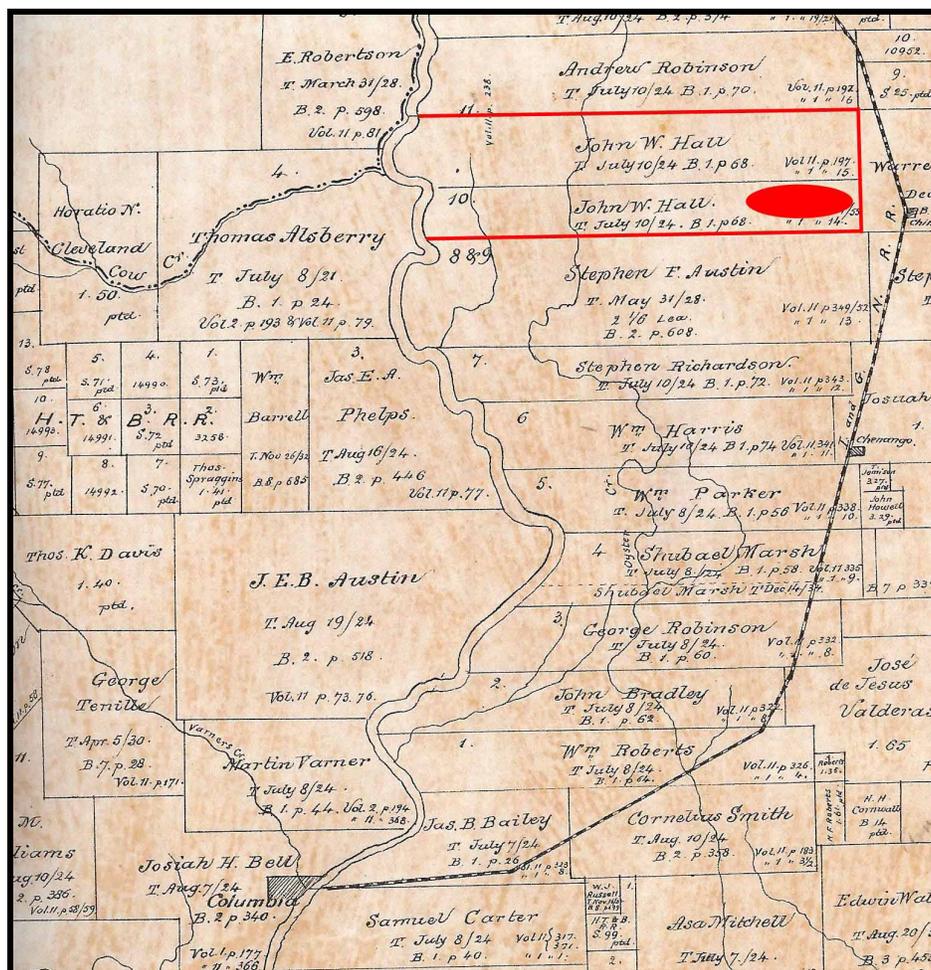


Warren D. C. Hall-Albert Sidney Johnston-William Preston Johnston-William J. Hutchins
China Grove Plantation
Brazosport Archeological Society



John W. Hall Leagues 10& 11 Map 1879 The General Land Office of the State of Texas

Arriving in Texas in 1828 Warren D. C. Hall with his wife would eventually settle on land in his brother John W. Hall's league 10 east of the Brazos River in the northern part of Brazoria County establishing China Grove plantation. As creditors were attempting to seize Hall's property Albert Sidney Johnston and Albert T. Burnley bought the plantation. Albert Sidney Johnston and his wife moved to China Grove in the mid 1840's. Unable to make the meager cotton plantation pay for itself Johnston was also foreclosed on and by 1850 joined the U. S. military. In the early 1850's William Prescott Johnston purchased the plantation his father had been forced to abandon. Running the plantation from Kentucky Johnston sold out in 1860 to William Hutchins. Hutchins held the plantation through the Civil War and Reconstruction

building it into a sugar producer. James G. Brown and Samuel M. Dodd owned China Grove plantation from 1876-1884. They would contract convict labor from the State of Texas through most of this time period. After several owners Claud B. Hamill bought the property after the turn of the century. The Hamill family still owns a major part of the China Grove plantation.

John Warren Hall and Mary E. Sims had four sons, John Warren, Warren DeWitt Clinton,¹ George Braxton, and Thomas Jefferson Hall born in the Carolinas. John W. Hall possibly had a second wife with whom he had one son William Sims Hall. The Hall family moved to near Natchitoches, Louisiana after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803.

Warren D. C. Hall studied law and by 1812 he had opened a law office in Natchitoches. John W. and Warren D. C. Hall both joined the Gutierrez-Magee expedition. Warren was elected captain and the brothers participated in the opening engagements, including the battle of Rosillo in 1813. Both brothers returned to Louisiana in protest over the atrocities against royalist prisoners, reportedly ordered by Gutierrez, at Alazan Heights and fortunately were not at the battle of Medina.

Warren D. C. Hall was mustered in on the 7th November of 1814 and continued in service for a period of six months. With the British threatening to capture New Orleans during the War of 1812, private William S. and corporal Warren D. C. Hall were in James H. Gordon's Company of Louisiana Volunteers and served under Lieut. Thomas Chaney in the battle fought on the 23rd of December 1814 after which he was among the troops commanded by General McCaslin.²

In the summer of 1815 Warren D. C. Hall joined Henry Perry in the Juan Pablo Anaya movement enlisting volunteers at New Orleans. By the fall of 1816 they had gathered 300 volunteers at Bolivar Point above Galveston Island on the Texas Coast. On Galveston Island, Perry joined forces with General Xavier Mina for an invasion of Soto de Marina, 180 miles south of the Rio Grande in November 1816. April 17, 1817 Louis Michel Aury, resident commissioner for the port of Galveston, convoyed the troops down the coast to the site of Soto de Marina. General Mina's initial attack was successful. However, the loyalist forces later counter attacked. General Mina was killed in action and most of his troops surrendered and were imprisoned. Previously Hall had sailed with Aury back to Bolivar Point near Galveston Island and did not participate in any of the action on land and was again fortunate to have escaped another defeat by the Spanish.³

¹ Warren D. C. Hall is listed as being born in Guilford County, North Carolina in the *Handbook of Texas*. All his brothers are listed as being born in South Carolina. In the 1850 and 1860 Federal Census he is listed as being born in South Carolina. Have one source as being born in Union County, South Carolina 1794 which fits best.

² Application for bounty land March 27, 1856

³ Margaret Swett Henson, "PERRY, HENRY," *Handbook of Texas Online*
jlsmith1946@sbcglobal.net December 2015

When Louis M. Aury returned to the Texas coast he found Jean and Pierre Lafitte in control of Galveston Island.⁴ Warren D. C. Hall came to know the buccaneer, Jean Lafitte. Hall related that Lafitte “was one of the prepossessing men I ever met. He wore no uniform, but dressed fashionably, and was remarkably neat in his appearance...He spoke English correctly, but with marked French accent...possessed superior conversational powers and entertained his guests with many original and amusing anecdotes...”



