. Joseph lived with his family on his farm until his death in 1864. Over the years he had sold portions of the league with James E. Black of the Tennessee-Mississippi area purchasing 1000 acres fronting on the San Bernard River in 1845. James E. Black with his wife and family settled near the river. He was the owner of over seventy slaves on his cotton plantation and for a while produced sugar, also operating "Black's Ferry" on the San Bernard. After his death in 1858 his wife Sarah worked the plantation until her death in 1864. W. L. Sweeny purchased 200 acres which contained the homestead and ferry in 1889. Sweeny operated the ferry until well after the turn of the century.

Living in Missouri, David McCormick was not quite five years old when his father Andrew McCormick died. He became a carpenter and learned to build houses. Leaving his wife and two children in Hempstead County, Arkansas in 1821 McCormick came to Texas to select land. He petitioned for and received his league of land which lay west of the San Bernard River in Brazoria County July 24, 1824 becoming a member of Stephen F. Austin's Original 300 Families. David McCormick moved to his league and started build his home about eight miles

south of Bell's Landing or Columbia. His wife and children died in Arkansas while he was away. The census of 1826 lists David McCormick as a farmer and stock raiser, aged between forty and fifty, a widower with one slave.

David McCormick asked his nephew Joseph Manson McCormick to come to Texas and become his heir. After visiting his uncle in 1831 Joseph M. McCormick returned to Kentucky where he married Louisa Agnes McKenzie in January 1832. Upon returning to Texas they made their home with David McCormick in a single room log cabin on the brow of the top bank of the San Bernard River in the lower portion of the league. There their first child Andrew Phelps McCormick was born.

Three-fourths of the McCormick League was wooded, but it included the lower or southeast half of Chance's Prairie. As David McCormick usually only kept one or more unmarried white men as hired help and had no slaves in 1832 he had only forty acres under cultivation but also maintained "McCormick's Ferry" on the river.<sup>1</sup>

In 1834 David McCormick built a new home for the extended family. The lumber was obtained from the woods by hand. According to Andrew McCormick "... The walls and the upper and lower joists were hewed logs; floors, window and door frames, facings and shutters, and the rafters, were whip-sawed hard ash lumber; the roof was of red cypress all heart split shingles; the sills were live oak, hewed to twelve inches square, the plates of Spanish oak hewed to ten inches square; the other logs were 22 feet long, twelve to fifteen inches in diameter, hewed down on two opposite sides so as to form a slab six inches thick; each end was so worked that in raising the walls, the ends of the logs or slabs would dove-tail together, forming a perfect joint and true perpendicular corner and reduce the space between the logs in the body of each wall, to a uniform size. These spaces were chinked with thin split pieces of wood, worked in so as to set at an angle of forty-five degrees from the perpendicular. These chink pieces were from six to eight inches long, three or four inches wide and about one-half inch thick, were so set in and driven that the lower edge of the lower end would jam hard against the log below it, and the upper edge of the upper end would jam hard against the log above it, the several pieces at the same time touching each other lightly, as a single row of ordinary bricks hacked up on end and oblique to an angle of forty-five degrees. These lines of chinked-in space were then plastered inside and out with good mortar made of oyster-shell lime and sharp sand...The outside chimney that opened into one end of the house with a fire-place that would receive a back log five feet long and two feet in diameter, when hard weather required heavy fires, was as carefully built as the rest of the house. The room, twenty-one feet square...had a good, large double bed in each of its three corners. The two farthest from the fire-place were furnished with heavy curtains, hanging over the joists overhead to the floor, drawn close or put back, as occasion prompted. An oblong dining table made of hard ash whip-sawed lumber, of suitable size to seat six persons comfortably...occupied the forth corner, except when meals were being served, when it was set in the center of the room...The log house had large additions set to it, made of first-class mill-sawed cypress lumber, a few years after uncle David's death, but the log room remained the best room in the larger dwelling house for twenty-five or thirty years."<sup>2</sup>

Joseph M. McCormick and his wife Louisa desired a home of their own. During the year 1834 they chose 500 acres in the southwest corner of the David McCormick league adjoining John Sweeney's plantation in the adjacent league. There they cleared about 10 acres of cane brake and built a small log cabin for the couple and their growing family in 1835.<sup>3</sup>

David McCormick volunteered to enlist in the Texas Army in 1836 but because of his current health and the fact that he was deaf he was not accepted into service. As Joseph M. McCormick joined the Texas Army, Louisa and her two children were part of the "Runaway Scrape" as Santa Anna swept across Texas. They were on Galveston Island when the news of Santa Anna's defeat reached them. Joseph M. McCormick fought at San Jacinto in Captain William H. Patton's company.

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<sup>1</sup>McCormick, Andrew Phelps, Scotch-Irish in Ireland and America, Private Publishing, New Orleans, Louisiana pp. 51-52.

