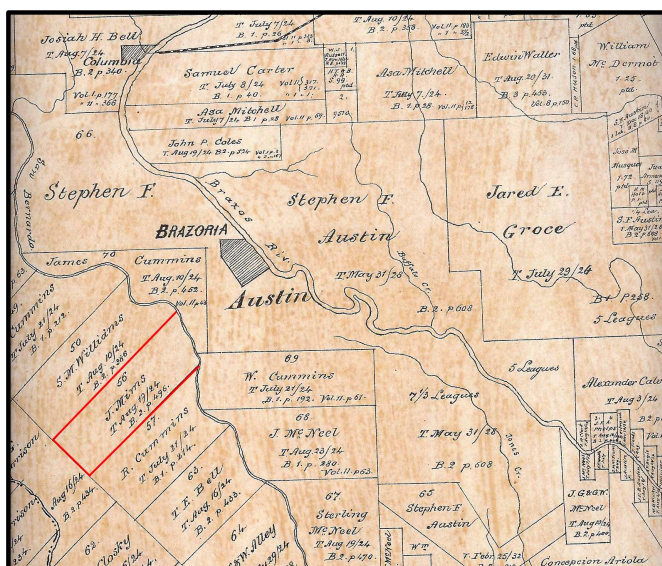


Joseph Mims-James Walker Fannin James Calvin McNeill Plantation
Brazosport Archaeological Society



Joseph Mims League Map 1879 The General Land Office of the State of Texas

One of Stephen F. Austin's Original 300 Families Joseph Mims and his second wife Sarah Weekley, of Alabama, came to Texas in ~1824 and settled on a league of land west of the town of Brazoria where they would raise a large family. Mims entered into a contract with James Walker Fannin Jr., an African slave trader, in January 1836 in which they would be equal partners in the Mims cotton plantation. With the death of Fannin in the Texas Revolution and Fannin's wife, Minerva D. Fannin in 1839, Joseph Mims bought the entire plantation with slaves from Thomas F. McKinney, executor of the James Walker Fannin estate. Joseph Mims died in 1844 leaving an estate largely in debt. His wife Sarah and his oldest living son Lumbert Mims then built a sugar mill and started to cultivate sugar cane in addition to cotton. Throughout the 1850's the Mims plantation was a consistent producer of sugar using in large extent a slave population that was of direct African descent. Sarah was able to eliminate the debt on the property and regain ownership of the entire Mims league and half of the Rebecca Cummings league before her death in 1861. The Civil War and Reconstruction brought death and ruin to most of Sarah's children. James Calvin McNeill was able to purchase the homestead of Sarah Mims in 1880 with his brother Charles P. McNeill and his descendants have owned the property since that time. The original Mims home burned to the ground in 1921 and the McNeill family built a new home on the property at that time.

Joseph Mims was born in 1790 in St. Stephens, Washington County, Alabama. He was the eldest child of Samuel and Hannah Bready Mims. Joseph Mims served in the War of 1812. Fort Mims, about 35 miles north of Mobile, was built around Samuel Mims home in an effort to protect them from the Indians. The fort was attacked on August 30, 1813 and ~500 people in the area were massacred or captured by the Creek Indians including Samuel Mims, who according to family lore was scalped and gutted. Joseph, his mother and other siblings had traveled to Mobile. When the massacre occurred, they were on the way back, on the Tombigbee River, heard what was going on, pulled over, waited for things to settle down, then went back to Mobile. They returned only after several months due to the Creek Indians still on the war path.

Joseph married Jane O'Neal in 1815, also from St. Stephens. They would have three children born in Alabama, Benjamin Franklin Mims born 1815, Harriet Ann Mims born 1817, and Jane Elizabeth Mims born 1819 before the death of Jane O'Neal Mims in 1819-1820.

Joseph Mims next married Sarah Weekley in Baldwin County, Alabama, January 8, 1821. They would have one child, Lumbert Mims born in 1822, before moving to Texas. On August 19, 1824, Joseph Mims received one league of land as one of Stephen F. Austin's Old Three Hundred colonists. His league lay west of the San Bernard River only four miles from the town of Brazoria. The 1826 Census lists Joseph Mims as a farmer and stock raiser aged between 35 and 40. His household included his wife, two sons, a daughter and four slaves. Joseph and Sarah Mims would have eight children born in Texas, Joseph 1826, Alexander 1829, Samuel 1832, Ann Elizabeth 1834, Leonard 1837, Julia 1839, David 1842, and Sarah Josephine 1844.

In November 1830, Mims was appointed commissioner to report on a road from Brazoria to Jennings Crossing on the Brazos River. It is also noted that he signed a petition calling for the Convention of 1836.¹

Benjamin Franklin Mims participated in the Battle of Velasco in 1832 as a member of Lieutenant Henry Smith's Company of Brazoria Volunteers.² At the Battle of San Jacinto he was a member of Captain Robert J. Calder's Company. He received for his service 640 acres and title to one-fourth league of land in what is now Hays County. He would continue to live at the home of his father and died June 26, 1840 while at the home of his Uncle Alexander Mims near Mobile, Alabama.

Joseph Mims sold 500 acres of land from the NW corner of his league along the San Bernard to Reuben McDonald of Alabama in 1834. This provided some working capital for Mims who was working to improve his cotton plantation while he operated a ferry on the San Bernard River near his home. This same year James Walker Fannin, who had attended West Point 1819-1821, entered upon the scene in Texas.³ Born January 1, 1804 in Pike County, Georgia, the illegitimate son of Isham Saffold Fannin and Jane Walker, he had been raised by his maternal grandfather James Walker. He had left West Point in 1821 and returned to his native state of Georgia and there married Minerva Fort a few years later, April 24, 1828. The union produced two daughters Missouri Pinckney (born July 17, 1829) and Minerva J. Fannin. (Minerva was mentally ill-born 1832)

¹ "Joseph Mims", *Handbook of Texas Online*

² Boddie, Mary Delaney, *Thunder on the Brazos*, Taylor Publishing Company, 1978

³ "With respect to James F. Walker, the records show him as being admitted to the Academy, at the age of 14 years 6 months, in 1819, and he was a cadet in the fourth class during the years 1819-1820 and 1820-1821," "Notes and Fragments", *Texas Historical Association Quarterly*, Vol VII No. 4, p. 320.

Edward Hanrick, writing Samuel May Williams, established Fannin as being interested in the Cuban slave traffic and as being worth “nothing” in 1833:

I have given a letter of Introduction to a Col. Fannin. This is one of the persons that was to be engaged in the Negroe Speculation. [Asa] Hoxey and myself has declined it for the present, and not at least until we heard from you but Fannin Would not wait for that, but is goin on emideately to Cuba. In as much as I have given him a letter of Introduction to you it is necessary for me to State to you what I know dispecting of him I believe he is an enterprising man and from what I can learn he is Worth nothing and perhaps as we say wuse than nothing, and his case is desperate, for he has nothing to loose and all to gain. This I say to you so you may Know the kind. As to his honesty or entegretly I believe them good as far as I have any knowledge of him, and as he might want you or some of your friends to embark with him I wish to let you all I know about him... Doctor Hoxey will start in a few days for your Country and you might do well by him. If Hoxey Shall succeed next year in making a good Crop it will be a great effect on the Wealthy planters of this part of the Country...⁴

May 23, 1833 James W. Fannin wrote a letter to Pedro Lamberto Fernandez of Mariategui Knight & Company in Havana, Cuba. Fannin inquired about the price, the terms of payment, and security of a cargo of Negroes for Texas, and the possible objection on the part of the government to giving passports to slaves or indentured persons leaving Cuba.⁵ A decree issued by the Mexican government July 13, 1824 prohibited the slave trade, domestic or foreign, and the constitution of Coahuila and Texas in 1827, forbade, after six months, the further introduction of slaves into the territory, and provided for the general emancipation of those already in Coahuila and Texas. In addition to James W. Fannin illegal importation of African slaves was carried out by several other members of Stephen F. Austin’s colony including Benjamin Fort Smith, Sterling McNeel, and Monroe Edwards in Brazoria County.

In May 1834 James W. Fannin and his partner Harvey Kendrick were in Havana, Cuba contracting to send 16 slaves to Texas aboard the American schooner *Crawford*, which they also agreed to purchase for \$3500 from Samuel Thompson and A. B. Henshaw of New Orleans: “...The said schr is to sail from this port on or about the twelvth of June next coming with Sixteen free negroes as is shown and made manifest by the oath and certificate of the said Fannin, before the U. S. Consul of the port, together with some two or three other gentlemen passengers for the Port-or-Roadstead of Brassos in the Province of Texas on the coast of Mexico, where the Blacks are to be landed and the said sch’r to proceed immediately for New Orleans...”⁶ May 26, 1834 James W. Fannin chartered the schooner *Crawford* for the voyage from Havana, Cuba to Texas for \$800.⁷

The “free negroes” and the gentlemen passengers were undoubtedly unloaded on the Brazos River, but Fannin did not realize enough cash out of the transaction to settle his debt for the *Crawford*. On August 22 he was in Mobile, Alabama and wrote Samuel Thompson, asking for further indulgence and offering to get an endorsement from Edward Hanrick of Mobile, “who is to be interested with me in the next trip.”⁸

⁴Edward Hanrick to Samuel H. Williams, Samuel May Williams Papers, Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas

⁵Smith, Ruth Cumby, “James W. Fannin Jr., In the Texas Revolution”, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Volume XXII, July 1919-April 1920, p. 80.

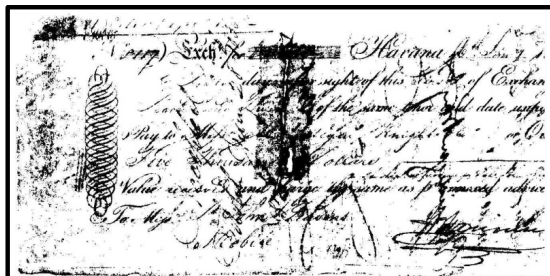
⁶Contract signed by J. W. Fannin and Harvey Kendrick, May 26, 1834, “Texas Letters and Documents”, *Texana*, Vol. I No. 2, Spring 1963, pp. 170-172.

⁷James Walker Fannin Probate Case 162, Brazoria County Clerk’s Office, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas

⁸Wharton, Clarence, *Remember Goliad*, Rio Grande Press, Glorieta, New Mexico, 1968, pp. 25-26.