Portrait of Jean Lafitte

In 1819, a group of filibusters from the Natchez, Mississippi nominated Dr. James Long to lead an expedition in an attempted to make Texas an independent country. A Supreme Council established itself at Nacogdoches, Texas with plans to secure the entire territory from the Spanish. The council needed a port of entry; Galveston was chosen as the best possible location. In order to establish a base on the island Dr. Long tried to appoint Jean Lafitte governor, but Lafitte declined.

Since Lafitte’s forces were too strong, Dr. Long instead decided to build a fort at Point Bolivar. While in Louisiana in early in 1820, Dr. Long recruited Warren D. C. Hall; they then

(<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fpe42>), accessed November 18, 2015

⁴ Harris Gaylord Warren, “AURY, LOUIS MICHEL,” *Handbook of Texas Online*

(<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fau04>), accessed November 20, 2015

⁵ Portrait of Jean Lafitte by anonymous artist from the Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas
jlsmith1946@sbcglobal.net December 2015

stocked a schooner with provisions at New Orleans. After arriving at Point Bolivar it took but little time for Long's 500 followers to consume the provisions Warren D. C. Hall and his companions had gathered. In an attempt to live off the land rather than expensive supplies, Long divided his army into detachments which were positioned strategically across the countryside.

Dr. James Long also had his wife Jane Wilkinson Long with him at their newly built fort by 1820. Jane Long actually was entertained aboard the *Pride* by her host Jean Lafitte while at Galveston. By her account "he was, in every particular the very reverse of what her imagination had pictured him. He was of middle stature perhaps a little above it graceful in his form and movements; with marked manly features; dark hair, brown complexion and a pair of eyes as vivid as lightning and as black as ebony. In conversation he was mild, placable and polite; but altogether unjocular and free from levity. There was something noble and attractive in his aspect in spite of its occasional; severity; and between the fierceness of his glance, and the softness of his speech, the disparity was striking."⁶

Dr. Long's volunteers were down to only a little over fifty individuals by the spring of 1821 with Warren D. C. Hall having wisely returned to Louisiana. Long left Bolivar September 19, 1821 to drive the Spanish garrison from Presidio La Bahia, however, he was overrun by loyalist forces within a few days after taking La Bahia.⁷ Long, after being a prisoner in Mexico City, was killed during a confrontation with a Mexican sentry early in 1822, ending the last of the Anglo/Hispanic expeditions to wrest Texas from Spanish control.

As Mexico became an independent republic and Stephen F. Austin began landing colonists on the Brazos River Warren D. C. Hall had returned to Louisiana. March 21, 1821 in Rapides Parish Warren D. C. Hall married Julietta Hadley a native of New York. She was the only child of John and Elizabeth Hadley born in 1798. Both her parents had died and her legal guardian had been her uncle Moses Hadley from Mississippi. At 27 years of age, Hall gave up filibustering to begin his life as a family man.

Warren D. C. and Julietta Hall with 1 male child and 13 slaves moved to Texas by November 1828, where they settled near Columbia and Hall took an oath of allegiance to the Republic of Mexico on December 21, 1828.⁸ As a Mexican citizen, Hall joined his brothers, who were already settled in the new republic. George Braxton Hall is numbered among Stephen F. Austin's original "Old Three Hundred" colonists and was living near Brazoria. John W. Hall had married and settled near Washington-on-the-Brazos, a town he soon would play a major role in establishing.

December 2, 1830 Warren D. C. Hall received a league of land next to his brother John W. Hall in the northern part of Brazoria County. He does not appear to have settled on this land

⁶ Gluck et al, *Lamar Papers* Vol II, p. 76.

⁷ Turner, Martha Ann, *The Life and Times of Jane Long*, Texian Press, Waco, Texas, 1969, pp. 66-69.

⁸ Williams, Villamae, ed., *Stephen F. Austin's Register of Families, From the Records of the General Land Office, Austin, Texas*, p,

but was anxiously seeking land elsewhere in the county. From the home of John Austin with whom he may have been residing he wrote to Stephen F. Austin requesting permission to obtain the James A. E. Phelps league on July 26, 1831: "...I am at a loss to act—but having my hands idle waiting for a place to go I have concluded to take possession of the Phelps league of land and so place the thing at issue, however, if you think I am acting precipitately I am willing to abandon it."⁹ A few days later Hall again writes Austin from the Phelps place¹⁰: "I wrote you a few lines the other day on the subject of Phelps land and of my intention to take possession of it I have done so—You say in your note to me by Mr Hunter that if an application is made to you that you would turn the papers over to a higher authority to be acted upon immediately I am anxious that the thing should be settled as soon as possible If it should be necessary for me to come up please to let me know by the bearer of this—I may have acted prematurely in taking possession but I was compelled to employ my hands at something and could not think of waiting there or four months for the thing to be decided..."¹¹

On August 16, 1824 Dr. James A. E. Phelps received title to two labors of land on the east side of the lower Brazos River and a league on the west side of the Brazos almost twelve miles above Bell's Landing (East Columbia) in Brazoria County, Texas. The 1826 Census of Austin's Colony classified Phelps as a physician with a household including his wife, two sons, and two daughters, one servant, and fifteen slaves. The Ayuntamiento of San Felipe ruled in March 1830 that Phelps' had an improvement of about 30 acres on his league which had been left with an agent and working hands therefore the doctor had complied with the colonization law.¹² Stephen F. Austin certified in January 1832 that although Phelps had delayed establishing his residence, his improvements and expenditures justified an extension of time for completion of his contract.¹³ The "improvements" evidently were his new plantation home Orozimbo, located on the west bank of the Brazos at the head of tide water and at a point where navigation was still advantageous. In a suit *Warren D.C. Hall vs James A. E. Phelps* it was stated that "he erected a dwelling, tenements and improvements, occupying it with his family, composed of himself, a wife, children, and slaves cultivating the same until August 1831...that on the 13th of that month, being himself absent with his wife on a visit to a child in the United States, having left his slaves and overseer in full possession, Hall, with violence and without any right...expelled the overseer and the slaves from the dwelling and tenements they occupied, driving them to some distant huts on the land and about the 6th of November following, he drove them wholly from the land, putting out of the enclosures the household furniture, etc., leaving the same to be wasted and destroyed, and took entire possession...continued with force to occupy until March following; that meantime Phelps returned, sought restoration of his estate, but it was withheld, until after an agreement was extorted from him to convey 1,000 acres, on the lower part of the league, in consideration of being restored to possession of the

⁹ Letter Warren D. C. Hall to Stephen F. Austin, Bolivar, July 26, 1831 Moses and Stephen F. Austin Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, Austin, Texas

¹⁰ Dr. James E. Phelps built Orozimbo plantation. See separate report.

¹¹ Letter Warren D. C. Hall to Stephen F. Austin, Phelps Place, July 30, 1831 Moses and Stephen F. Austin Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, Austin, Texas

¹² Barker, Eugene C., ed., "Minutes of the Ayuntamiento of San Felipe de Austin, 1828-1832", Southwestern Historical Quarterly OnLine, Volume 22, Issue I, p.81, (accessed November 13, 2008).