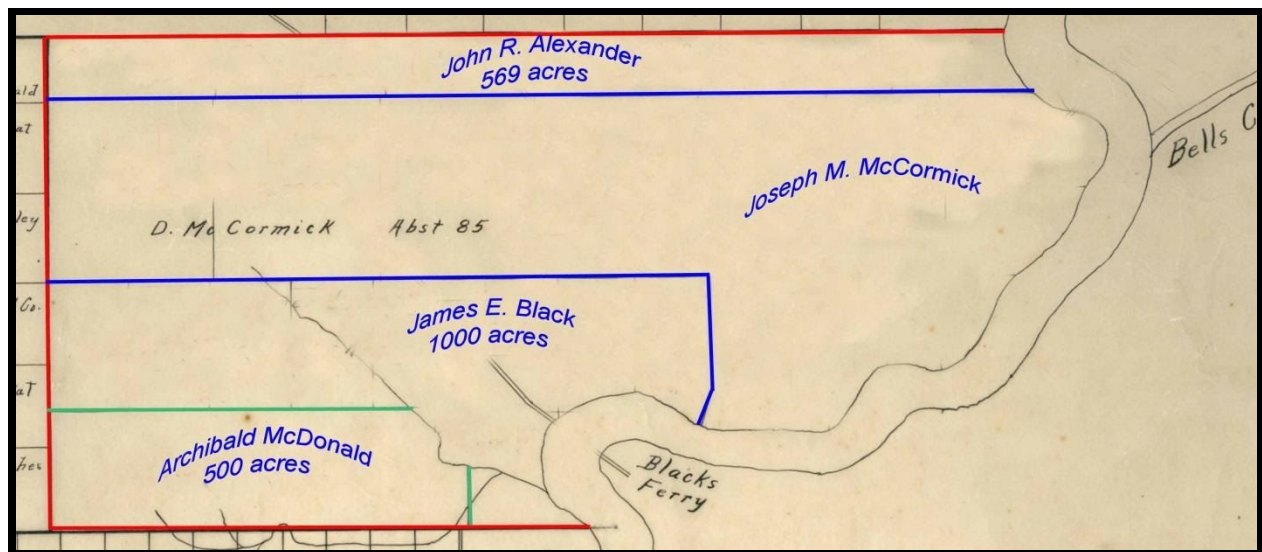
<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 52-54.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 135-136

The exposure and excitement due to the invasion caused David McCormick's health to decline and on May 30, 1836 he passed away. He was originally buried near his home but his remains were removed to the Columbia Cemetery in 1852.<sup>4</sup>

Joseph M. McCormick with his family then moved back to his uncle's home on the river. In September 1837 he sold the 500 acres he had improved for himself to Archibald McDonald of Kentucky for \$1500.<sup>5</sup> In December of the same year he purchased a male and female slave both born in Maryland in New Orleans. The male, Sampson Brown, was 24 years of age and could read, write, and knew the elementary tables and rules of arithmetic. He remained with the family until emancipation and then became a circuit rider preaching the gospel. McCormick did not farm on a large scale as he never owned a large number of slaves.<sup>6</sup> He later obtained a slave, Prince Monroe, who actually managed his farm for over twenty years.<sup>7</sup> According to tax records McCormick owned nine slaves in 1850. His farm had 90 improved acres and he produced 30 bales of cotton in 1849. When emancipation came there were 13 men, 11 women, and 14 children freed which were slaves that had been owned by both Joseph M. McCormick and his son Andrew P. McCormick. Joseph M. McCormick had died January 1865. His son Andrew McCormick would later become a lawyer and judge moved into Brazoria after a time.

John R. Alexander, a cousin of Joseph M. McCormick was given 569 acres of land out of the northern part of the league in July 1843.<sup>8</sup> In December 1845 Joseph M. McCormick contracted to sell 1000 acres of land along the San Bernard River, which included his home and his cultivated land, to James E. Black.<sup>9</sup>



David McCormick League ~1848

<sup>4</sup> IBID., pp. 54-55.

<sup>5</sup> Brazoria County Deed Records: C 49/50

<sup>6</sup> McCormick, Andrew Phelps, *Scotch-Irish in Ireland and America*, Private Publishing, New Orleans, Louisiana, pp. 145-146

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 148

<sup>8</sup> BCDR: B 277/79

<sup>9</sup> BCDR: 6 49/51

Born in South Carolina in 1798 James Elliot Black married Emily C. Wilson in 1824 in Wilkinson County, Mississippi. Their first two sons Livingston and Orington were born in Tennessee while their youngest child Geraldine was born in Mississippi. Emily Black evidently died a short time after the birth of Geraldine in 1836.

A marriage of convenience between James Elliot Black and Sarah Ann Holmes Waddy Armour took place September 20, 1837 in Tennessee. Sarah Ann Holmes Waddy had married Solomon Hillen Armour February 13, 1828. They had three children before Solomon H. Armour died in 1833. At the time of her second marriage to James E. Black she had two children living, David H. and Sarah Kimbrough Armour; her youngest son Samuel R. Armour had died in 1834.

While the first two sons of James and Sarah Black are born in Tennessee their third son Joseph (Lon) Alonzo Black was born in Montgomery County, Texas in 1846 indicating the family did not move to Brazoria County immediately after James E. Black had contracted to purchase his plantation in 1845. By 1848 James E. Black is listed on the tax rolls as owning 1000 acres of land, 70 slaves, 25 horses, and 100 head of cattle.