After James W. Fannin's returned to the United States Theophilus R. Hyde had Fannin arrested in New Orleans for nonpayment of a debt of \$3000 in April 1835. Michael J. Kenan of Alabama posted a \$1500 bond in order to get Fannin released. He had previously also given Fannin a letter of credit for \$1500 on April 2, 1835 in Mobile, Alabama.⁹

May 1835 James Walker Fannin Jr. was again back in Havana, Cuba purchasing African slaves. He gave Mariategui Knight & Company a note for \$4258 endorsed by him on John W. Foster. Mariategui Knight & Company¹⁰ usually took a 2 ½ % commission on their sale (~\$250-350 price of each slave in Cuba). Fannin also had a letter of credit drawn on St. John & Leavens of Mobile,¹¹ Alabama for \$5000 which he gave to Mariategui Knight & Company. This letter of credit was guaranteed by Michael J. Kenan of Alabama. This would not have been nearly enough money to purchase over 150 slaves. Mills & Bennet held an account in Brazoria for the benefit of James W. Fannin and his three associates, [John] Duncan, [Abram] Sheppard, and [William] Kingston, all of Matagorda County. It appears each of them must have put up over \$9000 apiece in order to purchase 152 African slaves.¹²



Mary Austin Holley noted in her diary on June 10, 1835, an encampment in Quintana near Thomas F. McKinney's warehouse of recently arrived Africans which may have been part of Fannin's 152.¹³

Samuel Thompson evidently granted an extension of Fannin's debt, for more than a year later we find Fannin writing him again, asking additional indulgence. This letter is dated San Bernardo, Province of Texas, September 15, 1835. He tells Thompson, "I have been lying ill---nay nearly dead." After various excuses and promises, he says: "I have since made a good trip, having brought for myself and others 152 negroes in May last (1835), but can not realize any cash from them until March or April, when you shall be fully paid every cent I owe you. You need not be concerned about the present state of affairs in Texas. There is no serious danger to us. Tho' we may have to fight some little—but success will certainly follow our efforts...I am settled on Caney Creek, midway between Brazoria and Matagorda."¹⁴

Already anticipating war with Mexico James W. Fannin wrote a letter to Major Frances Belton, in Alabama, asking him to accept a commission in the Texas army. The letter dated 27

⁹ James Walker Fannin Probate Case 162, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas

¹⁰ Mariategui Knight & Company merged into the firm of George Knight & Co. This is also the company that Monroe Edwards would negotiate with shortly thereafter for 188 African slaves.

¹¹ Newton St. John & John Leavens

¹² James Walker Fannin Probate Case 162, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas

¹³ Holley, Mary Austin, *The Texas Diary: 1835-1838*, p. 29.

¹⁴ Wharton, Clarence, *Remember Goliad*, Rio Grande Press, Glorieta, New Mexico, 1968, p. 26.

August 1835 at “Velasco, Rio Brasos, Prov. Texas” ended with a statement concerning the voyage from Cuba “With 152.”

... “When the hurly-burly is begun” we will be as glad to see as many West Point boys as can be spared--many of whom are known to me, & by whom I am known as J. F. Walker—my maternal Grand-father’s name, & by whom I was raised and adopted, & whose name I then bore...My last voyage from the island of Cuba (with 152) succeeded admirably.

Yr. friend & c.,
J. W. Fannin Jr.¹⁵

A promissory note for \$1973.34 for “value received,” dated 24 August 1835, signed by James F. Perry of Peach Point Plantation payable to Fannin indicates that he had started to distribute his slaves among the local planters.¹⁶ Down the San Bernard River from the Mims Plantation was “African Landing,” consisting of a large live oak log, lying parallel with the river making a natural wharf. Smuggled slaves were brought on land and clothed here for the first time.¹⁷

According to an old Mims slave, Jerry Johnson, whose father was a blacksmith on the Mims Plantation, James Walker Fannin, his wife and two daughters moved to a home on the Joseph Mims Plantation.¹⁸ There are two letters written by Fannin which indicate his family was not in Texas before he entered the army. February 22, 1836 he wrote: ‘If my family get in, I should like to join them...After near eighteen months absence, nothing but dire necessity can keep me from my wife and children...’¹⁹ Later in a letter to Joseph Mims: “If my family arrive, send my wife this letter...”²⁰

James W. Fannin Jr. raised a group of 34 volunteers from Brazoria County, the Brazoria Guards, and led them in the battle of Gonzales on October 2, 1835. On October 6 he was one of a committee urging Stephen F. Austin to bring all aid to Gonzales, and when Austin brought up the whole Texas army and moved toward Bexar, James Bowie and Fannin were sent as scouts to determine conditions between Gonzales and Bexar and to secure supplies. On October 27 Bowie and Fannin selected a campsite near the Nuestra Senora de la Purisma Concepcion de Acuna Mission and on October 28 led the victorious Texas forces in the battle of Concepcion.

On November 6, 1835, while engaged in the siege of Bexar, James W. Fannin wrote to the President of the Convention, at San Felipe, and offered to empower the body to “sell, hypothecate, or otherwise dispose of all my property in Texas, consisting of thirty-six negroes on Cany Creek &

¹⁵ Raines, C. W., editor, *Memoirs of Francis Richard Lubbock*, Ben C. Jones and Company Printers, Austin, Texas, 1900, p. 32. Jenkins, John H., ed., *The Papers of the Texas Revolution 1835-1836 in Ten Volumes*, Presidial Press, Austin, Texas, 1973, Vol. 2 p.. 371-73.’’

¹⁶ James F. Perry Papers

¹⁷ Story told by Harold Graves and Stephen Perry related that one evening planters had gathered at the landing made purchases, and afterward visited and played cards well into the night. When leaving for home, one of the planters was unable to locate his large Newfoundland dog. The following day, searching more carefully, he found a pile of clean dog bones beside a campfire where the slaves had been. Platter, Andrew Allen, *Educational, Social, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County*, Doctorial Dissertation Education, University of Houston, Texas, pp.150-151.

¹⁸Platter, Andrew Allen, *Educational, Social, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County*, Doctorial Dissertation Education, University of Houston, Texas, p. 150. However, according to a letter written to Samuel Thompson September 15, 1835 Fannin wrote “I am settled on Caney Creek, midway between Brazoria and Matagorda.” The location of Caney Creek is repeated in several other letters-not the Mims Plantation on the San Bernard River.

¹⁹ Letter James W. Fannin Jr. to James W. Robinson, February 22, 1836,[Fort Defiance-Goliad]

²⁰ Letter J. W. Fannin to Mr. Jos. Mims, February 28, 1836 Goliad

Brazos river to meet the purchase” of war material.²¹ His offer was not accepted. On November 13 Sam Houston, commander in chief of the regular army, offered Fannin the position of inspector general. Fannin preferring a command on the battle front turned down the position.²² Stephen F. Austin granted Fannin an honorable discharge from the army on November 22 and he returned to Brazoria County.²³ Houston commissioned Fannin as a colonel in the regular army on December 7, and on December 20 issued orders for him to proceed to Matagorda to establish his recruiting headquarters.²⁴

Back in Brazoria County James W. Fannin and Joseph Mims entered into a formal contract on January 12, 1836:

Know all men by these presents that We Joseph Mimms & J. W. Fanning Jr. have this day entered into the following partnership that is to say. The said Mimms agrees to furnish eight negros men & boys together with the following property stock & C. to wit sixty head of stock cattle two yoke of Oxen & Cart & yokes, four work mules two horses, five ploughs & gear three hundred bushels of corn, eighty head of hogs & three thousand & thirty acres of land, part of league No. fifty seven on the west bank of the San Bernardo adjoining Williams to the North & John Cummings to the South including all the improvements of said Mims, it being the tract of land on which he now lives. Which property is valued at twenty five thousand dollars. And the said Fanning agrees to furnish twenty three African negros to wit twelve men seven women and four boys, which negros are valued at Seventeen thousand two hundred and fifty dollars, and it is agreed between the parties that the said Fanning shall pay the said Mimms said difference of Seven thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars in five equal annual instalments with interest from this date at the rate of Eight per centum per annum or should the tranquility of the country authorize it said Fanning is at liberty to pay the whole of said last mentioned amount of Seven thousand seven hundred & fifty dollars in negros at fair valuation and have his bond cancelled at and paying no further interest then may have accrued up to the time of such payment at the rate aforesaid.

The above named negros & stock are to be worked & used on said plantation above described for the term of five years under the exclusive & entire control of said Mims and the profits arising from the produce of said negros stock & plantation during the aforesaid term of five years after deduction all necessary expenditures for carrying on said plantation is to be equally divided between said contracting parties. The dividends to be declared annually.

And at the expiration of the aforesaid Term of five years said land negros stock & the produce & increase shall be valued (should the parties themselves not agree) by an disinterested person chosen by each party & should they not agree they shall choose a third whose decision shall be final. And said Land negros stock farming utensils & C. after being valued shall be equally divided between said parties, but each of them shall be at liberty to retain negros Originally put in by him.

²¹ Barker, Eugene C., “The African Slave Trade in Texas”, Vol. 6, No. 2, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, p. 152. James Walker Fannin accused Samuel Rhoads Fisher of improperly handling the salvage of the schooner *Hannah Elizabeth* on the Matagorda coast line in a letter written December 11, 1835. Fisher was quick to reply: “Your African emigrants have scarce yet gained a residence in our country, their native lingo yet betrays their recent importation. Did you expect to gull the Government and Council, and the public, by your whining affections of sympathy for the unfortunate, when but a few months have rolled round since your last Ethiopian speculation and importation? Or did you suppose that the abuses practiced on our coast, would be corrected at the instance of one who, contrary to the laws of his country, had disgraced its borders by the introduction of slaves, natives of, and immediately from, Africa?” Letter S. Rhoads Fisher to the Public, January 1836.

²² Jenkins, John H., ed., *The Papers of the Texas Revolution 1835-1836 in Ten Volumes*, Presidial Press, Austin, Texas, 1973., Vol. 2, pp. 456-57.