¹³ Ibid.

residue...” It would take several years before this suit was finally settled by the Texas Supreme Court in Phelps’ favor.¹⁴

After Dr. Phelps’ return to Texas Warren D. C. Hall may have moved to the Liberty area. In October he attended the Convention of 1832 at San Felipe as a delegate from Liberty Municipality and appears in the Anahuac area as hostilities broke out there.¹⁵

Juan Davis Bradburn,¹⁶ the Virginian born commander of the Mexican troops at Anahuac, held three runaway slaves at Anahuac that had escaped from Louisiana. Acting as slave catcher, William M. Logan,¹⁷ tried unsuccessfully to confront Bradburn and obtain the slaves. Bradburn initially refused to give up the slaves citing Mexican law prohibited their return. Logan then hired William B. Travis to retrieve the slaves. Travis devised a scheme to have them released. A note was given to the guards at the Mexican post indicating a group of armed men was on its way from the Texas-Louisiana boarder to take the slaves by force if necessary.¹⁸

Juan Davis Bradburn, after a few days, learned that the armed force was all a ruse. He immediately suspected William B. Travis as the instigator and had him arrested in May 1832.¹⁹ Patrick C. Jack went to the aid of Travis demanding his immediate release and was also arrested.²⁰ Monroe Edwards aided the prisoners by passing coded messages to and from Travis and Jack. He also attempted to arouse the local populace without result.²¹

A letter was discovered among the laundry of William B. Travis and Patrick C. Jack addressed to “O. P. Q.” to have a horse ready on a certain day and time. Juan D. Bradburn suspected Monroe Edwards as “O. P. Q.” He moved all the prisoners to a brick kiln for better security. A few nights later James Morgan’s store in which Monroe Edwards worked was surrounded by soldiers, who “without hardly allowing him time to put on his clothes, hurried him a prisoner to the guardhouse.”²²

In June 1832, the internal strife escalated, armed resistance resulted at both Velasco at the mouth of the Brazos River, and Anahuac. At Anahuac volunteers arrived to free Juan D. Bradburn’s prisoners. Warren D. C. Hall was elected second in command under Frank W.

¹⁴ Dallam, James Wilmer, *Opinions of the Supreme Court of Texas from 1840-1844, Warren D. C. Hall vs. James A. E. Phelps*, The Gilbert Book Co., St. Louis, Missouri, 1882, pp. 435-441.

¹⁵ *Handbook of Texas Online*

¹⁶ Juan Davis Bradburn arrived at the site of Anahuac in the fall of 1830 and by March 1831 he had laid out the plans for the town of Anahuac and an accompanying military fort. Henson, Margaret S., *Juan Davis Bradburn*, pp. 49-55.

¹⁷ William M. Logan had entered Texas in 1831 living at Liberty. Later he fought at the siege of Bexar and San Jacinto.

¹⁸ Henson, Margaret S., *Juan Davis Bradburn*, pp. 94-96.

¹⁹ Monroe Edwards identifies “Mr. Hall of the Brazos”, probably Warren D. C. Hall, as the individual responsible for circulating the report of the armed force approaching Anahuac and that William Barret Travis had a separate letter sent to Juan D. Bradburn. Letter Monroe Edwards to R. M. Williamson, Anahuac, May 24, 1832, Gulick, Charles A. Jr., et al eds., *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar.*, Vol. I, pp. 91-92.

²⁰ N. D. Labadie related that “while Travis and Jack were in their office, a guard of thirteen soldiers appeared at the door, and took them to quarters as prisoners, without any explanation.” Labadie, Nicholas D. “Narrative the Anahuac, or Opening Campaign of the Texas Revolution.” *The Texas Almanac for 1859 in The Texas Almanac, 1857-1873: A Compendium of Texas History*, p.130.

²¹ Letter Monroe Edwards to R. M. Williamson, Anahuac, May 24, 1832, Gulick, Charles A. Jr., et al eds., *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar.*, Vol. I, pp. 91-92.

²² Labadie, Nicholas D. “Narrative the Anahuac, or Opening Campaign of the Texas Revolution.” *The Texas Almanac for 1859 in The Texas Almanac, 1857-1873: A Compendium of Texas History*, pp. 130-131.

Johnson.²³ It would not be until July 2, 1832 that Travis, Jack, Edwards, and the other prisoners would be released after Juan Davis Bradburn had been replaced as commander at Anahuac.²⁴ In the interval John Austin had returned to Brazoria County to gather more volunteers and arms. This led to the Battle of Velasco June 26. Warren D. C. Hall must have accompanied his friend John Austin back to Brazoria County as he was appointed on June 20th to serve on the committee to communicate with the officers at Velasco. Although some authors disagree it would be likely that Hall did participate in the battle on the 26th.

In 1833 Warren D. C. and Julietta Hall had a daughter Julia H. Hall. It is unknown what became of their son listed in 1828.

Locating in the Columbia area probably on his brother, John W. Hall's league, Warren D. C. Hall later become associated with a duel often reported in local Brazoria County lore. In late July or early August 1834 a duel took place between John A. Wharton (1806-1838) and William T. Austin (1809-1874).²⁵ Although they are written by second hand sources and are almost fifty years after the event they are quite entertaining although not entirely accurate. Ammon Underwood²⁶ wrote the first article:

The Duel Between Colonel John A. Wharton and Colonel William T. Austin

Columbia, May 8, 1882-In fulfillment of a promise to furnish THE NEWS with reminiscences of an historical event which transpired in Texas in 1834, between parties whose names and characters are intimately interwoven in the history of this period, I desire to furnish the following narrative.....

At a place near Columbia, taking its name from that event, and ever since known as Battle Island²⁷, occurred the famous duel between Colonel John A. Wharton and Colonel William T. Austin. The writer saw much of the practice of each party at Columbia preparatory to the conflict, which was with the old fashioned dueling pistols...Both parties in their practice were splendid and unerring shots, as their targets most surely proved. The seconds, if my recollection serves me right, for Wharton were a Mr. Cage²⁸ and Collinsworth²⁹, Dr. Archer³⁰, surgeon. For Austin, Colonel Warren D. C. Hall and William J. Eaton³¹. The place was finally reached by the

²³ Henson, Margaret Swett, *Juan Davis Bradburn*, Texas A&M University Press, College Station Texas, 1982, p.101.

²⁴ Henson, Margaret S. *Juan Davis Bradburn*, pp. 99-110.

²⁵ *The duel between Wharton and Austin has taken place Wharton got his arm broke and badly shattered so much so that it is probable he will lose it.* Peach Point, James F. Perry to P. C. Jack [*The Austin Papers*, Vol. II p.1074].

²⁶ Ammon Underwood was a resident of Columbia for many years and has quite a file at the Brazoria County Historical Museum Library.

²⁷ Located about ten miles north of Columbia and named for its islands of oak trees not actually an island. Battle Island Ranch is in operation today.

²⁸ Benjamin. F. Cage and Franklin C. Gray possibly bought out *The Advocate of the Peoples Rights* (Weekly newspaper owned by John A. Wharton and Oliver H. Allen published in Brazoria 1833-1834) in order to start their own paper *The Emigrant*. The only reference I have in my files: Extra Edition, *The Advocate of the Peoples Rights*, March 27, 1834.