With a larger slave population James E. Black could increase the number of acres under cultivation and produce cotton on a larger scale than had the McCormick family. In 1850 he had 500 acres improved, \$800 worth of farm equipment on the property, 6 horses, 20 mules, 30 milch cows, 24 work oxen, 150 head of cattle, and 300 hogs. In 1849 he produced 200 bushels of corn, 50 of Irish potatoes, 1500 of sweet potatoes, 400 lbs of butter, 3 tons of hay, and 90 bales of cotton.

The James E. Black family was also listed in the 1850 Federal Census for Brazoria County:

James E. Black	49M	South Carolina
Sarah H. Black	40F	Tennessee (Alabama)
Sarah K. (Armour)	18F	Tennessee
Livingston O. Black	20M	Tennessee
Orington L. Black	19M	Tennessee
Jereldean (Geraldine) Black	12F	Mississippi (Should be 14)
William Black	8M	Tennessee
Joseph Black	6M	Texas

August 1852 James E. Black contracted with John Martin to build "...one house the following dimensions to wit, the house to be sixty six ft. Long thirty three ft. Wide and eight ft. High to be framed of the material furnished by the said J.E. Black. The House to be joined to a frame now standing on the plantation of the said J.E. Black erected by the said John Martin on a former contract. The two frames after being joined to be wash boarded and shingled and floored and to have the requisite number of windows and doors and to be finished in the interior as a Sugar House..." for \$750. Black was also to supply all the material and extra hands as needed.<sup>10</sup> The sugar making capacity of the Black plantation is not completely clear though listed as "Capt E. H. Black"<sup>11</sup> on the San Bernard River by P. A. Champomier with 197 hogsheads of sugar produced in 1852 and 100 hgsdhs in 1853 using horse power.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> BCDR: F 118/19

<sup>11</sup> Though called Captain at different times the author has not been able to determine his military attachment.

<sup>12</sup> Champomier, P. A., Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1852-53, With An Appendix, New Orleans. Champomier, P.A., Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1853-54, With An Appendix, New Orleans, 1854.

April 1, 1852 Orington L. Black died at ~21 years of age.



Columbia Cemetery

In 1855 Sarah H. Black sued her husband for divorce. She claimed that she had “always conducted herself toward the said Black as a chaste and virtuous wife”. On the other hand she claimed “...that frequently before and since and on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of August 1854 said James E. Black was caught in the act of having illicit sexual intercourse with a mulatto woman named Susan, a slave of the said Black. ...that the said Black frequently before and since and on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of September 1854 had illicit sexual intercourse with a negro woman named Ann or Annie, the slave of said Black and that when accused of the same by your petitioner he said that a “damned good whipping or cowhiding would do her good and he would give it to her unless she minded her own business”...that on or about the 27<sup>th</sup> day of September 1854, a negro woman on the plantation raised a stick at your petitioner and threatened to whip her that said Black was standing by and laughed at it and refused to have the woman whipped...when she spoke to him, he would reply go to Hell you God damn old bitch...that she has been living in the same house with said Black during the past year or two but that she has not been cohabiting with him...that your Honor award such damages against him in favor of your petitioner by way of alimony as may seem just in the process and that said children William and Alonzo may be placed under her charge...” These were only a partial list of the grievances against her husband.

James E. Black responded “...the defendant denies all the allegation in the plaintiff’s petition which charge him with immoral conduct, and with unkindness to the plaintiff, and says that he has always discharged all his duties as a husband with fidelity—That he has always desired to treat the plaintiff with tenderness and affectionate consideration—That the plaintiff has never exhibited any affection for this defendant, but on the contrary, has always been to this defendant, an unsympathising, complaining, extravagant, careless, and disrespectful wife...”<sup>13</sup> Sarah H. Black later petitioned the court for maintenance and support in the sum of \$600 per year as she was living apart from her husband with the commencement of her suit.

The testimony by the different parties was as conflicting as the statements of the plaintiff and defendant. J. T. Morris, the overseer of the plantation in 1854, testified that he could not say that James E. Black had mistreated his wife and that he “never saw the old man Black have anything to do with the negro women on the place nor did I know of his having any intercourse with any one of them...”<sup>14</sup>

Susan C. Scates<sup>15</sup> aged 35 years living in Tennessee had lived with the Black family for several years ending in 1842. She testified that Mrs. Black’s conduct toward her husband was “generally disrespectful disobedient, and complaining...I have frequently heard Mrs. Black say that she did not marry Mr. Black cause she loved him, but married him for the sake of his property. Also that she would not have married him under any consideration whatever if he had been a poor man...The children by Black’s first marriage

<sup>13</sup> *Sarah H. Black vs James E. Black* Civil Case 1835

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> It is unknown to the author the relationship of Susan C. Scates to the Black family.

were badly treated by the plaintiff. His little daughter was not allowed scarcely enough food to sustain life. She was frequently supplied with food by other persons who were acquainted with her condition. Neither was she well clothed and not suffered to sleep in the same apartment with her stepmother, but was made to sleep in the kitchen with a little brother, who had a disease of the lungs with afflicted breath, which made the little girl sick, and caused her to vomit every morning when she got up for which her stepmother soundly whipped her every morning. The boy first mentioned died in the kitchen without his stepmother knowing anything about it until found in that condition by some of the servants. He was then hurried to the grave and buried before his body was cold rather than have the trouble of watching with the corpse through the night..."<sup>16</sup>