²³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p.486

²⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, p.272

And it is further understood & agreed on by the above named parties that neither is at liberty to use the name or credit of the other on account of said partnership each being liable for his own contract...²⁵

Continuing as agent for the provisional government, Fannin, on January 9, 1836, began recruiting volunteers for the Matamoros expedition in Velasco.²⁶ Fannin by the end of January and first part of February after Sam Houston opposed the plan and with the realization that General Santa Anna was potentially ready to invade Texas cancelled any plans to march south.²⁷ Fannin was elected colonel of the Provisional Regiment of Volunteers at Goliad on February 7 and from February 12 to March 12 acted as commander of the chief of army.²⁸ On March 14 he received Sam Houston's order to retreat to Victoria. Fannin, however, delayed his retreat until March 19 enabling General Jose de Urrea's army to overtake his troops near Coleto Creek. After battling through the afternoon, Fannin was forced to surrender the next day. His command was imprisoned at Goliad until March 27, 1836 when James Walker Fannin and over 300 of his men were executed on orders by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna.



James Walker Fannin Jr.

Minerva D. Fannin, her children and several more families from Brazoria County boarded the schooner *Columbus* at Velasco to escape the Mexican Army. The boat then traveled up the coast to the area of the Sabine River and then back to the Neches River.²⁹

According to Betty Ballinger, granddaughter of Laura H. Jack:

²⁵ James Walker Fannin Probate Case 162

²⁶ Brown Gary, *Hesitant Martyr of the Texas Revolution-James Walker Fannin*, Republic of Texas Press, Plano, Texas, 2001, pp. 78-89

²⁷ Ibid., pp.99-108

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 113-122

²⁹ Helm, Mary S., *Scraps of Early Texas History*, Austin B. R. Warner & Company, 1884, pp. 13-15.

Mrs. Fannin and her daughter , Pinckney, were with my grandmother and her family—on the Neches, where they had taken refuge from the Mexicans in the “Run Away Scrape”...Colonel McKinney arrived by boat, and waving his hat said, “Texas is free!”...He told Mrs. Jack that her husband , Mr. H. Jack was safe, but was obliged to inform Mrs. Fannin of the tragedy of Goliad.³⁰

Minerva Fannin and her two daughters lived in Velasco for a while after the Battle of San Jacinto. It may be that Minerva and the children had not arrived in Texas until the first week in March 1836 leaving Fannin no time in which to see his family before his death. It appears she and her two children stayed at the American Hotel owned by Isaac C. Hoskins and Captain Jeremiah Brown for two days in early March. Also from the 3rd of March til the 5th of April she boarded with B. M. Calvit.³¹ After the Battle of San Jacinto she was again in Velasco staying two and a half days in the hotel of Hoskins. Then she again boarded with B. M. Calvit until November 22, 1836.³² General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna along with Ramon Martinez Caro his secretary and Colonels Juan Nepomuceno Almonte and Gabriel Nunez Ortega were held at Velasco for several weeks after the Battle of San Jacinto. Before Santa Anna was taken to Dr. James Phelp's home at Orozimbo Plantation, Minerva Fannin tried to see Santa Anna in order to shoot him but was prevented in doing so by his guards according to one unsubstantiated source.

James W. Fannin had written to Joseph Mims before his death: “Look to our property-save it for my family, whatever may be my fate.”³³ Joseph Mims would see to the operation of the cotton plantation previously jointly held with James W. Fannin. Elisha M. Pease was made guardian of the two girls, and Thomas F. McKinney was named executor of James W. Fannin's estate. His estate in joint ownership with Joseph Mims consisted of 3000 acres of land, 39 slaves, 5 horses & mules, 3 yoke of oxen, 60 head of cattle, 220 bales of cotton, and farming utensils worth \$43,990.³⁴

Fannin had acquired a substantial number of debts against his estate including the amounts owed for his slave purchases amounting to almost \$25,000. Joseph Mims was against the partitioning of the estate, therefore Thomas F. McKinney held the creditors at bay for a couple of years with Joseph Mims producing cotton and shipping it to New Orleans and as far away as Liverpool, England. McKinney paid the day to day debts incurred in the operation of the plantation and managed to give Minerva Fannin and Joseph Mims \$500 each for their own use in 1838.³⁵

Thomas F. McKinney continued to serve as executor of the estate living with his wife Nancy in Quintana for several years after San Jacinto while his business partner Samuel May Williams settled into Galveston. Minerva D. Fannin with her children may have moved to live with the William H. Jack family on the east bank of the Brazos River below Brazoria. According to Anna Gray Gibbs McKinney, Minerva died at the home of William H. Jack.³⁶ A bill submitted by Doctor O. P.

³⁰Brown Gary, *Hesitant Martyr of the Texas Revolution-James Walker Fannin*, Republic of Texas Press, Plano, Texas, 2001, p. 237.

³¹ Mrs. Barbara M. Calvit was a widow owning the Evergreen Plantation at this time. Whether the family would have been boarded in Velasco or at her plantation is unknown.

³² James Walker Fannin Jr. Probate Case 162, Brazoria County Clerk's Office, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas

³³Letter James Walker Fannin to Joseph Mims, Goliad, 28th Feb'y 1836

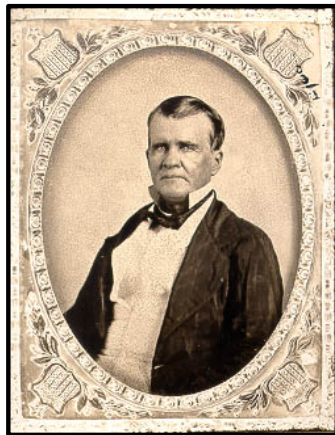
³⁴ James Walker Fannin Jr. Probate Case 162, Brazoria County Clerk's Office, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ “Minerva Fannin” Mrs. Rebecca J. Fisher, *The Austin Weekly Statesman*, November 9, 1893, Austin, Texas

Kelton listed the date of November 15, 1839 as the last time he had treated her. Doctor John Work treated her in her last illness and attended her day and night for 36 hours straight starting on the 13th. His bill is marked Velasco.³⁷ After Minerva's death Thomas F. McKinney and his wife Nancy tried to continue to take care of the children having moved to Galveston in 1839.

Shortly after the death of Minerva D. Fannin, on December 3, 1839 James W. Fannin's portion of the plantation, slaves, and livestock was auctioned off by the probate court for \$22100 to Joseph Mims.³⁸ By Mims purchasing Fannin's portion this essentially removed the contract partnership. Joseph Mims then signed a mortgage for \$37,500 with Thomas F. McKinney. This was to be paid in four payments with Pinckney and Minerva Fannin, the surviving children, to receive the last payment of \$8250 and an additional \$3950.³⁹ Part of this debt was to cover the purchase of 2000 acres of land for \$6000 in the western half of the Rebecca Cummings league just south of his league in 1837.⁴⁰ Settling the estate with Joseph Mims, Thomas F. McKinney wrote his business partner Samuel May Williams of Galveston: "I have just returned from Brazoria and have sold the property of the Fannin estate for \$22000. Have arranged so as to secure \$12000 for the children poor things. The mother's dying request was that Mrs. Jack would use her influence with me to take charge of them...Will therefore make some provisions for the children here."⁴¹



Thomas Freeman McKinney

Thomas F. McKinney and his wife Nancy divorced July 18, 1842 and he remarried Anna Gray Gibbs September 23, 1842. The Fannin children continued to remain in his household in Galveston until the death of Missouri Pinckney Fannin November 14, 1847 of yellow fever.

³⁷James Walker Fannin Jr. Probate Case 162, Brazoria County Clerk's Office, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas

³⁸BCDR: C 456//57

³⁹BCDR: A 224/26

⁴⁰BCDR: C99/100

⁴¹ Brown Gary, *Hesitant Martyr of the Texas Revolution-James Walker Fannin*, Republic of Texas Press, Plano, Texas, 2001, p. 242.



Trinity Episcopal Cemetery in Old City Cemetery Galveston, Texas

Thomas and Anna McKinney moved to Austin, Texas in ~1850. From 1848-1852 Minerva was under the guardianship of a Mrs. Richardson living at Rutgersville College where it was hoped she could be taught to read but this proved to be a hopeless cause.⁴² She returned to the home of Thomas F. McKinney but as Minerva grew older she became unmanageable for the family. November 9, 1862 she was admitted as a private patient to the State Insane Asylum treated for “Idiocy” –suffered from epilepsy beginning in infancy. Thomas F. McKinney remanded to the state the assets from Fannin’s estate valued at \$20,000. Minerva remained institutionalized until her death July 27, 1893. Col. W. P. Hardeman paid her funeral expenses to be buried in the State Cemetery in Austin, Texas.



State Cemetery Austin, Texas

⁴² “Minerva Fannin” Mrs. Rebecca J. Fisher, *The Austin Weekly Statesman*, November 9, 1893, Austin, Texas

⁴³ <http://www.cemetery.state.tx.us>

Joseph Mims continued to keep his cotton plantation operational with the slaves he had purchased from the James W. Fannin estate and operated a ferry near his home on the San Bernard River. The main road leading west from Brazoria crossed the river at this site. Cotton shipped:

1837 37 bales/cotton to New Orleans by R. Mills & Co.
 1838 62 “ “ “
 1838 40 “
 1839 173 “ sold to McKinney & Williams shipped on the Schooner *Osceola*
 1839 40 “ to Liverpool by Henry W. Williams⁴⁴

Joseph Mims was doing well enough that he donated the bounty land of his deceased son Benjamin F. Mims, 640 acres, to Rutgersville College in 1841.⁴⁵ To his married daughter Harriet A. and her husband Pinckney S. McNeel Joseph and Sarah gave 300 acres of land out of his league which was the tract they were living on in 1843.⁴⁶ They had been married since 1834 and would raise a large family (See Appendix A).

According to the tax records in 1840, Joseph Mims now owned 5300 acres, 50 slaves, 6 horses, 150 head of cattle, and one gold watch, but was heavily in debt.

Joseph and Sarah Mims' young daughter Ann Elizabeth Mims aged eight died in 1842 and became the first person buried in the Mims' family cemetery. Her tombstone reads:



ANN ELIZABETH MIMS
 Died
 Aug. 24, 1842
 In the 8th Year
 of her age
 Elizabeth is dead, a child as sweet, fair
 As opening rose bud in morning air;
 Round her pure world darker cypress wave
 Youth could not save her from an early grave.

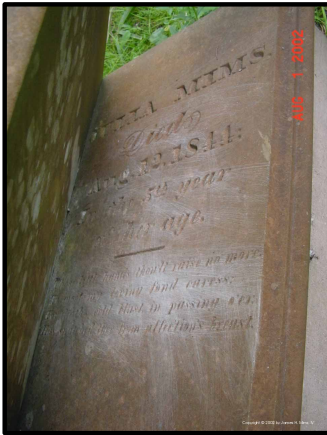
Photo Courtesy of James H. Mims

⁴⁴ James Walker Fannin Jr. Probate Case 162

⁴⁵ BCDR: B 31 According to family lore Benjamin F. Mims contracted a heavy cold or pneumonia while sailing to Mobile, Alabama and died a few days after his arrival at his uncle's home. James H. Mims correspondence.