²⁹ James Collinsworth (?) Arrived possibly in early 1834 from Tennessee and was on Sam Houston's staff at the Battle of San Jacinto [*The New Handbook of Texas*, The Texas State Historical Association, 1996, Austin, Texas].

³⁰ Dr. Branch T. Archer was a close friend of the Wharton family for many years and is buried at Eagle Island Plantation.

³¹ No information on William J. Eaton in my files ?

parties, the ground measured, the parties placed³², and the word given³³. Austin fired a little before Wharton, but their fire was almost at the same moment. Wharton's pistol, or right arm, was wounded and the bone painfully shattered, almost from the hand to the elbow³⁴. Austin, of course, was unhurt. Col. Wharton was taken to the residence of Dr. Phelps³⁵, where he was attended to for a few days by his intimate friend and surgeon, Dr. Branch T. Archer...Afterward Wharton remained for considerable time at the residence of Dr. Phelps, suffering the most excruciating pain, but under the skillful treatment of Dr. Phelps his wounds were healed, but ever afterward was compelled to write with his left hand, which he did with great facility...³⁶

This highly romantic rendition of the duel brought forth other letters to the editor, which may be slightly more factual to the real cause of the "difficulty":

HEMPTEAD, May 22, 1882- In THE NEWS...I see a very interesting narrative by Mr. A. Underwood, of the historic duel...Mr. Underwood certainly had fair opportunities for knowing all the particulars of this affair, yet there are some that he has omitted, which the writer believes to be true...

At the time of the time of the death of John Austin, elder brother of William T., in 1833, a duel was pending between him and Colonel Wharton. At Columbia, in the presence of W. D. C. Hall and others, Wharton made the remark that he was "glad John Austin was dead, as it saved him the necessity of killing him, which he surely would have done if the duel had occurred." This remark coming to the ears of young Austin, he determined, in accordance with the usages of the day to take his brother's place and thus avenge the insult. Wharton was well known as an experienced duelist and a dead shot. Austin was little more than an apparently over grown, physically powerful, but awkward boy, not yet developed into that splendid, manly stature which distinguished his mature years. After consultation with Colonel W. D. C. Hall, a devoted friend of the Austins, it was determined that young Austin should seek his enemy out and provoke a challenge. Then followed the visit to San Felipe, the assault upon Wharton, the challenge and acceptance. Austin began pistol practice under his friend Colonel Hall, who was every way qualified to teach his pupil, but at first could not hit the head of a flour barrel at ten paces. Before the time fixed for the duel, however, it is said he could cut a suspended tape every shot.

³² The seconds, walking together would step off ten paces with slightly exaggerated strides. Pegs were driven at the spots where the shooters would stand [*Dueling in the Old South*, Jack K. Williams, Texas A&M University Press, College Station, Texas, p.3.]

³³ The second who had won the "word" explained his procedure...he warned, and should either of you fire before the word 'fire' or after the word 'stop' he falls by my hand [Ibid. p.4.]

³⁴ ...*From your brother, I learned the news of the Colony, and of its politicks, for really I was ignorant of them, as no one sends me, either papers, or hand Bills. I heard with singular pleasure, that you were recovering the use of your arm! I had heard of the occurrence of the meeting, but never the particulars, until I learned them from your brother—They gratified me much, because they were in perfect accordance, with my estimate of you, and your character, should you ever have to meet a Crisis—I hope you may never feel the necessity of another...* Sam Houston to John A. Wharton, Nacogdoches, 14th Apl, 1835, *The Writings of Sam Houston 1813-1863*, A. W. Williams and E. C. Barker, The University of Texas Press, 1938, Vol. I, pp. 293-294].

³⁵ Dr. James E. A. Phelps owned the Orozimbo Plantation just north of Columbia, where Santa Anna would later be imprisoned after the Battle of San Jacinto.

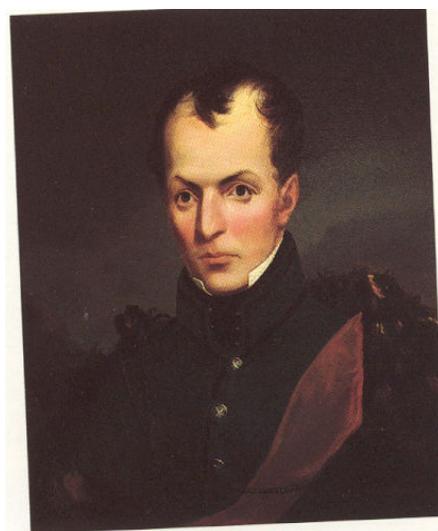
³⁶ *Galveston Daily News*, May 18, 1882

At the meeting one of Austin's friends said to him, "Let this be your best shot, and end him." "I don't want his life," replied Austin. "Then he will kill you," said the friend. "I'll see to it that he does not kill me, either," said Austin with perfect composure. It was well known to be Wharton's custom in pistol practice to hold his weapon "ready" over his shoulder, the muzzle pointing upward and backward, Austin's "ready" was muzzle down at his side. At the word Austin fired first, Wharton's pistol dropping to the ground as it fired. Austin had put his ball squarely in the wrist of his adversary's pistol hand. "Are you satisfied!" demanded Austin. "No," replied Wharton; "but I have no hand to shoot with." "Then take your left, and I will take mine," was the reply. The seconds declared that the code had been complied with, and interfered to prevent the left-handed duel³⁷.

The cause of this duel as herein given...as handed down in a family intimately acquainted with Colonel Austin both before and after the duel,...A. A. Pittuck.³⁸



Colonel William T. Austin



Colonel John A. Austin

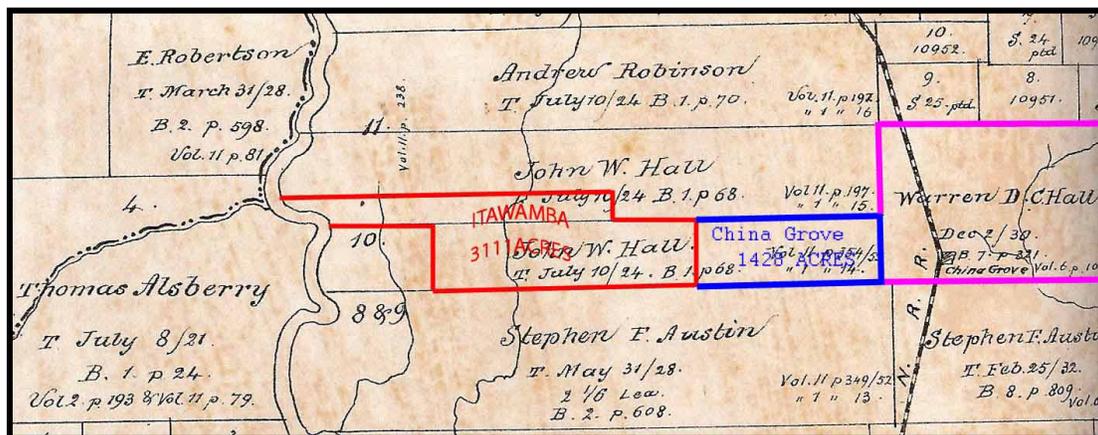
In 1835 Warren D. C. Hall was made a member of the committee of safety at Columbia, and in November represented Columbia at the Consultation. Hall was adjutant inspector general for Stephen F. Austin until November 1835 when he resigned the post. David G. Burnet early in 1836 appointed Hall secretary of war for the Republic of Texas, a post he held until after the Battle of San Jacinto. After San Jacinto Colonel Hall commanded the post at Velasco until May 26, 1836.