Geraldine Wall<sup>17</sup>, daughter of James E. Black by his first wife, had left her father's home in 1850 at age 14 and now lived with her husband and family in Mississippi. She testified "Plaintiff scarcely ever spoke to her husband in any other manner than that of a complaining quarrelsome and disrespectful tone of voice...Mrs. Black's treatment to her husband's children by his former wife was unkind...She would not permit the children of her husband by his former wife to appear in company either at home or abroad as she did her own children by her former husband and often after her husband and his children by his former wife had left the table, at meal times, she would have certain dishes of delicacies placed on the table for herself and children by her former husband...She did not sleep with her husband for a year or two previous to the time I left. I slept in the same room they did. They slept in separate beds. I have heard her say that she would never have another child by her husband. This was said when her youngest child was an infant...she was under the impression that the defendant was very wealthy from the splendid style in which he went to Tennessee in form of housing and two servants but was very much disappointed when she came to Mississippi with him and saw the ordinary looking house in which he lived and the plain style in which his children were dressed. She also said she would never had married him had it not been for her relatives, who persuaded her to do so..."<sup>18</sup>

Livingston O. Black, son of James E. Black by his former wife, aged 25 years had been living in Walker County, Texas the last five years but visited his father six weeks to two months each year.<sup>19</sup> He testified "...that the plaintiff herein has been everything but a good wife to the defendant...I know that ever since my recollection, the plaintiff herein has evinced a very high temper, and been exceedingly overbearing in her disposition and manners towards the defendant herein..that she was always ready to raise a quarrel with the defendant...and the defendant at such times would go off and leave the place for the purpose of avoiding such quarrel...I believe that my father...could hardly ever or never get an overseer to stay two years out in account of the conduct of the plaintiff...and did see her box the jaws of one of the said overseers and heard her tell him that she would have him tarred and feathered...I have also seen her raise a cane knife to one of the said overseers named Rogers and tell him she would cut his throat...She was constantly in the habit since the year of 1848 since they commenced living together on the San Bernard River in this county of using violent language towards the said defendant and applying oppressive epithets to him..."<sup>20</sup>

Elizabeth H. Stephenson of Memphis, Mississippi aged 24 visited the Black family in 1848 and 1849 remaining at their home a month at a time. She testified for the plaintiff "I have heard the defendant abuse complainant by words in cursing & other abusive language & have known him to suffer his children & complainant's step children & his overseer to curse and abuse his wife...without making any correction. The same being done in his hearing. I can further state that my visits to the home were through sympathy for Mrs. Black and I considered that she had not the comforts of life that she should have had considering the pecuniary and circumstances of the family...the treatment of Plaintiff by the daughter of defendant was that of a mother but that of the sons...who did not treat her kindly and did not act towards her as in duty they should have done were not treated as children but as their conduct to her justified...the sons were very unkind and so generally abused her without cause. They cursing her & other very often abusive language to her and that too in the presence of their father..."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Sarah H. Black vs James E. Black* Civil Case 1835

<sup>17</sup> Geraldine Black married Alexander E. Wall April 4, 1854 in Mississippi. It is not known what part of the family she was living with in Mississippi 1850-1854 before her marriage.

<sup>18</sup> *Sarah H. Black vs James E. Black* Civil Case 1835

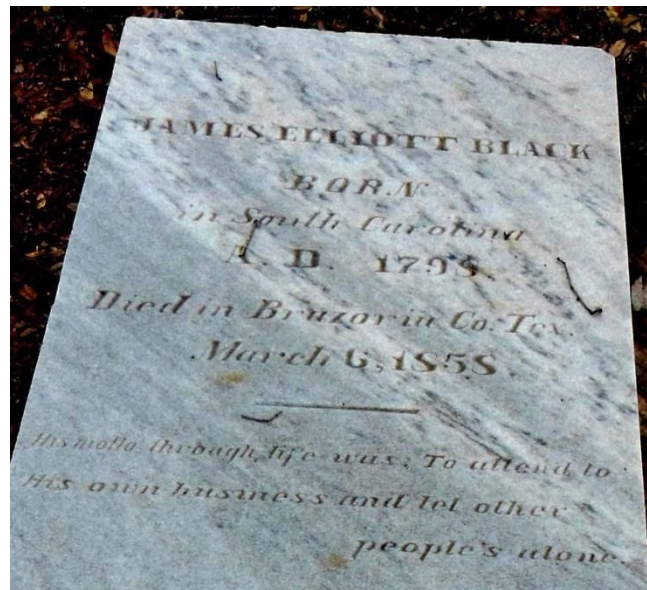
<sup>19</sup> James E. Black owned 600 acres of land in Walker County.