⁴⁶ BCDR: B 328/29

Only two years later another young daughter Julia Mims died.



JULIA MIMS
Died
Aug. 12, 1844
In the 5th year
of her age
These little hands thou'et raise no more
To meet my loving fond caress
For death's cold blast in passing o're
Has snatched thee from affection's breast.

Photograph Courtesy James H. Mims

In November of 1844 Joseph Mims also died. Dr. Francis W. Smith attended Joseph Mims in his last illness along with Dr. Stephens making several visits in November. Yellow fever was quite prevalent during the year and may have been the cause for such misery in the family.

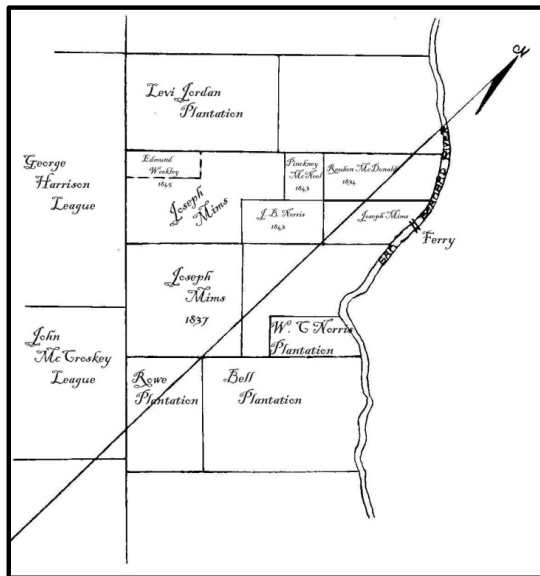


JOSEPH MIMS
DIED
Nov. 23, 1844
Aged 54 years
Dear FATHER,
Though long since gone;
Thou art not forgotten.

Photograph Courtesy of James H. Mims

Joseph Mims as part of his will notes: "My son Lumbert I wish to leave with all the family keep them together and work my estate out of debt if possible."⁴⁷ His estate now consisted of:

2544 ac. in Mims league @ \$2.50/ac.	
500 ac. cleared w/improvements @ \$28/ac. + \$5000 improvements	\$25360
2000 ac. purchased from John Cummings @ \$2.50	\$5000
74 slaves	\$29325
Livestock, crops, farm utensils & 1 ferry flat	
	\$59829.50



Samuel May Williams, Joseph Mims, Rebecca Cummings, and Thomas B. Bell Leagues

The Joseph Mims estate was still indebted to Thomas F. McKinney for \$20,806.57 and to Pinckney and Minerva Fannin for \$14,075.76. For those that knew the Mims family it was actually Sarah Mims with the help of her son Lumbert that kept the family together and began to dig the family out of debt. The Mims plantation was consistently producing good cotton crops from 1841-1845 with most of their cotton sold thru McKinney Williams & Co., Henry H. Williams & Co., or McKinney personally.⁴⁸

May 6, 1845 Sarah Mims sold to her brother-in-law Edmund Weekley 300 acres out of the Mims league for \$1500. Edmund and Sarah's sister Hannah had been living on this tract.⁴⁹ Lumbert Mims as executor sold the entire plantation, slaves, and livestock to Thomas F.

⁴⁷ Record of Wills: A 608/09

⁴⁸ Joseph Mims Probate Case 347, Brazoria County Clerk's Office, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas

⁴⁹ BCDR: D 9

McKinney.⁵⁰ Sarah Mims in turn purchased everything from McKinney for \$35,520.⁵¹ As part of the mortgage Sarah was to pay Thomas F. McKinney three notes of \$7148.24 each and to the Fannin children three notes of \$4691.92 each.⁵² All of these transactions occurred the same day.

March 29, 1847 Thomas F. McKinney released the previous mortgage and issued Sarah Mims a new mortgage in which Sarah now owed \$25,000 payable in five notes. The crops from the plantation which now included both cotton and sugar were to be consigned to McKinney.⁵³

During this period Sarah and her son Lambert had converted to growing sugar cane and had received \$8700 for purchasing equipment for her sugar mill from McKinney. Her debt had grown to \$36,000. Another mortgage for \$20,000 payable in notes of \$4000 each for the next five years had been issued by McKinney with the plantation and 87 slaves as part of the security along with the crops of cotton and sugar consigned to him.⁵⁴ McKinney released all her previous mortgages. Now she was able to pay \$29336 of this debt and was ready to refinance again with McKinney. March 20, 1849 Sarah made an agreement that 100 bales of cotton from the 1848 crop along with hogsheads of sugar and molasses for the same year would be sold by McKinney with the proceeds applied to last of her debt.⁵⁵ The next day Sarah Mims sold 1334 acres of land out of the upper sw corner of the Rebecca Cummings league to Thomas F. McKinney for \$5336.⁵⁶ All claims by McKinney against the Mims Plantation would now be released.

In 1850 Lumbert Mims, who had married Henrietta Jane Norris⁵⁷ in 1846, is listed in the Agricultural Census. There were 515 acres improved and another 2700 unimproved acres as part of the plantation with \$5000 worth of farm machinery, principally the sugar mill. They owned 3 horses, 27 mules, 21 milch cows, 12 work oxen, 500 head of cattle, and 100 hogs. In 1849 the plantation produced 5000 bushels of corn, 50 of Irish potatoes, 1500 of sweet potatoes, 30 lbs. of butter, 6 tons of hay, 240 hogsheads of sugar, and 17,500 gallons of molasses.

Lumbert Mims is listed in a separate household from his mother in the 1850 Federal Census:

Lumbert Mims	28M	Alabama
Henrietta Mims	19F	Alabama
Franklin B. Mims	2M	Texas
Sarah Mims	1F	Texas

The Sarah Mims household:

Sarah Mims	45F	Alabama
Joseph Mims	24M	Texas
Alexander Mims	21M	Texas
Samuel Mims	18M	Texas
Leonard Mims	13M	Texas
David Mims	8M	Texas
Josephine Mims	6M	Texas

⁵⁰ BCDR: B 498/501

⁵¹ BCDR: B 501/02

⁵² BCDR: B 502/04

⁵³ BCDR: D 336, D 337/39 & D 340/41

⁵⁴ BCDR: E 138/42 & E 422/25

⁵⁵ BCDR: E 143/44

⁵⁶ BCDR: E 142

⁵⁷ Her parents John Bradford Norris & Henrietta Catherine Lafitte Norris had lived in the middle southern part of the Mims League before selling out in 1848.

In August 1851 Sarah Mims sold the remaining 666 2/3 acres out the Rebecca Cummings league she still owned to Abraham S. Woodcock of Alabama for \$1000.⁵⁸ In 1854 a new home was built for the family on the western bank of the San Bernard River. The house had 13-foot ceilings and two rooms on each side of a “dog trot” hall, which was portioned even with the other room divisions. Stairs, against the hall, led from the south portion of the “dog trot” to the two rooms upstairs where the dormers were. There were two wide porches the width of the house on the south and north sides. The separate kitchen was reached by a screened in walkway. The house was served by a brick cistern, built around the same time as the house, and an above ground cedar cistern used to collect rain water for the house. The flooring was of 12-inch wide planks.⁵⁹ According to L. J. McNeill the house measured 60 feet in length and 40 in width. A gallery along the lower floor overlooked a long expanse of the river stretching away to the south. The building had a high cable roof from which large dormers extended both north and south. Two cisterns were at the east end of the house. Sam Prince, whose mother was a Mims house servant, recollected that the serving girls at mealtime were to attend to all needs without spoken words.⁶⁰



Photograph Courtesy of the Brazoria County Historical Museum 2000.008p.0071

Lumbert Mims purchased the 300 acre homestead of Edmund and Hannah Weekley in October 1855 for \$4000.⁶¹ Sarah Mims was also doing well and was able to purchase the 500 acres sold to Reuben McDonald by Joseph Mims out of the Mims league many years before for \$2500.⁶² Also two other tracts were acquired by Sarah from Anthony Winston amounting to 908

⁵⁸ BCDR: F 130/31

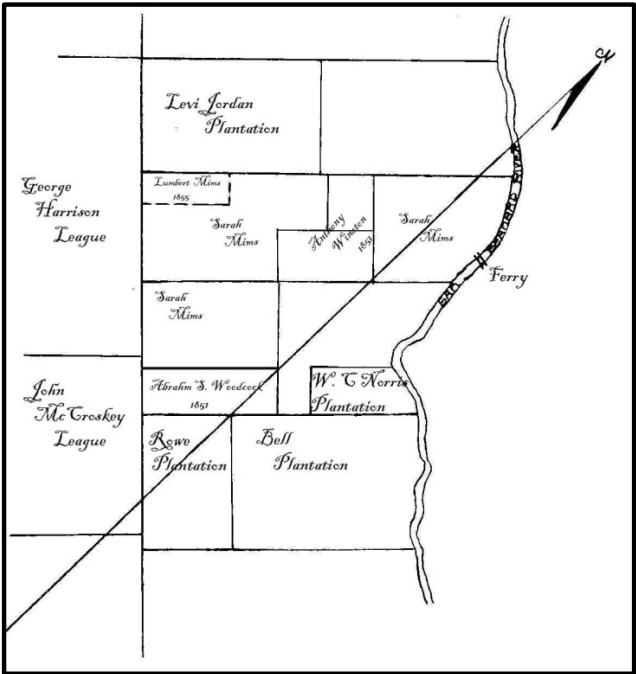
⁵⁹ *The Freeport Facts*, Freeport, Texas, July 2, 1931

⁶⁰ Platter, Andrew Allen, *Educational, Social, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County*, Doctorial Dissertation Education, University of Houston, Texas, 1961, p. 153.