³⁷ The Code of Honor in dueling held that it was the duty of the seconds *if after a fire either party be touched, the duel is to end; and no second is excusable who permits a wounded friend to fight, nor no second who knows his duty will permit his friend to fight a man already hit* [*Dueling in the Old South*, Jack K. Williams, Texas A&M Press, College Station, Texas, p. 96.]

³⁸ *Galveston Daily News*, May 25, 1882

John W. (Captain Jack) Hall³⁹ received title to Leagues 10 & 11 and two labors of land July 10, 1824. The 1826 census lists him as a farmer and stock raiser with a wife Patsy, two young sons, four servants, and twenty slaves. He settled at Washington-on-the-Brazos and established a ferry there. The two leagues of land granted him by the Mexican government, however, lay east of the Brazos River on both sides of Oyster Creek above the town of Columbia.

Warren D. C. Hall initiated a purchase agreement with George A. Smith of Virginia February 15, 1837 to buy 3111 acres of land in Leagues 10 & 11. This became Itawamba plantation.⁴⁰ Warren D.C. Hall then purchased in March 1837 all of League 10 and portions of League 11 from his brother.⁴¹ After several tracts are sold from League 11 it was discovered that it is actually 1 ½ leagues and the remainder unsold tract was bought by Warren D. C. Hall from his brother in May 1837.⁴² Warren D. C. Hall with Julietta and their daughter Julia, settled on the eastern end of his brother's League 10 building China Grove Plantation into a cotton plantation. China Grove was named for the grove of China Berry trees which Hall had planted around his home.⁴³



John W. Hall Leagues 10 & 11 Map 1879 The General Land Office of the State of Texas

September 1836 Monroe Edwards, the African slave runner who knew Warren D. C. Hall from Anahuac, bought the Point Pleasant plantation, 17 African slaves, and the cotton & corn

³⁹ John W. Hall born South Carolina ~1886 and died January 1, 1845.

⁴⁰ Brazoria County Deed Records: A 6

⁴¹ BCDR: A 13, 14 & 15

⁴² BCDR: D 594/95

⁴³ According to Brazoria County lore Warren D. C. Hall was at China Grove when “several Mexicans came into the dining room while Hall was eating breakfast and attempted to kill him, and would have done so had it not been for his body servant, Old Tom, who came to his master’s assistance by using the dining room chairs as clubs. He knocked them down and about until they were glad to get away, before Hall got his gun.” Strobel, Abner J., *The Old Plantations and Their Owners of Brazoria County, Texas*, Lake Jackson Historical Association, 2006, pp.70-71.

crop for \$35,000 from Benjamin Fort Smith.⁴⁴ From Monroe Edwards, who skipped out of Texas in 1839, it was learned that he had actually sold the plantation to Warren D. C. Hall for \$35,500 just days after he purchased it September 1836.⁴⁵ Warren D. C. Hall quickly sold the property to Vincent A. Drouillard for \$40,000 the next month.⁴⁶ September 16, 1837 Monroe Edwards related his true involvement with the original transaction in the *Telegraph and Texas Register*:

“As my name is necessarily used in the foregoing adv., and as the conclusion would naturally be that I am embarrassed or unable to pay my debts, in explanation...I will remark that in the purchase of the above named property I acted merely as the nominal purchaser of one Warren D. C. Hall; the personage and the property itself being bound for the amount due thereon. Columbia, Sept. 12, 1837.”

M. EDWARDS

While practicing law and working his plantation Warren D. C. Hall was also speculating in several such large tracts of land. September 23, 1837, he advertised in the *Telegraph and Texas Register* lots and acreage associated with the town of Liverpool on Chocolate Bayou in Brazoria County. He had earlier attempted to aid his friend John Austin in the selling of property in Bolivar located at the head waters of the Brazos River. His real estate grew to encompass more than 17,000 acres, by 1840 according to tax records.

By 1840 he also owned 51 slaves. In order to have working capital for his plantation Warren D.C. Hall issued a deed of trust for \$6868.03 to John W. Harris and E. M. Pease in favor of Thomas Allcorn using his plantation lands, his headright league, and nine slaves as security. It was noted that several of these slaves were direct from Africa.⁴⁷ Of course, this would beg the question of how Hall had increased his number of slaves from 13 in 1828 to 51 in 1840. He did purchase 19 slaves from his brother William S. Hall's estate in 1840. Did he purchase African slaves from Monroe Edwards or was he a partner with Benjamin Fort Smith or Monroe Edwards in their illicit activities?

January 9, 1841 Warren D. C. Hall refinanced and issued a deed of trust for \$12,871.70 to Thomas McKinney and Samuel May Williams of Galveston. He used his plantation and 16 slaves as security. Additionally he had to consign 160 bales of cotton from his 1841 crop and 180 bales from his 1842 crop to McKinney and Williams.⁴⁸

Warren D. C. Hall joined the expedition against General Adrian Woll in the later part of 1842 and safely returned home.

⁴⁴ BCDR: A: 23/24

⁴⁵ BCDR: A 96

⁴⁶ BCDR: 1/2

⁴⁷ BCDR: A 371/73

⁴⁸ BCDR: B 11/12

As the final payment on his mortgage was becoming due in 1843 Warren D. C. Hall entered into an agreement with Albert Sidney Johnston and his business partner Albert T. Burnley to sell China Grove and his headright league which was adjacent to China Grove.⁴⁹

This was after he had already lost a suit brought by William B. Aldridge and Thomas Davis and was foreclosed on in the later part of 1842. The China Grove Plantation and Warren D. C. Hall league of land were sold at auction December 10, 1842 to Robert J. Townes.⁵⁰

In a ploy to delay creditors from seizing all of their property Julietta Hall sued her husband Warren D. C. Hall claiming she had separate property at the time of their wedding in 1821. In her petition to the court: "...said husband was poor without money or property that she your said petitioner had inherited from her parents and had at the time of her said marriage four hundred and fifty dollars and a large quantity of superior silver plate and furniture of great value to wit a total value of twenty five hundred and twelve dollars..." Warren D. C. Hall testified that "At the time of my marriage with her I owned some property but was embarrassed in my circumstances and had incurred debts as surety, for which judgments had been rendered against me and to satisfy which all my property was sold during the year after my marriage" and "shortly after my marriage with the petitioner she did receive as alleged, the money , plate furniture and jewelry mentioned...they were sold by me for the sum stated and as near as I can recollect, and proceeds of the sale applied to the payment of my debts." The judge awarded Julietta \$5590 to be paid from W. D. C. Hall's assets.⁵¹ In 1845 Julietta sued again stating she had not been paid anything by her husband. The judge agreed and had his personal property seized and sold at auction with Julietta picking up most of this property.⁵² This included 6 slaves, 2 wagons, 10 yoke of oxen, 12 work horses and mules, 3 riding horses, 20 mares & colts, 100 head of cattle, 150 sheep & goats, assorted farm implements, lots and acreage near Liverpool, a sloop *John O'Brien*, and crops now growing.⁵³ This helped them to at least keep some of their personal property.