<sup>20</sup> *Sarah H. Black vs James E. Black* Civil Case 1835

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

November 1855 James E. Black and his wife Sarah entered into an agreement: “the said James and the said Sarah by the advice of friends-and because it is believed that the happiness of both will be promoted by a final separation and a mutual renunciation of all conjugal fellowship. And to avoid the scandal of a public trial...that the said Sarah will no further prosecute--but will dismiss the suit for divorce from the bonds of matrimony now pending in the District Court...the said James E. Black hereby binds himself and his heirs-Executors or Administrators to pay to the said Ammon Underwood Trustee for the said Sarah H. Black the sum of six hundred dollars per annum during the joint lives of the said James Black and Sarah H. Black, to pay also all the cost of the court...and to pay to Abner S. Lathrop Attorney of the said Sarah, the sum of two hundred and fifty dollars...She further binds herself to live separate and apart from the said James E. Black during the remainder of her life. She further binds herself to allow the said James E. Black to have the sole management, control and government of the children of the said James and herself. The care of their person and the direction of their education And she binds herself not to interfere with the authority of the said James E. Black over the said children; she further binds herself not to contract any debts or credits to James E. Black...it is agreed and stipulated between the said James E. Black and Sarah H. Black that their children shall be permitted with reasonable frequency to see and associate with their mother...” Sarah would receive her first payment March 1, 1856.<sup>22</sup>

Sarah H. Black had already bound debts to her husband in the form of a dentist bill. She had teeth extractions performed and a full set of false teeth prepared by John L. Brown. Brown had filed a suit against James E. Black for the debt of \$225 and won. James E. Black had the case argued all the way to the Texas Supreme Court since and Sarah had been living apart but the payment of the debt was upheld.<sup>23</sup> Sarah H. Black moved to Columbia, Texas for a while, but March 6, 1858 James E. Black died at his residence on the San Bernard.<sup>24</sup>



Columbia Cemetery

His motto through life was: To attend to his own business and let other people's alone.

James E. Black's estate was valued at \$87,745.35. This included 76 slaves valued at \$58,750 and his 1000 acre plantation valued at \$10,000. After the slaves were divided among the heirs and some of the livestock were sold it was not until May 1860 that the final division of

<sup>22</sup> BCDR: G 454/56

<sup>23</sup> Hartley, O. C. & R. K., Reports of Cases Argued and Decided in The Supreme Court of the State of Texas, During the Latter Part of Austin Session, 1856, and the Whole of Galveston Session, 1857, Vol. XVIII, The Gilbert Book Company, St. Louis, Mo., 1882, pp. 409-423.

<sup>24</sup> *The Weekly Telegraph*, March 31, 1858, Houston, Texas

property among James E. Black's heirs took place. Sarah H. Black and her sons Joseph and William received title to the 1000 acre plantation with all the improvements thereon. They also received 2 horses, 20 yoke of oxen, 18 mules, farming & blacksmith tools, house hold and kitchen furniture, and the ferry boat with skiff. Livingston O. Black and his sister Geraldine received 600 acres in Walker County.<sup>25</sup> Sarah then gave up her rights to all the unimproved land owned by James E. Black in Kaufman and Henderson counties to the four children.<sup>26</sup> Livingston O. Black returned to Brazoria County after the Civil War and married Laura Jack Yeiser. He remained in the county with his family as a farmer until his death in 1889.



Columbia Cemetery

For the year 1859 the plantation earned \$4876.60 but had expenses of \$5521.80.<sup>27</sup> For 1859 the plantation with 500 improved acres produced 600 bushels of corn, 20 of Irish potatoes, 365 lbs of butter and 128 bales of cotton. There were 15 horses, 30 mules, 60 milch cows, 20 oxen, 200 head of cattle, and 100 hogs on the plantation. There were 53 slaves on the property living in 12 dwellings in 1860. The 1860 Federal Census lists:

Sarah H. Black	Planter	47 F	Alabama
David Armour		30 M	Tennessee (Son by 1 <sup>st</sup> marriage)
William W. Black		17 M	Tennessee
Alonzo Black		14 M	Tennessee (Texas)
A. F. Poston	Overseer	27 M	North Carolina

<sup>25</sup> BCDR: J 445/47

<sup>26</sup> BCDR: J 447/49

<sup>27</sup> Record of Wills: C 408 & 409



With the beginning of the Civil War Will Black and David Armour joined W. G. Mosley's Company of "Brazoria Volunteers" Rio Grande Regiment 1<sup>st</sup> March 1861 to 20<sup>th</sup> March 1861. With the evacuation of the state by the United States troops they were honorably discharged. Will and his brother Lon Black joined Brown's Regiment of cavalry, the "Columbia Blues", at Columbia October 5, 1861.<sup>28</sup> They would see service locally along the Texas coast. All three of Sarah's sons were often at home during the war.

The plantation made \$3447.16 but had expenses of \$4680.40 for 1862.<sup>29</sup> During the year 1863 Sarah H. Black kept a diary. She often attended church services in Columbia and read from her Bible. The McCormick and Sweeny families were part of her social circle. Her son David Armour was at the plantation on many occasions and she visited with her married daughter. She noted that she had to receive written permission from the Confederate authorities to send her cotton to Brownsville and her son David would make the journey. Being a crossing on the San Bernard River Confederate troops stopped by her home or camped at the crossing on occasion. Of concern was the fact that she often complained of intestinal problems attended by Dr. Morris and often took the "blue mass". This was a mixture of mercury and chalk which supposedly relieved constipation. Though she did list any specific symptoms she ended the year 1863 in poor health.<sup>30</sup>

The daughter of Sarah H. Black, Sarah Kimbrough Armour, had married Mordello Munson in 1850 and lived with her family on their plantation east of the Brazos River.