⁶¹ BCDR: G 421/22

⁶² BCDR: G 472

acres for \$7000 in December 1856. This land had been in sugar production by Anthony Winston and by the Norris family before him. Winston reserved the sugar mill engine, kettles, and equipment for himself. His family was to move out by the 15th January 1857.⁶³



Samuel May Williams, Joseph Mims, Rebecca Cummings, and Thomas B. Bell Leagues

During the 1850's the Mims Plantation had become a consistent producer of sugar:

1852	368 hogsheads of sugar
1853	200
1852	220
1855	192
1858	150 ⁶⁴

⁶³ BCDR: 776/78
⁶⁴ Champomier, P. A., Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1852-53, With An Appendix, New Orleans, 1854. Champomier, P. A., Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1853-54, With An Appendix, New Orleans, 1854. Champomier, P. A., Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1854-55, With An Appendix, New Orleans, 1855 & Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1855-56, With An Appendix, New Orleans, 1856. Champomier, P. A., Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1858-59, With An Appendix, New Orleans, 1859. Champomier, P. A., Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1860-61, With An Appendix, New Orleans, 1861.

In 1860 Agricultural Census Alexander Mims listed 700 improved acres with another 7520 acres unimproved along with \$20,000 worth of farm machinery. There were 20 horses, 35 mules, 40 milch cows, 14 work oxen, 150 head of cattle, and 300 hogs on the property. The plantation produced in 1859 7000 bushels of corn, 599 of peas & beans, 60 of Irish potatoes, 2410 of sweet potatoes, 300 lbs of butter, 15 tons of hay, 105 bales of cotton, 65 hogsheads of sugar, and 800 gallons of molasses. There were 103 slaves on the property in 20 dwellings. Lumbert Mims was able to produce 77 bales of cotton on his property while Joseph Mims produced 75 bales. Lumbert had 15 slaves in 4 dwellings on his property while Joseph had 9 slaves in 3 dwellings.

The 1860 Federal Census lists Sarah Mims with her son Alexander as head of household:

Alex Mims	30M	Texas
Sarah Mims	55F	Alabama
Leonard Mims	23M	Texas
David Mims	18M	Texas
Sarah Josephine Mims	16F	Texas
Joseph Mims	33M	Texas

Joseph Mims had married Susan Caroline McNuchols in Matagorda County in 1856. Joseph Mims' wife and family are listed in a separate household:

Susan Mims	33F	Alabama
Mary Mims	2F	Texas
Columbia Mims	8/12F	Texas

Lumbert Mims' household:

LumbertMims	35M	Alabama
Henrietta Mims	28F	Alabama
B[enjamin] F. Mims	12M	Texas
W[illia]m Mims	10M	Texas
Frank Mims	6M	Texas
Alphonso Mims	3M	Texas
Emma Mims	2F	Texas

Sarah Weekley Mims died on January 31, 1861. Buried in the family cemetery, Sarah's tombstone inscription reads:



Photo Courtesy of James H. Mims

Sarah McNeill, who lived on the Levi Jordan Plantation and was acquainted with several of the Mims family, makes mention of the passing of Sarah Mims in her diary:

...Mrs. Sarah Mims, universally known and respected, an old settler was called hence, in the fifty-third year of her age. Her death was sudden, of congestion. Mr. (Annie) and I were there the day before and the night of her death. Grandma (Mrs Levi Jordan) was there at the time of her death. Oh! It was a sad scene, enough to melt a heart of stone to witness the grief of those six grown men and one daughter. How could they give up their dear mother! She was speechless, but extended her hand to all who gave theirs. Several of her children promised to meet her in heaven. They are wicked all of them. May God help them turn from evil. A dozen years ago old Mr. Mims died, leaving his wife and children heavily in debt. By industry and frugality she cleared her property and raised her children respectably. Long will she be missed.⁶⁵

An inflated value of the estate of Sarah Mims amounted to \$226,032.96 in April 1861. Sarah and her family had prospered during the 1850's. She owned almost all of the Joseph Mims League valued at \$25 per acre along with all the improvements amounting to \$103,600. She had recouped 1333 2/3 acres out the Rebecca Cummings League valued at \$10,666.66. In Brazoria she owned a warehouse in Block 14 valued at \$1000. R. & D.G. Mills was holding credit for her in the amount of \$13,498.88. Ball & Hutchings of Galveston also had \$2864.92 on credit in her name. Additionally there were 116 slaves recorded as her property valued at \$80350.⁶⁶ Her lands and slaves were divided among her living children. Alexander and Samuel Mims equally received 1300 acres of the plantation lands along the San Bernard River which held the home and improvements.⁶⁷

With the death of Sarah Mims and the beginning of the Civil War the Mims Plantation had reached its zenith and would now decline. September 7, 1861, Sam and David Mims both enlisted for the duration of the war in Company B Eighth Texas Calvary, Terry's Texas Rangers, as did many of the young men in Brazoria County. David Mims died from disease January 6, 1862 in Kentucky. He had attended Baylor at Independence in 1859. Samuel Mims, the original second corporal of Company B, was wounded in the assault on Murfreesboro, Tennessee July

⁶⁵ Raska, Ginny McNeill & Hill, Mary Lynne Gasaway, eds., *The Uncompromising Diary of Sallie McNeill 1858-1867*, Texas A&M University Press, College Station, Texas, 2009, p. 94. It is not quite understood why Sallie considered the Mims family as wicked but she was a religious person and even had Leonard Mims as one of her potential suitors before he married.

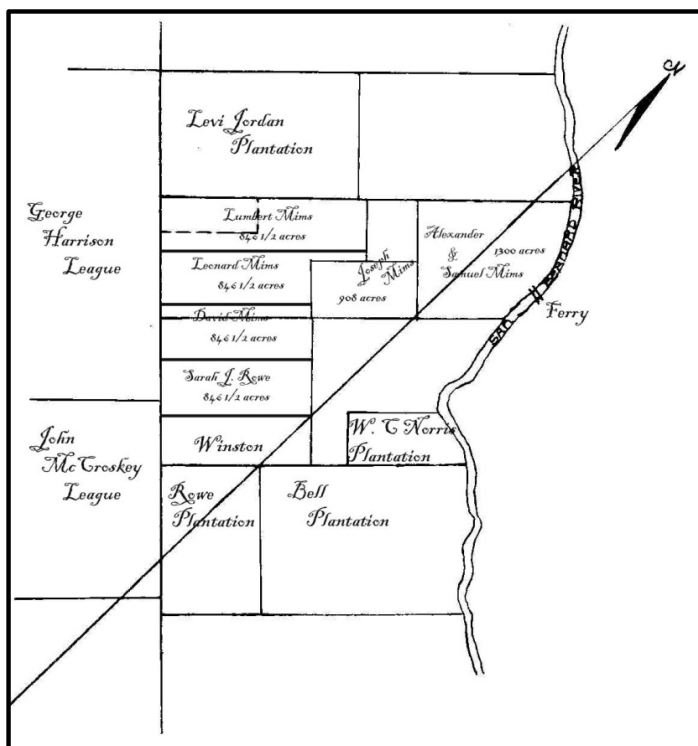
⁶⁶ Record of Wills: C 432/35

⁶⁷ Sarah Mims Probate Case 771, County Clerk's Office, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas

13, 1862 and fell into enemy hands when Federal forces reentered the city. He died a few days later July 17.⁶⁸

During the Civil War Leonard Mims married Sue Francis Patton on November 7, 1861 and Sarah Josephine Mims married Benjamin Franklin Rowe⁶⁹ November 25, 1862. The Rowe family had a plantation on the west side of the San Bernard River not far from the Mims Plantation.

January 31, 1862 Sarah Mims Estate was partitioned among all her children.⁷⁰



Division of Sarah Mims' Lands Among her Children

With the deaths of Samuel and David Mims during the Civil War their property was also divided among their living siblings in December 1862.⁷¹ Alexander Mims, a bachelor, remained the owner the Mims home on the San Bernard River and the ferry.

⁶⁸ Cutrer, Thomas W. ed., *Our Trust is in the God of Battles*, the University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, Tennessee, 2006, pp. 362-63.

⁶⁹ Father Shadrack Manley Rowe-Mother Sarah F. Tripp

⁷⁰ Probate Court Minutes: J 118/25 & J 127/28

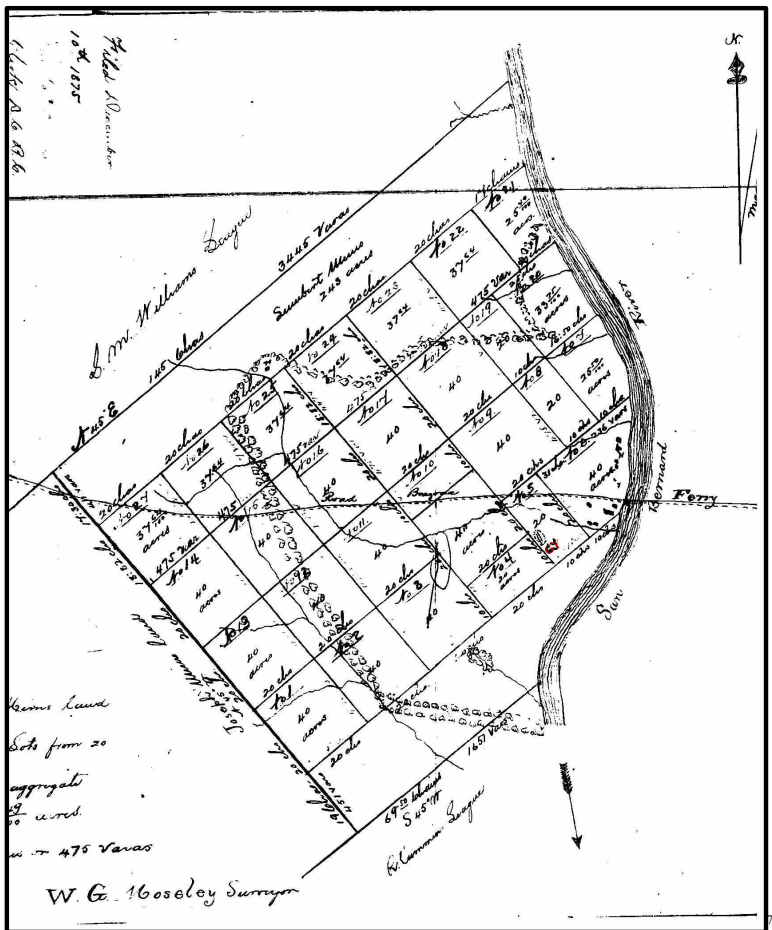
A black and white portrait of a man in a military flight suit, identified as a pilot. He is wearing a flight helmet with a chin strap and has a serious expression. The background is dark and indistinct.