August 1843 Robert J. Townes released the plantation and league of land to Albert Sidney Johnston and Albert T. Burnley for \$10.⁵⁴ Hall then sold the lands to Johnston and Burnley for \$15,704.36.⁵⁵ This transaction was turned over to Hall's creditors E. M. Peace and Robert J. Townes.⁵⁶

Warren D. C. Hall and Julietta remained in Brazoria County for several years and were Albert Sidney Johnston's nearest neighbors. They were actually able to get heavy financing to

⁴⁹ BCDR: B 209

⁵⁰ BCDR: B 282

⁵¹ *Julietta Hall vs Warren D. C. Hall*, Civil Suit 938, Brazoria County District Clerk, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas

⁵² *Julietta Hall vs Warren D. C. Hall*, Civil Suit 1184, Brazoria County District Clerk, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas

⁵³ BCDR: B 531/32 & B 532/33

⁵⁴ BCDR: B 283

⁵⁵ BCDR: B 283/84 B284/85

⁵⁶ BCDR: B 285 & B 285/86

buy 500 acres of land just south of China Grove in league 9 and built a sugar plantation on the property. For several years he rented the China Grove plantation from Albert Sidney Johnston. Hall was elected Justice of the Peace at Brazoria in 1843, serving until 1846. In 1847, Hall was appointed the first postmaster of Liverpool and lived in this area. From 1850 to 1852 he was also the Justice of the Peace at Liverpool. Though Hall lists himself as a planter in the 1850 Federal Census, tax rolls from 1850 do not list him with any acreage owned in Brazoria County since most of their property had been put in Julietta's name. The slave census lists him owning 16 slaves in Galveston County. In the 1850 Agricultural census Hall is listed as having 250 acres improved, another 3090 acres unimproved, and \$3000 worth of farm machinery. He owned 20 horses, 12 mules, 50 milch cows, 56 work oxen, 150 head of cattle, 60 sheep, and 200 hogs. The plantation produced 2500 bushels of corn, 1040 lbs of butter, and 14 tons of hay. The extra carpenter and laborer listed in the census may indicate the sugar mill was being built at the time.

W. D. C. Hall	Planter	55M	South Carolina
Julietta		50F	New York
Oliver H. Perry		22M	Louisiana
Julia H. Hall		17F	Texas
Parley Johnson	Labourer	35M	New York
Wm McKinzee	Carpenter	55M	Georgia
Y. Hughes	Overseer	30M	Kentucky
Alexander Pic	Overseer	30M	New York

By January 1853 they moved to the west end of Galveston Island to a place Hall called "Three Trees". In 1854 after refinancing several times and still not being able to make their payments W. D. C. and Julietta Hall signed over the plantation and a large group of their slaves to their major creditor, Henry H. Williams of Baltimore, Maryland.⁵⁷ Hall maintained a ferry across San Luis Pass on the route from Velasco to Galveston. He died of a stroke in Galveston on April 10, 1867 and was buried in the Trinity Episcopal Cemetery. Julietta lived in Galveston until her death in March 1878.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ BCDR: D 2/3, D4/5, D 6/7, D 7/8, D 149/54, G 202/06, G 206/07

⁵⁸ Julia H. Hall married Thomas C. Nelson March 1, 1851 in Brazoria County. Nelson was a mason. In 1860 their family was listed in the northern part of the Brazoria County.



Albert Sidney Johnston, the youngest son of Dr. John and Abigail Johnston, was born in Washington, Kentucky February 2, 1803. He received his early education from private tutors and later at Transylvania University before receiving an appointment to West Point in 1822. Henrietta Preston and Albert Sidney Johnston married January 20, 1829. They would have three children as she followed her husband in his military career. Henrietta's illness caused Johnston to resign his commission in 1834. Henrietta Preston Johnston died August 12, 1835 in Louisville, Kentucky.

Leaving his children in the care of his wife's family Albert Sidney Johnston came to Texas enlisting in the Texas Army as a private but was given the command of the Army of the Republic of Texas, January 31, 1837.

This appointment was a bitter disappointment to the jealous Felix Huston, who challenged him to a duel. General Johnston was shot through the hip, and the Secretary of War dispatched the following letter:

War Department
Columbia, February 7, 1837

Dr. A. Ewing, Surgeon General:

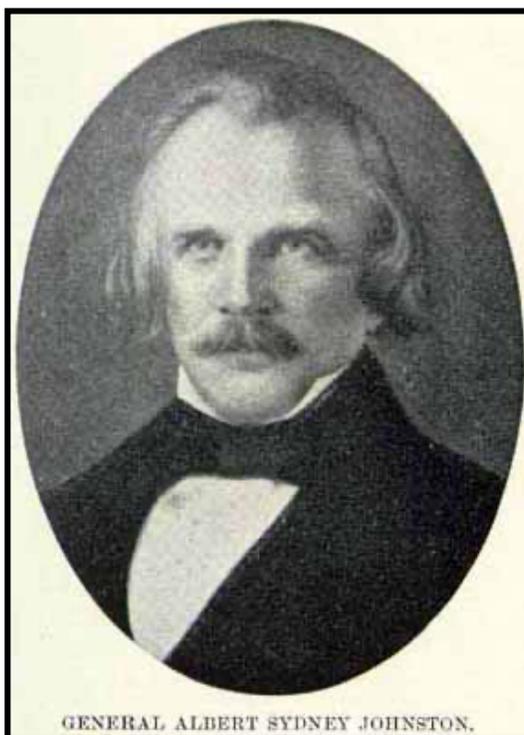
Sir—I am requested to instruct you to repair forthwith to the headquarters of the army, there to consult with the faculty on the case of Gen. A Sidney Johnston, who has been badly wounded by a pistol shot.

You will report while at the army the manes of all surgeons employed there; also a minute account of the situation of the medical department, so that all deficiencies may be remedied.

William S. Fisher
Secretary of War⁵⁹

After his recovery he was appointed Secretary of War of the Republic of Texas on December 22, 1838; he resigned March 1, 1840 and returned to Kentucky. October 4, 1843 he married Eliza Griffin. They would have one child in Kentucky before Johnston brought his family to Texas to settle at China Grove plantation in 1846 after serving a six month tour in the Mexican War as Colonel of the First Texas Rifle Volunteers.

May 4, 1846 Albert Sidney Johnston released Albert T. Burnley from their joint contract and assumed the total loan for China Grove himself.⁶⁰ A friend had cautioned Johnston against buying the plantation at the time Johnston and Burnley had made their original purchase. Although Johnston's original purchase included 5856 acres of land only a small portion was under cultivation. Johnston had sought to have this initial agreement annulled but could not. Now he would be under a heavy debt as he released Burnley.