Sarah Kimbrough Armour Munson

She also kept a diary during the Civil War and on May 5, 1864 she entered: "On this day, the most grievous day of my life, I was called to the Death bed of my dearly beloved mother, one of my greatest of earthly treasures. Oh that we may meet again where troubles are no more. May the Lord so direct our steps as to lead

<sup>28</sup> Creighton, James A., A Narrative History of Brazoria County, Texian Press, Waco, Texas, pp. 446-447.

<sup>29</sup> Record of Wills: C 593 & 594

<sup>30</sup> Diary of Mrs. Sarah H. Black 1863

us to that blessed abode where we shall meet that dear vanished mother to part no more.”<sup>31</sup> Sarah H. Black passed away at 5:45 in the afternoon.



Later that year William Waddy Black married Sarah H. Burke.

As there were several lawsuits against her estate it would not be until 1869 that the estate was finally partitioned among the heirs of Sarah H. Black. William and Sarah Black received 200 acres which included the homestead and ferry landing. They sold their property to Francis Le Rebus and Veranzo Turini (?) January 1870 for \$800.<sup>32</sup> The next year Le Rebus sold his interest to Veranzo Turini.<sup>33</sup> Turini was listed as a tailor aged 37 born in Austria living with Le Ribeus in the 1870 Federal Census.



Black's or W. L. Sweeny's Ferry Courtesy Brazoria County Historical Museum  
Unknown Date 1985.059p.0019

<sup>31</sup> Dairy of Sarah Kimbrough Armour Munson

<sup>32</sup> BCDR: M 65/66

<sup>33</sup> BCDR: M 431/32 Several different spellings for V. Turini.

V. Turini died in ~ 1882. His estate sold the homestead and ferry boat with privileges to J. W. Sweeny in 1883 for \$1505. Turini had been living on the property until his death.<sup>34</sup> W. L. Sweeny quickly acquired the property.<sup>35</sup> In 1884 J. W. Sweeny, W. L. Sweeny, and William F. Suter filed articles of incorporation forming the Bernard Ferry Company. William F. Suter was to live on the property and conduct the business.<sup>36</sup> In 1885 Suter and his wife sold their interest back to W. L. Sweeny.<sup>37</sup> The ferry operated until well after the turn of the century when a bridge was built across the San Bernard River and it became locally known as Black's Ferry Road.



Black's or W. L. Sweeny's Ferry Courtesy Brazoria County Historical Museum Unknown Date  
1985.060p.0008

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<sup>34</sup> BCDR: V 379/81

<sup>35</sup> BCDR: V 368/69

<sup>36</sup> BCDR: X 25/26

<sup>37</sup> BCDR: X 263/65



Black's Ferry 1920's Courtesy Brazoria County Historical Museum 2005.016p.0020

There should be several homesteads on the David McCormick League with the McCormick family and Black family both living on the San Bernard River. None of these sites have been surveyed or explored archeologically. The Black's family cemetery is also located in this area.

## Appendix A David McCormick League Deed Record

GRANTORS	GRANTEES	Kind of Instrument	Book	Page	Month	Day	Year	Acres	Description
Mexican Government	David McCormick	Deed			July	21	1824		1 League west side of San Bernard River
David McCormick Estate	Joseph M. McCormick						1838		Petitioned Probate Court to be Universal Heir
Joseph M. McCormick	Archibald McDonald	Deed	C	49/50	Sept	4	1837	500	\$1500
Joseph M. McCormick	John R. Alexander	Deed	B	277/79	July	20	1843	569	Gift to his cousin upper part of league
Joseph M. McCormick	James E. Black Walker County	Deed	6	49/51	May	17	1890	1000	Bought in December 1845 and paid by 1854 Deed lost
James E. Black	John Martin	Contract	F	118/19	Aug	4	1852		\$750 to build sugar house 66' x 33'
James E. Black	Sarah H. Black	Agreement	G	454/56	Nov	22	1855		Divorce agreement
Joseph M. McCormick	Andrew McCormick	Deed	H	236/38	Sept	3	1854		Gift of 1/3 of his land To his son
Joseph M. McCormick	Andrew McCormick	Deed	H	238/39	Sept	3	1854	171	Transfer note to son from George W. Dunlop
Joseph M. McCormick	Andrew McCormick	Deed	J	288/89	Sept	30	1859		Gift of Land
Joseph M. McCormick	Andrew McCormick	Deed	J	289/90	Sept	30	1859		Gift of 5slaves
Estate James E. Black	Sarah H. Black & children	Decree	J	445/47	March		1859	1000	Partition of estate of J.E. Black Sarah & minors received the plantation
Sarah H. Black	L. O. Black Joseph Black William Black Geraldine Wall	Deed	J	447/49	May	5	1860		Release all her rights to several tracts of land outside Brazoria County from J. E. Black estate
William & Sarah A. Black	Francis Le Ribeus Vrenzo Turini (Vincent Turini)	Deed	M	65/66	Jan	19	1870	200	\$800 ½ Interest Sarah H. Black Estate upper portion of 400 acres Homestead
Joseph A. Black	Thomas J. Sweeny	Deed	M	265/66	Dec	22	1869	1000	\$300 his ¼ interest
Francis Le Ribeus	V. Turini	Mortgage	M	77/78	Mar	22	1870	200	\$400
Francis Le Ribeus	V. Turini	Deed	M	431/32	Jan	23	1871	200	\$400 gold
Sarah Black estate	A. J. Burke	Deed	N	659/661	May	24	1873	600	\$1200
V. Turini Estate	J.W. Sweeny	Deed	V	379/81	Feb	9	1883	200	\$1505 Homestead with ferry boat & privileges
J. W. Sweeny	W. L. Sweeny	Deed	V	368/69	Feb	9	1883	200	\$1000 Homestead with ferry boat & privileges
J. W. Sweeny W. L. Sweeny William F. Suter	Bernard Ferry Company		X	25/26	Sept	29	1884		Articles of Incorporation Business conducted at Suter's home on the river
William F. & Annie Suter	W. L. Sweeny	Deed	X	263/65	Feb	16	1885	28	\$1000 acreage and home he lived in with livestock