⁷² Probate File 771

⁷³ *The Houston Chronicle*, April 19, 1936, Houston, Texas

After the Civil War each of the siblings essentially had a plantation for each of their families. Each tried their hand at cotton farming for a time. Leaving a large family, Lumbert Mims died March 16, 1869 being buried in the Mims family cemetery.

Alexander Mims, unmarried, died January 22, 1873 without a will. He still owned 1300 acres out of the Joseph Mims league, which included the old Mims place and the sugar mill.⁷⁴ The old homestead was subdivided into lots to be sold off at public auction December 1875.



⁷⁴Alexander Mims Probate Case 940, Brazoria County Clerk's Office, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas

⁷⁵Record of Wills: E 698

Joseph Mims bought lots 5 & 6 out of the Alexander Mims estate in January 1876 but did not comply with the terms of the sale. George Melgaard purchased all the machinery from the sugar mill for \$575. These lots contained the home with improvements and the family graveyard. J. Calvin McNeill then purchased the same lots and other tracts once owned by Alexander Mims.⁷⁶ Joseph Mims purchased for \$4422 the same properties from James C. McNeill the same day.⁷⁷ Joseph and his family would now make the old Mims home their place of residence. Joseph, unwisely, put up all his lands as security for the transaction. However, the cotton business was not good to Joseph and McNeill brought suit against him for lack of payment in 1879. In 1880 James C. & Charles P. McNeill bought the property back at auction which included several tracts leaving Joseph only a 200 acre homestead out of the old Norris-Winston tract for his home.⁷⁸



J. Calvin & Charles P. McNeill Playing Chess Courtesy of the Brazoria Historical Museum

James C. McNeill deeded his half ownership of all his properties over to his wife in September 1881.⁷⁹ Then at the end of the same year the McNeill brothers partitioned their lands held together with James C. McNeill receiving ownership of the other half of the Mims property.⁸⁰

A group formed to keep civil order, called the "San Bernard Rifles", drilled behind the great barns on the McNeill place and held their secretive meetings behind closed doors.⁸¹

J. Calvin, Charles P. McNeill, and J. V. Hinkle formed the McNeill Ferry Company with \$500 worth of stock in January 1885.⁸²

In 1921 the old Mims home burned down. Jerry Johnson, a freedman, was among the first to arrive after the catastrophe. He offered \$1000 in cash to Calvin McNeill to rebuild his home. McNeill, financially secure, refused the offer, but admitted he could use help cleaning up.

⁷⁶ BCDR: P 341/43

⁷⁷ BCDR: S 66/69

⁷⁸ BCDR: S 472/73

⁷⁹ BCDR: T 419/23

⁸⁰ BCDR: U 21/28

⁸¹ Creighton, James A., *A Narrative History of Brazoria County*, Texian Press, Waco, Texas, 1975, p. 262.

⁸² BCDR: X 364

Johnson rounded up a group of Negro workers who helped remove the debris from the fire.⁸³ James Calvin McNeill then built a new home in the same vicinity. Descendants of J. Calvin McNeill and Sarah Emma Mims McNeill (daughter of Lumbert Mims) have owned the property ever since. No archeological work has been done in the area.



The McNeill Home ~1927 Courtesy of the Brazoria County Historical Museum

The Mims family cemetery has been cleared in recent years by James H. Mims and should contain the graves of several other family members which may not have tombstones or markers.⁸⁴

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mimsfamily/Cem%20-%20TX%20-%20Brazoria%20-%20Mims%20Family%20Narrative.htm>



Photograph Courtesy of James H. Mims

⁸³ Creighton, James A., *A Narrative History of Brazoria County*, Texian Press, Waco, Texas, 1975, p. 264.

⁸⁴ Mims, James H. and Lisa, "Mims Family Cemetery Designation Application Material and Genealogy for Joseph Mims Family", 2003, Mims Cemetery File, Brazoria County Historical Museum, Angleton, Texas

The Joseph Mims league should contain the home sites of Joseph Mims (1824)-J. Calvin McNeill (1880-present), Edmund Weekley-Lumbert Mims (1845-after Reconstruction), Joseph Mims (1862), Norris-Anthony Winston (1843-1857), Pinckney S. McNeel (1843), Leonard S. Mims (1862). There were at least two sugar mills, one located near the home of Sarah Mims and the other in the Norris-Winston tract at one time. The slave quarters for the Joseph Mims plantation would be of special interest due to the heavy percentage of African slaves at this location.

Henrietta Mims, widow of Lumbert Mims, was able to hold on to their initial 300 acres in the NW corner of the Mims league until her death in 1875. Her household listed in the 1870 census:

Henrietta Mims	38F	Farmer	Alabama
Franklin Mims	23M	Stock Raiser	Texas
William Mims	19M	Stock Raiser	Texas
Anna Mims	17F		Texas
George Mims	15M		Texas
Alphonso Mims	13M		Texas
Emma Mims	12F		Texas
Sarah Mims	7F		Texas
Madora Mims	6F		Texas
Samuel Mims	5M		Texas
Roberta Rowe	1F		Texas
Gabe Butler	20M	Domestic Servant	South Carolina

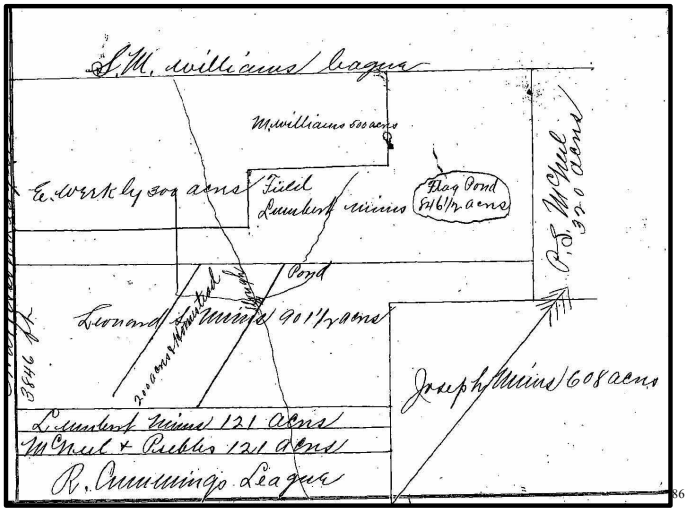
Leonard S. Mims and his wife Susan Francis (Fanny) Patton raised their family on their land in the western part of the Mims league. Their family listed in the 1870 census:

Leonard Mims	28M	Farmer	Texas (Should be 33yrs old)
Fannie Mims	22F		Mississippi
Julia Mims	5F		Texas
Robert Mims	1M		Texas

In 1878 a suit was brought against Leonard Mims and the family was forced to live on their 200 acre homestead.⁸⁵ Leonard S. Mims passed away in ~1880. The family is listed in the 1880 census:

Leonard S. Mims	43M	Farmer	Texas
Susan Mims	37F		Tennessee
Robert F. Mims	11M		Texas
Celie Mims	9F		Texas
Calvin Mims	7M		Texas
Annie B. Mims	5F		Texas

⁸⁵ BCDR: 20 17/19



Joseph Mims and his wife Susan Caroline McNichols had a cotton plantation on their portion of the Mims league which they kept even after they ran into financial problems while living at the original Mims home. During the early 1870's Joseph loaned money to many of the freedmen in the neighborhood with the freedmen using part of their crops as security. By the mid 1870's Joseph was borrowing money to keep his plantation running. The 1870 Federal Census lists the Joseph Mims family:

Joseph Mims	43M	Farmer	Texas
Susan Mims	30F		Alabama
Mary Mims	12F		Texas
Columbia Mims	10F		Texas
David Mims	8M		Texas
Susan Mims	3/12 F		Texas

After being forced to move back to their original home in the Norris-Winston tract, Joseph Mims was financially strapped. He sold his wife the homestead for \$1000. Susan later remarried George F. McGinnis. The lands were divided among the Mims children and grandchildren in January 1890.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ BCDR: 20 18

⁸⁷ BCDR: 18 224/27



A photograph of a blue grid map. The grid is composed of white lines. There are several handwritten labels in white ink: "House" appears three times, each preceded by a small square symbol. One "House" is located in the upper left, another in the upper middle, and a third in the upper right. Below the middle "House" is the label "Sugar Hill". A horizontal line with a small loop is drawn across the grid, passing through the middle "House" and "Sugar Hill" labels. There are also several diagonal lines drawn across the grid.

Brazoria County Historical Museum 1988.070c.0086

⁸⁸ BCDR: 18 226

Appendix A Joseph Mims Family

Joseph Mims b. 1790 St. Stephens, Washington County, Alabama (Samuel Mims & Hannah Bready)
d. November 23, 1844 Brazoria County, Texas (buried Mims family cemetery)⁸⁹
m. 1st 1815 St. Stephens, Washington County, Alabama

Jane O'Neal b. 1792 St. Stephens, Washington County, Alabama
d. 1820

A. Benjamin Franklin Mims b. 1815 d. June 26, 1840 Montgomery Hill, Baldwin County, Alabama

B. Harriet Ann Mims b. 1817 Alabama
m. 1st Alabama

Dr. Christopher George Cox b. d. August 20, 1833 Brazoria County, Texas (cholera)
1. ? Cox
m. 2nd August 28, 1834 Brazoria County, Texas

Pinckney S. McNeel b. 1811 Mississippi d. October 27, 1871 Matagorda County, Texas

1. Gerard McNeel b. 1836-
2. Benjamin Milam McNeel b. 1838-
3. John (Daniel) Shelby McNeel b. 1839-
4. Joseph Mims McNeel b. 1842-
5. Ann McNeel b. 1843
6. William McNeel b. 1845-
7. Sarah Pinckney McNeel b. 1848-
8. Julia McNeel b. 1849-
9. John Pinckney McNeel b. 1851-
10. Virginia McNeel b. 1853-
11. Molly Jane McNeel b. 1854-

C. Jane Elizabeth Mims b. 1819 Alabama
m. Alabama

W. W. Peebles b. 1813 South Carolina

1. Ben F. Peebles b. 1838 Alabama
2. Robert Peebles b. 1847 Alabama
3. Henry Peebles b. 1852 Alabama
4. Riply Peebles b. 1854 Alabama
5. Mims Peebles b. 1859 Alabama

m. 2nd January 8, 1821 Baldwin County, Alabama

Sarah Weekley b. January 21, 1806 St. Stephens, Washington County, Alabama (George Weekley Margaret Dunn)
d. January 31, 1861 Brazoria County, Texas (buried Mims family cemetery)

A. Lumbert Mims b. September 1, 1822 Alabama
d. March 16, 1869 Brazoria County, Texas (buried Mims family cemetery)
m. November 17, 1846 Brazoria County, Texas

Henrietta Jane Norris b. 1831 Mobile, Alabama d. 1875 Brazoria County, Texas

1. Benjamin Franklin Mims b. November 4, 1847 Brazoria County, Texas
d. August 10, 1894 Alvin, Texas
2. Sarah Tate Mims b. July 24, 1849 Brazoria County, Texas Mims Plantation
d. May 17, 1860 Brazoria County, Texas (buried Mims family cemetery)
3. William Crawford Mims b. 1850 Mims Plantation d. 1903
4. Ann Elizabeth Mims b. ~1853 Mims Plantation d. 1874
5. George Franklin Mims b. 1855 Mims Plantation d. before 1879

⁸⁹ In a petition to the Probate Court Lumbert Mims states that his father died December 21, 1844. With the tombstone placed at a later date there is the possibility of an error on the tombstone.