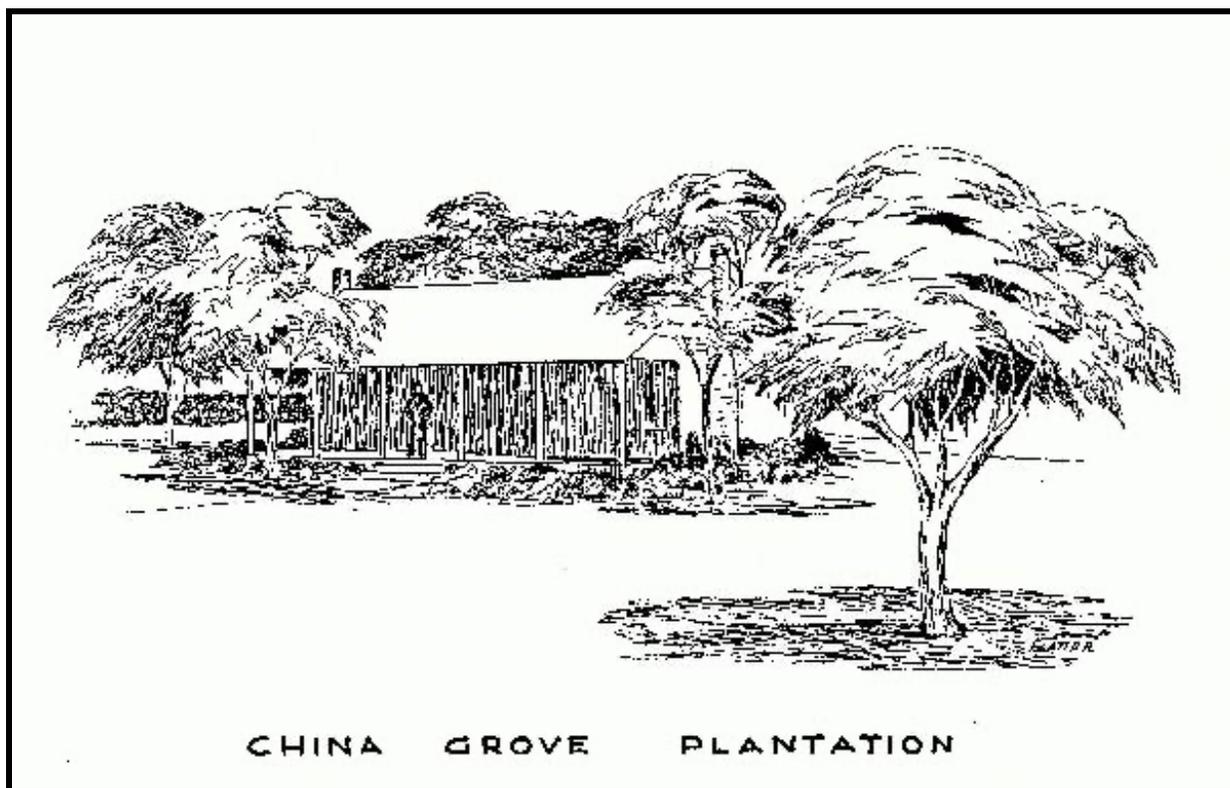


⁵⁹ Raines, C. W., editor, *Memoirs of Francis Richard Lubbock*, 1900, p. 39.

⁶⁰ BCDR: E 8/9

James Love, his lawyer in Galveston, had written him that the season's crop of cotton on China Grove was greatly reduced by storms and moreover, Love questioned the intentions of the present tenant W. D. C. Hall, to pay the rent even if the crop was plentiful. He urged Johnston to come to Texas at once to decide what could be done with the place.⁶¹

William Preston Johnston described China Grove, which was in fact a crude frontier homestead, during a visit to the family in 1847: "A double log cabin, covered with clapboard, and fronted with a wide porch, gave a rude shelter; and the pine tables, hickory chairs, and other household effects, might have suited a camp better than a permanent establishment...From the front porch the view extended as far as the eye could reach over a grassy plain, unbroken except by an occasional fringe or mot of distant timber....In early spring an emerald sward, embroidered with the blue lupin, the crimson phlox, the fragrant, and flossy mimosa, and a thousand flowers of varied perfume and hue, invited great herds of deer to browse on the tender grass...His house was shaded by a grove of the fragrant pride of China, and the spacious yard contained towering live oaks, pecans, and other beautiful native forest trees. A hedge of Cherokee rose with its snowy bloom protected the inclosure; and an ample orchard of figs and peaches furnished its fruits for the table..."⁶²



⁶¹ Roland, Charles Pierce, *Albert Sidney Johnston*, University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas, 1960, p. 119.

⁶² Johnston, William Preston, *The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston*, FB & C Ltd., London, England, 2015, pp. 146-148.

⁶³ Platter, Andrew Allen, *Educational, Social, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County*, Doctorial Dissertation Education, University of Houston, Texas, 1961, p. 208.

Albert Sidney Johnston set to work with his own hands to repair house, barn, and fences, and to grow crops of cotton, corn, fruits and vegetables. Assisting him was only one slave family of a husband, wife, two teenage boys, and one girl. Later he hired an Irish ditcher named John. He wrote to George Hancock:

China Grove, February 28, 1847

...You have long since, I fear, condemned me for neglect, and appearances are so much against me that I would not blame you; but I had a reasonable excuse in the unremitted labor I had to encounter in repairing my farm and preparing for a crop. I may say with truth that I have scarcely taken time to rest since we came here. The plantation has quite a renovated appearance, and I hope by next winter to have it in complete reparation, with a comfortable house to live in, and everything farmer-like about it. I hoped to be able to return in the autumn in time to make you a visit, but I was detained so much later than I expected that I was compelled to come here at once and go to work. This I believed to be the best course to pursue, whether I sold the place or kept it; and I have no doubt that what I have already done would make the place sell for two thousand dollars more. You would be surprised, I think, at what I have achieved in three months with my limited means. If a good opportunity to sell occurs, I will not let it pass...⁶⁴

Later the same year another letter to George Hancock:

China Grove, October 21, 1847

...We have been blessed with excellent health since we came here, and everything has prospered with us better than we had any right to anticipate. I have cribbed 900 bushels of corn, and will send enough cotton to market to pay all of our expenses of every kind, besides considerable repairs and improvements. This, I think, is as much as could have been expected from so small a force. I esteem it also of great importance to me to have acquired some practical knowledge as a farmer; and mine has been truly so, for I have often lent a hand in the work.

My object in coming here with a force so inadequate was to repair the dilapidations which rented property always suffers, and to keep the place until I could sell it, or make such an arrangement for the cultivation of the whole of the cleared land as to enable me to pay the remainder of my debt. The latter arrangement I would prefer, as I still regard this as a splendid estate, which, if possible, I would like to hold. If I had it paid for, I would be satisfied to live here with the little force I have, with the confidence of supporting myself, but it would be a pity to let so large a place lie idle, when its cultivation in sugar-cane would, without doubt, produce wealth in a few years...⁶⁵

In December 1847 their son Hancock McClung Johnston was born at China Grove and in spring of the next year the family was still in good spirits and enjoying their secluded life style in another letter to George Hancock:

⁶⁴ Jones, Katherine M., *The Plantation South*, The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., New York, 1957, p. 314.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 314-15.