## McCormick Family Genealogy

Andrew McCormick b. 1755 d. 1797

m.

Catherine Adams b. 1750 d. 1809

I. Joseph McCormick b. January 17, 1778

II. Andrew McCormick b. February 4, 1780 Rowan, North Carolina

d. December 22, 1822 Lafayette, Kentucky

m. 1803

Sarah Steele b. 1774 d. August 5, 1855

A. Eliza Adams McCormick b. 1806 d. 1878

B. Joseph Manson McCormick b. January 9, 1806 North Carolina  
d. January 21, 1865 Brazoria County

m. January 3, 1832

Louisa Agnes McKenzie b. 1807 d. 1875

a. Andrew Phelps McCormick b. December 18, 1832 Brazoria County, Texas  
d. November 2, 1916 Waco, Texas

m. 1st September 8, 1859 Brazoria County, Texas

Mary Jane Copes b. 1842 d. 1870

1. Joseph Manson McCormick b. 1860

2. Lucinda McCormick b. 1861

3. Louise McCormick b. 1863

4. Sarah McCormick b. 1864

5. Mary McCormick b. 1866

6. Andrew Phelps McCormick b. 1868

m. 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1, 1871 Brazoria County, Texas

Louise Hannah (Lula) Bell

1. Catherine McCormick b. 1872 d. 1877

2. Bell McCormick b. 1873 d. 1958

3. Thaddeus Bell McCormick b. 1875 d.

4. Henry David McCormick b. 1877 d. 1877

5. Alice McCormick b. 1878 d. 1879

6. Elizabeth McCormick b. 1880 d. 1881

7. Morgan Lewis McCormick b. 1882 d. 1883

8. Florence McCormick

9. Grace McCormick b, 1886 d. 1886

10. Annie Bates McCormick b. 1888 d. 1983

11. Jewel Elizabeth McCormick b. 1894 d. 1960

b. Sarah Elizabeth McCormick b. 1835 d. 1859

c. Catherine Melvine McCormick b. 1838 d. 1842

C. Juliet Ann McCormick b. 1808 d. 1876

D. Rebecca Stevenson McCormick b. 1812 d. 1881

E. Zillah Adelaide McCormick b. 1814 d. 1877

F. John A. McCormick b. 1819 d. 1823

III. Elizabeth b. June 1, 1782

IV. John McCormick b. 1786

V. Mary McCormick b. 1790 d. April 20, 1845

VI. David McCormick b. 1793 d. May 30, 1836 Brazoria County, Texas

VII. Calhoun McCormick b. January 20, 1795 d. June 1, 1845

## James Elliot Black Family Genealogy

- James Elliot Black b. 1798 South Carolina  
 d. March 6, 1858 Black's Ferry, Brazoria County  
 m. 1<sup>st</sup> April 20, 1824 Wilkinson, Mississippi
- Emily C. Wilson b. 1798 Massachusetts d. ~1836
- A. Livingston Overton Black b. 1827 Henry County, Tennessee  
 d. February 22, 1889 Brazoria County, Texas  
 m. July 16, 1868 Brazoria County  
 Laura Jack Yeiser b. November 9, 1846 Brazoria County, Texas  
 d. March 10, 1924 Houston, Texas
1. James Elliot Black b. July 29, 1871 Columbia d. December 14, 1896
  2. Edna Black b. 1872
  3. Laura Jack Black b. 1874
  4. Geraldine Black b. November 17, 1875 d. February 14, 1847
- B. Orington Lindley Black b. 1831 Tennessee d. April 1, 1852 Brazoria County
- C. Geraldine Black b. 1836 Mississippi d.  
 m. April 4, 1854 Wilkinson Co. Mississippi  
 Alexander E. Wall b. 1806 Mississippi d. 1866
1. Mary E. Wall b. 1855 Mississippi
  2. Elliot Wall b. 1859 Mississippi
  3. Sarah J. Wall b. 1862 Mississippi
  4. Annie Wall b. 1866 Mississippi
- m. 2<sup>nd</sup> September 20, 1837 Paris, Henry County, Tennessee
- Sarah Ann Holmes Waddy Armour b. March 11, 1811 Huntsville, Alabama  
 d. May 5, 1864 Black's Ferry, Texas
- A. James E. Black b. 1839 d. September 21, 1849
- B. William (Will) Waddy Black b. 1842 Tennessee d.?  
 m. September 8, 1864 Brazoria County  
 Sarah H. (Zennie) Burke
- C. Joseph (Lon) Alonzo Black b. February 3, 1846 Montgomery Co., Texas  
 d. December 1869 Jackson County, Texas  
 m. September 26, 1866 Jackson County Texas  
 Mary Ware
- D. Horace Black b. 1847 Texas d.?
- E. Charles Fennimore Black b. 1848 Texas d. June 13, 1849
- Sarah Ann Holmes Waddy b. March 11, 1811 Huntsville, Alabama  
 d. May 5, 1864 Black's Ferry, Texas  
 m. 1<sup>st</sup> February 13, 1828 Tennessee
- Solomon Hillen Armour d. December 1833 Paris, Tennessee
- A. David H. Armour b. April 3, 1830 Tennessee  
 d. February 14, 1885 Comanche Co., Texas
- B. Sarah (Sally) Kimbrough Armour b. September 3, 1831 Tennessee  
 d. January 31, 1887 Bailey's Prairie  
 m. February 6, 1850 Brazoria County, Texas  
 Mordello Stephen Munson b. 1825  
 d. 1903
- C. Samuel Robert Armour b. May 10, 1833 Tennessee  
 d. May 21, 1834