6. Alexander Alphonso Mims b. 1857 Mims Plantation d. 1880
7. Emma Eurelia Mims b. 1859 Mims Plantation d. 1875
8. Sarah Emma Mims b. 1863
9. Eudora Catherine Mims b. February 2, 1865 Brazoria County, Texas d. May 21, 1950 Houston
10. Samuel Mims b. 1868 Mims Plantation d. 1924

- B. Joseph Mims b. 1826 Texas
 m. October 16, 1856 Matagorda, Texas
 Susan Caroline McNuchols b. 1840 Alabama
 d. November 18, 1902
1. Mary Mims b. 1858
 2. Columbia Sidney Mims b. 1859 d. 1912
 3. David Mims b. 1863
 4. Susan Caroline (Carrie) Mims b. March 1870 d. 1932 Brazoria, Texas
 5. Ida Mims
- C. Alexander Mims b. 1829 Texas d. January 22, 1873 Brazoria County, Texas
 D. Samuel Mims b. 1832 Texas d. July 17, 1862 Murfreesboro, Tennessee (Died from wounds)
 E. Ann Elizabeth Mims b. 1834 Texas d. August 24, 1842 (buried Mims family cemetery)
 F. Leonard S. Mims b. 1837 Texas d. ~1880
 m. November 7, 1861 Brazoria County, Texas
 Susan Francis (Fannie) Patton b. 1848 Mississippi-(Tennessee 1880 census)
1. Julia Mims b. 1865
 2. Robert F. Mims b. 1869
 3. Celie Mims b. 1871
 4. Calvin Mims b. 1873
 5. Anna Beulah Mims b. 1875
- G. Julia Mims b. 1839 d. August 12, 1844 (buried Mims family cemetery)
 H. David Mims b. 1842 Texas d. January 6, 1862 Kentucky (disease) during Confederate service
 I. Sarah Josephine Mims b. 1844 d. before 1870
 m. November 25, 1862 Brazoria County, Texas
 Benjamin Franklin Rowe b. 1837 Kemper County, Mississippi d. Oct. 1, 1888(1885) Brazoria County,
 Texas (Murdered)
1. David Franklin Rowe b. 1867
 2. (Roberta) Beula Rowe b. 1869
 3. Aleck Rowe b.

Appendix B
Deed Records

GRANTORS	GRANTEES	Kind of Instrument	Book	Page	Month	Day	Year	Acres	Description
Mexican Government	Joseph Mims	Deed	2	496	August	19	1824	4428	Joseph Mims League
Joseph Mims	Reuben McDonald	Deed			August	9	1834	500	
Joseph Mims	Mary D. Cleveland	Deed	A	36/37	April	10	1837	608	\$608 out of Mims Lge
John Cummings	Joseph Mims	Deed	C	99/100	Dec	11	1837	2000	\$6000 West 1/2 Rebecca Cummings League
J. W. Fannin Estate	Joseph Mims	Deed	C	456/57	Dec	3	1839		\$22,100 J. W. Fannin's slaves & interest in plantation
Thomas F. McKinney	Joseph Mims	Mortgage	A	224/25	Dec	4	1839	3000	\$37500 +30 slaves
Joseph Mims	Reutersville College	Deed	B	31	May	1	1841	640	Gift B.F. Mims Bounty Lands
Jesse A. H. & Mary D. Cleveland	D. R. W. Davis	Deed	B	51/52	May	1	1841	608	\$7000 Gin House, 60 saw Gin, Corn mill, 100 hd Hogs & 45 hd of Cattle Mims Lge
D. R. W. Davis	John B. Norris	Deed	B	213/14	Jan	25	1843	608	Mims League
Joseph & Sarah Mims	Harriet A. & Pickney S. McNeel	Deed	B	328/29	Oct	27	1843	300	Gift to daughter who lived on land
Lumbert Mims Executor	Thomas F. McKinney	Deed	B	498/500	May	6	1845	3044 2000	+ 72 Slaves
Joseph Mims Estate		Appraisal	B	500/01	May	6	1845		Appraisal of plantation
Sarah Mims	Edmund Weekley	Deed	D	9	May	6	1845	300	SW corner Mims Lge
Sarah Mims	Thomas F. McKinney	Mortgage	B	501/02	May	6	1845	3044 2000	\$35520.48 land & slaves security
Sarah Mims	Thomas F. McKinney	Mortgage	B	502/04	May	6	1845	2744 2000	\$35520.48 land & slaves security
Sarah Mims	Thomas F. McKinney	Mortgage	D	337/39	March	29	1847	2744 2000	Refinance \$25000 Slaves + all cotton & sugar crop till paid
Thomas F. McKinney	Sarah Mims	Release	D	336	March	30	1847		Release Mortgage B 501/02
Sarah Mims	Thomas F. McKinney	Mortgage	D	340/41	March	30	1847		Extension
John B. Henrietta Norris	John H. William C. Norris	Deed			March	18	1848	608	
Sarah Mims	Thomas F. McKinney	Mortgage	E	138	March	20	1849	2744	\$20,000 Land + 87 slaves as security
Sarah Mims	Thomas F. McKinney	Deed	E	142	March	21	1849	1334	\$5336 sold out of Rebecca Cummings LG
Thomas F. McKinney	Sarah Mims	Release	E	143/44	March	20	1849		Paid off B-502 & \$8700 advanced by McKinney crop to finish pay off debt
Sarah Mims	Thomas F. McKinney	Mortgage	E	422/25	March	20	1849	2744	\$20,000 Slaves + cotton & sugar crops till paid
Pinckney S. Harriet McNeel	John H. William C. Norris	Deed						300	
Thomas F. McKinney	John M. Lean	Deed	F	47/48	Feb	12	1851	1334	\$5336 Rebecca Cumming League
John M. Lean	Sarah Mims	Deed	F	48/49	Feb	14	1851	1334	\$5669.50 same tract
Sarah Mims	Abraham S. Woodcock	Deed	F	130/31	Aug	31	1851	666 2/3	\$1000 out of Rebecca Cummings League
John H. Norris	Anthony Winston	Deed	F	165/67	Dec	15	1851	608 300	Mims League

Edmund & Hannah Weekley	Lumbert Mims	Deed	G	421/22	Oct	23	1855	300	\$4000 their acreage & home
Reuben McDonald Alabama	Sarah Mims	Deed	G	472/73	July	30	1853	500	\$2500 nw Corner on the San Bernard
Anthony Catherine Winston	Sarah Mims	Deed	G	776/77	Jan	15	1857	600 300	\$14000 his sugar plantation + livestock
B.F W. C. Mims Anne Butler	Mrs Harriet J. Mims	Deed	N	302	Oct	30	1872		\$1833.34 children release their 1/2 in their father's estate
Thornton Spiller	Joseph Mims	Mortgage	N	487	April	3	1873		\$42.09 debt 1 bale cotton securtiy
Henry Morgan	Joseph Mims	Mortgage	N	556	March	11	1873		\$42.30 debt 1 bale cotton securtiy
George Holmes	Joseph Mims	Mortgage	N	558	April	4	1873		\$90.96 entire cotton crop security
Walter Brown	Joseph Mims	Mortgage	N	574	March	17	1873		\$75.90 debt 1 bale cotton securtiy
Leonard S. Mims	Susan Frances Mims	Deed	O	81/83	Jan	19	1874	846	His plantation & livestock
Leonard S. Mims	Eugene J. Wilson	DT	O	286/88	June	15	1874	200	\$150 note to William H. Crofton homestead
Estate David Mims	Joseph Mims	Deed	P	98/101	July	6	1875	121	\$520.30 Cummings league
Estate Alexander Mims	Eugene J. Wilson	Deed	P	214/15	Dec	7	1875	40	Lot 9 out of 970 tract
Estate Alexander Mims	Eugene J. Wilson	Deed	P	215/16	Dec	7	1875	37	Lot 22
Joseph Mims	J. C. McNeill	Mortgage	P	251/54	Jan	3	1876		\$5000 note 909 acre plantation + other tracts as security
Joseph Mims	J. C. McNeill	Mortgage	P	255	Jan	3	1876		Cotton crop 1876
Joseph Mims	J. C. McNeill	Deed	P	256	Jan	3	1876		\$1000 Interest in Alexander Mims estate
Alexander Mims Estate	Joseph Mims	Deed	P	341/42	Jan	21	1876	20 40	Lot 5&6 A. Mims estate + ferry boat
Leonard S. Mims	William H. Crofton	Mortgage	P	530/32	June	28	1876		\$1039.78 note land + cotton crop security
Leonard S. Susan F. Mims	Eugene J. Wilson	DT	P	606/07	June	28	1876		Same security
Joseph Mims	A. P. McCormick	DT	S	66/69	Jan	24	1876		\$4422 note J. C. McNeill Home place
Lumbert Mims Estate	Eugene J. Wilson	Deed	T	615/16	March	6	1876	243	\$243
Leonard S. Mims	Ahrens & Heinze	Mortgage	R	262	Sept	16	1878		\$50 10 bales cotton security
Joseph Susan C. Mims	Eugene J. Wilson	Mortgage	R	338	Sept	25	1877		\$100 3 bales cotton security
W. H. Sharp Sheriff	C.P. J. C. McNeill	Deed	S	472/73	Feb	7	1880	20 40	\$1428.75 Lot 5 & 6 Mims Place + tracts
James C. McNeill	Sarah E. McNeill	Deed	T	419/23	Sept	1	1881		Mims dwelling & other tracts to his wife
Joseph Mims	Susan C. Mims	Deed	V	463/64	Sept	22	1883	200	\$1000 homestead & livestock to his wife
Sarah Emma & J. C. McNeill	Susan C. Mims	Deed	V	775/76	Feb	1	1884	107	\$230
J. C. McNeill C. P. McNeill J. V. Hinkle		Charter	X	364	Jan	7	1885		McNeill Ferry Co. \$500 worth of stock
Susan C. Mims McGinnis	David Mims Carrie Mims Ida Mims Columbia C. Crafton Mamie McNeel	Deed	18	224/27	Jan	3	1890		Gift Joseph Mims homestead tract to children & grandchild