## Slave List James Elliot Black Estate

	Name	Years Old	Value
1.	John	80	Nothing
2.	Sucky	70	Nothing
3.	Minda	34	\$850
4.	Hardy	27	1000
5.	Porter	28	800
6.	Aggy	36	900
7.	Amanda	14	1000
8.	Travis	16	1100
9.	Judy	10	800
10.	Currie	3	250
11.	Burrell	40	3000
12.	Jane	35	700
13.	Maria	19	1100
14.	John	17	600
15.	Alexander	15	1100
16.	Bob	30	1100
17.	Caroline	22	900
18.	Robin	3 months	150
19.	Martin	50	500
20.	Harriet	40	600
21.	Ann	20	1100
22.	Malisa (Sweet)	18	1050
23.	Drucilla (Tang)	15	1000
24.	Eliza	10	650
25.	Martin Jr.	1	200
26.	Mary Henry	35	500
27.	Pink	13	800
28.	Martha	5	500
29.	Charles	32	1000
30.	Bill	17	1000
31.	Polly	9	650
32.	Paris	14	850
33.	Dick	16	1050
34.	Amy	70	100
35.	Eveline	40	800
36.	Mat	27	1100
37.	Julia Ann	24	900
38.	Sam	21	900
39.	Obediah	17	1000
40.	Ben	31	1000
41.	Letty	29	900
42.	Henry	12	950



43.	Ellen	10	700
44.	Mitchel	8	550
45.	Rivers	5	400
46.	George	3	250
47.	Lydia	6 months	175
48.	Peter	30	1300
49.	Mary	25	900
50.	Laura	3	250
51.	Hiram	6 months	150
52.	Tina	15	900
53.	John	13	1000
54.	Jerry	37	1200
55.	Elvira	30	850
56.	Julia	16	800
57.	Green	14	800
58.	Allen	20	1050
59.	Anthony	45	1050
60.	Milly	44	400
61.	Tennessee	28	1000
62.	Frances	20	900
63.	Creacy	18	950
64.	Adaline	6 months	175
65.	Texana	4	300
66.	Booker	16	1000
67.	Lizzie	10	700
68.	Malinda	3	300
69.	Black Susan	40	Nothing
70.	Louisa	21	900
71.	Rebecca	19	1000
72.	David	19	1050
73.	Docia	17	1000
74.	Simon	14	750
75.	Yellow Susan	26	1100
76.	Catherine (Cat)	4	450
			\$58750

## Division of Slaves

Sarah H. Black

Ben	Lydia	Amanda	Green
Letty	Hardy	Judy	Eveline
Henry	Minda	Curry	Rebeca
Ellen	Peter	Gerry	David
Mitchel	Aggy	Elvira	Allen
George	Travis	Julia	

Livingston O. Black

Anthony	Francis	Texana	Mary Henry
Milly	Creacy	Lizzie	Pink
Tennessee	Adaline	Molinda	
Martha	Charles	Book	

Joseph A. Black

Martin	Tang	Cat	Rivers
Harriett (Wife)	Eliza	Mat	
Ann	Martin Jr.	Julia Ann	
Sweet	Susan	Dick	

William W. Black

Burrell (Blacksmith)	Maria	Caroline	Tina
Jane	Alexander	Robin	
John	Bob	Polly	

Geraldine Wall

Peter	Hiram	Louisa	Obe
Mary	Docia	Simon	Bill
Laura	John	Sam	Paris

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Munson Family File

Diary of Sarah H. Black

Diary of Sarah Kimbrough Armour Munson

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Map Collection

Texas State Archives, Austin, Texas

1850 Federal Agricultural Census

1860 Federal Agricultural Census

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Brazoria County Tax Records on microfilm Brazoria County Historical Museum, Angleton, Texas

Federal Population Schedule, Seventh Census of the United States.

1850 The State of Texas, Brazoria County

"Schedule 2—Slave Inhabitants in the County of Brazoria, Texas"

Federal Population Schedule, Eighth Census of the United States.

1860 The State of Texas, Brazoria County

"Schedule 2—Slave Inhabitants in the County of Brazoria, Texas"

Federal Population Schedule, Ninth Census of the United States.

1870

Federal Population Schedule, Tenth Census of the United States.

1880

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