Appendix C
39 African Slaves Owned by James Walker Fannin Jr. Estate

Mary 2 children	\$800
Emily	600
Schaco 2 children	800
Monetia 1 child	650
Snork 1 child	650
Frany 2 children	800
Jane 1 child	650
Boys	
Isha 15	450
Archo 15	450
Quibo 15	450
John 15	450
Coffee 15	450
Salauka 16	600
Goma 16	600
Men	
Will	900
Sam	900
Joe	900
Henry	900
Sandy	900
Abe	900
Agie	700
Demado infirm	400
Joe cripple one hand	400
Frank	700
Sam	700
Benno	700
Ogo	700
Jack	700
Jaw Bone	700
Bob	700

Appendix D

Last Will and Testament of Joseph Mims

In the name of God Amen. Being of sound mind though feble health I deem it prudent to make this my last will and testament. To my dearly beloved wife Sarah I bequeath one third part of my Estate after the debts are all paid which property at death I wish to revert to my children by my present wife Sarah. My children Mrs. Jane Peples and Mrs. Harriet McNeel I wish when my estate has been freed from debt to have one thousand dollars each, if the debts are not paid there will be nothing coming to them.— The balance of my estate I wish equally divided between my children by my present wife Sarah.

My son Lombard I wish to leave with all the family. Keep them together and work my Estate out of debt, if possible. The purchase I made from P. S. McNeel I wish surrendered if I die

I leave my wife Sarah and my eldest son Lombard as my executors.

Joseph Mims

October 25, 1844

The following transcription was added by James H. Mims, IV on 7/3/2014:

Brazoria County

Record of Wills

Book A

Page 608

The Succession of Joseph Mims deceased

The Republic of Texas} To the honorable the Judge of the Probate Court

County of Brazoria } in and for said county. The petition of Lom

bard Mims of said county respectfully represents that his father Jos

eph Mims of said county departed this life in said county on the 21st day of December last, after having first made and published his last will and testament

which is here presented and shown to the court that by the said

will be your petition is appointed one of the Executors thereof

He then first prays that after due notice given the said will may be probated

and that letters issue to him in accordance with the law. He also prays

for and order to appraise the estate; and he prays for all other _____

January 15th 1845

N L Townes atty

For L.Mims

jlsmith1946@sbcglobal.net

July 2014

Commented [JHM1]: I added this as it has December instead of November (month on tombstone). This doc was dated 1845 and the tombstone was probably placed around 1861 or later.

Appendix E
74 Slaves Owned by Joseph Mims at His Death

Ben aged 35 His wife Fanny aged 26 Children Malinda 2 Louisa 5	Abram aged 26 His wife Emily aged 22 Children Robert 6 Mary 3	Jo 28 Jolla 19 Gomay 22 Quiby 22	
Bo aged 25 His wife Jane aged 20 Children Nancy 4 Loke 1 ½	Will aged 50 His wife Milly aged 38 Children Daniel 15 Hista 13 Henry 12 Mary 10 Barbary 8 Douglass 5 Charles 2 Ann 4 mo	Archo 20 Jaw Jone 25 Sandy 47 Amy 18 Coffee 19 Archie 19 Dolphus 18 Joe 24 Sam 36 Frank 22	
Ojo aged 28 His wife Mary aged 25 Children Lucinda 8 George 6 Lewis 4 Thompson 2 Becky 1	Henry aged 27 His wife Orico aged 21 Children William 3 Thomas 1		
Demado aged 40 His wife Shacko aged 25 Children Ila 8 Dabiah 6 Susan 4 Solomon 1	Chelauka aged 23 His wife Patsy aged 21 Child Milly 3		
Jo aged 45 His wife Menetia aged 34 Children Isam 8 Martha 5 Eliza 3	George aged 25 His wife Ester 21		
Sam aged 32 His wife Ina aged 32 Children John 6 Martin 4 Todd 2 Minerva 1 mo.	Mary aged 45 Children Delia 10 Rose 10 Calvert 8		

Appendix F
87 Slaves Owned by Sarah Mims 1849

Sam 36 Wife Ina 26	Ben 40 (Died) Wife Tena 30	Mary 50	Jolly 23 Goma 25
Children John 10 Martin 8 Zado 6 Minerva 5 Jefferson 1	Children Malinda 12 Louis 10 Elijah 2	Children Rose 15 Delia 15 Calvin 12	Coffee 23 Quibbe 26 Archo 25 Douglass 23 Sandy 50 Anry 23 Jack 21
Abram 30 Wife Emily 26	Bob 30 Wife Jane 35	Henry 35 Wife Orris 23	Sam 43 Joe 32
Children Robert 10 Grace 7 Lear 1	Children Nancy 10 Sike 6	Children William 6 Thomas 5 Ritta 3 James 2 Rachael 3 mo.	Jaw Bone 34
Will 55 Wife Mille 44	O'jo 33 Wife Mary 30		
Children Daniel 18 Henry 15 Mary Ann 14 Barbara 12 Douglass 9 Charles 6 Ann 4 Sam 2 Emanuel 5 mo.	Children Lucinda 12 George 10 Lou 8 Thompson 6 Becca 4 Phebe 3 Dennis 4 Mo.		
Frank 28 Wife Hester 17	Demado 45 Wife Shako 30		
Child Washington 2 mo.	Children Illa 12 Delia 10 Susan 8 Solomon 6 Pendleton 2 Phillis 1		
Chelauka 27 PatsyWife 25	Jo 50 Wife Monitia 30		
Children Mira 2 Nelly 5 mo.	Children Isam 12 Martha 9 Ellen 4 Rhoda 7 mo.		
George 30 Wife Esther 25			

Appendix G
List of 116 Slaves Owned by Sarah Mims at Her Death

Joe man 47	Milly woman 52	Bob man 40	Coffee man 30
Martha woman 40	Manuel man 14	Jane woman 34	Frank man 45
Joe child 1	Sam boy 15	Irene child 4	Osha man 35
Roller man 37	Ann girl 16	Nancy woman 20	Milly girl 19
Rose woman 24	Sylva girl 8	Tike man 18	Jaw Bone 50
Caroline child 6	Charles man 20	George man 50	John man 23
Ephram child 4	Douglas man 24	Mary Ann woman 24	Bartara woman 20
Reuben child 2	Louisa girl 18	George child 2	Hilliard boy 1
Sam man 45	Matilda child 1	Cora child 6	Ajie woman 45
Iner woman 30	Ojor man 43	Nora child 4	Quibe man 36
Sam child 1mo.	Mary woman 37	Catherine child 2	Susan woman 18
Martin man 20	Margaret child 1	Henry man 48	Mandy girl 12
Morris child 2	George boy 20	Onie woman 38	Stafford man 47
Peter child 8	Dennis boy 14	Sylva child 7	Ohio man 60
Ben child 4	Laura girl 10	Bill boy 18	Menceher woman 35
Sado man 18	Phoebe girl 13	Jim boy 18	Ellen woman 16
Miverva woman 16	Munro boy 3	Rita girl 14	Viney girl 9
Jeff boy 13	Joam man 24	Clarissa girl 14	Flora girl 7
Maria girl 10	Deliah woman 25	Nat boy 10	Hannah girl 5
Lamkin man 40	Liza child 1	Rachel girl 9	Thaddeus man 30
Patsy woman 32	Albert boy 4	Fanny woman 50	Lewis man 22
Moses child 2	Alfred boy 4	Lage boy 14	Calvin man 24
Julia child 4	Rainey girl 10	Emily woman 36	Mary woman 48
Malinda child 6	Jenney girl 9	Robert man 20	Nancy woman 48
Nelly child 14	Daniel man 28	Grace girl 17	Dolphus woman 32
Myra child 16	Lucinda woman 23	Leah girl 14	Jerry boy 10
Betsy girl 12	Becky child 1	Sandy man 60	Jack man 40
Will child 4	Little Will child 4	Goma man 34	
	Molly child 2	Hester woman 25	
		Mahala child 1	
		Bernard child 8	
		Wash boy 13	

Appendix F
Estate of Sarah Mims

An Estimative Inventory of the property belonging to the Estate of Sarah Mims deceased-

1 League of land situated in Brazoria County on the West Bank of the San Bernard River, including the plantation of the deceased which league of land was originally granted to Joseph Mims, less Three Hundred acres now belonging to L. Mims being the place where she resided at the time of her death Valued at \$25 per acre \$103,600.00

1333 2/3 acres Land situated in Brazoria County Texas bordering the Mims league & taken out of the R. Cummings League Valued \$8 per acre	\$10,666.66
34 Mules Valued	2550.00
8 head of Horses & Colts	800.00
10 Yoke of Oxen	500.00
200 Head more or less of Cattle	1200.00
200 Head " " " Hogs	500.00
4 Wagons Valued	200.00
7 Carts "	245.00
50 Ploughs more or less	100.00
Farming utensils including	
Hus Gearing & C. & C. valued	250.00
10,000 Bushels of Corn more or less	5,000.00
1500 Lbs. Bacon	187.50
1 Ferry Boat Flat	200.00
25 Shocks of Fodder	375.00
7 Beds & Bedding	
350.00	
4 Tables	25.00
1 Writing Desk & case	52.00
3 Beamers	50.00
18 Chairs	18.00
1 Carriage & Harness	400.00
Household & Kitchen furniture	50.00
¼ lot including warehouse	
In town of Brazoria in Block 14	1000.00
\$13,498.88 in the hands of R & D G Mills	13,498.88
Note of Ball 7 Hutchings due	
Jan 1 st 1862 for \$2864.92 with	
10 per cent interest from July 10, 1861	2864.92

+ 116 slaves

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