China Grove, March 22, 1848

...We like our residence, here, although entirely secluded from all society whatever. If we lose the pleasures and sweets of society, we are free from all the drawbacks, which themselves form a numerous catalogue. Happy contentment reigns under our humble roof. We both industriously endeavor to do our part in our own sphere, and the result of our efforts is never the subject of complaint. We have been married nearly five years and the first unkind word or look has never passed between us. If this is true—and it is so, for I have said it—have we not sufficient indemnity for the loss of society and the absence of wealth? There are those who, not comprehending the object of life, would sneer at our humble and satisfied views of it, but experience will in the end convince...

We are now in the midst of spring. Everything is very beautiful around us. The grounds around our cabin are filled with China-trees in full bloom; large roses, also blooming; the Cherokee-rose hedge, its dark green spangled with large white roses; the Quasatchee, a species of acacia, “waving its yellow hair;” and the air redolent of sweets. We have fine strawberries and Irish potatoes, tomatoes in bloom, and many other vegetables. My corn all came up in February, and the stand is excellent and growing finely. I had a time of it to save it from the birds. The price of corn is eternal vigilance here...⁶⁶

The next Spring Albert Sidney Johnston wrote to his son William Preston Johnston:

China Grove, May 16, 1849

...My crops are small, but since I have become a farmer I have the gratification of success in everything I have attempted; and in gardening I have succeeded as well. We have had a great abundance of strawberries; and at this time have a good variety of excellent vegetables—artichokes, pie-plant, fine heads of early York cabbage, squash, tomatoes, Irish potatoes, and your favorite yams of last year’s crop... Our cantaloupes will soon be ripe, and in a short time we will have plenty of figs and watermelons.

The statistics of the poultry-yard and dairy are still more creditable to the industry and attention of your mother. She boasts of her flock of 100 turkeys, with prospects of as many more, besides swarms of chickens and ducks, and as many eggs as we want. All these things, with butter and milk, and a good appetite gained by some toil, enable us to live, so far as these matters are concerned, as well as rich folks...⁶⁷

The next month he wrote to his friend Edward Hobbs:

China Grove, June 10, 1849

..The life of seclusion and obscurity in which I have lived accounts for your not having heard from me...

We have been away from home but about three or four times to visit a neighbor since we came here...

On my return from Mexico after the campaign of Monterey, I found that all the proceeds of the Louisville property would scarcely suffice for the education of Will and his sister, and that it

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 315-16.

⁶⁷ Johnston, William Preston, *The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston*, FB & c Ltd., London, England, 2015, p. 158.

was necessary to go to work at once with small means for the support of my family. My own personal labor (this is no figure of speech—I don't mean headwork) was necessary in conducting my small farming operations; and I have yielded it with cheerfulness, and have thus, after three years' toil, become a rugged farmer, with good habits...⁶⁸

By the fall of 1849 Albert Sidney Johnston still owed \$6000 in principal and additional interest at 10%. After three years work he was actually still impoverished. Eliza Johnston wrote: "He is almost in despair, and often says he feels like a drowning man with his hands tied; but he tries to keep up his spirits." Writing again in October 1849: "our home is now a beautiful place, and I have become so attached to it that I shall grieve a great deal when we must leave it Your father looks care-worn and sad. You would be astonished at the great change in him since you last saw him. From a fleshy, stout man he has grown quite thin, and considering his frame, slender."⁶⁹ Though he had thousands of acres of land he did not have enough capital to invest in additional slaves nor the sugar mill he sought to build. The land would not pay for itself.



Eliza Croghan Griffin Johnston

During this same time period Johnston's creditors brought suit against him and although it was two years later before China Grove was sold at auction he was still unable to pay his note. In December 1849 Albert Sidney Johnston accepted President Zachary Taylor's appointment as Army paymaster and entered the military once again. He would die at the Battle of Shiloh April 6, 1862 while in command of the Confederate Army of the Mississippi.

⁶⁸Jones, Katherine M., *The Plantation South*, The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., New York, 1957, pp. 316-17.

⁶⁹ Johnston, William Preston, *The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston*, FB &c Ltd., London, England, 2015, p. 165

Part of the address of his troops before the Battle of Shiloh:

Headquarters, Army of the Mississippi
Corinth, Mississippi, April 3, 1862

Soldiers of the Army of the Mississippi: I have put you in motion to offer battle to the invaders of your country. With the resolution and discipline and valor becoming men fighting, as you are, for all worth living or dying for, you can but march to a decisive victory over the agrarian mercenaries sent to subjugate you and despoil you of your liberties, your property, and your honor...The eyes and hopes of eight millions of people rest upon you; you are expected to show yourselves worthy of your lineage...With such incentives to brave deeds, and with the trust that God is with us, your generals will lead you confidently to the combat—assured of success.⁷⁰

A. S. Johnston, General commanding

At a sheriff's auction E. M. Pease and Robert J. Townes bought the China Grove plantation for \$2050, February 4, 1851.⁷¹

William Preston Johnston graduated from Yale University, studied law at the University of Louisville, and entered the practice of law in Louisville, Kentucky. July 7, 1853 he married Rosa Elizabeth Duncan of New Orleans, Louisiana. They would have six children together. Shortly before their marriage April 18, 1853 William Preston Johnston bought back the China Grove Plantation and the Warren D. C. Hall headright league for \$12234.28 from E. M Pease and Robert J. Townes.⁷²

William Preston Johnston would continue to practice law in Kentucky and evidently rented the China Grove plantation. In April 1855 he paid his mortgage off in full.⁷³ William J. Hutchins of Houston bought the property from Johnston June 20, 1860 for \$20,000.⁷⁴ Hutchins was a wealthy entrepreneur. He was one of the incorporators of the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos and Colorado Railway. Hutchins was alderman of Houston for several terms and mayor in 1861. He was one of the organizers of the Houston Cotton Compress Company in 1860 and of the City Cotton Mills in 1865. In 1861 he built Hutchins House, at that time the state's largest hotel. At a sheriff's sale in 1861, he and David H. Paige bought the Houston and Texas Central Railway for \$10,000; for seven years Hutchins served as president and general manager of this line, in which role he gave his name to the town of Hutchins, near Dallas. With the rank of lieutenant colonel, Hutchins was made chief of the Texas Cotton Bureau when it was established, on December 1, 1863. Its task was the heavy one of obtaining cotton, getting it to foreign markets, and bringing back arms and supplies for the Confederate Army. By 1870 Hutchins's fortune was down to

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 566

⁷¹ BCDR: F 368/70

⁷² BCDR: F 530/31

⁷³ BCDR: G 285/86

⁷⁴ BCDR: J 493/94 William Preston Johnston would be aide de camp to Jefferson Davis during the Civil War and was with Davis at his capture. After the Civil War he became president of LSU and later the first president of Tulane University in New Orleans. Most of the Johnston Papers are at Tulane University.

\$200,000, mostly in real estate. He withdrew from banking in 1873 and from his great wholesale business in 1877.⁷⁵ It is probable that with his early wealth that he built a sugar mill on the property after the Civil War. Sugar was being produced at least by 1873 if not sooner:

Fine Syrup and Sugar

Our enterprising merchant friend, Wm. D. Cleveland, has sent us samples of sugar and syrup which would command premiums in any competitive exhibition.

The sugar is a fine, granulated looking article from Col. W. J. Hutchins' celebrated China Grove Plantation, and looks like a prime grade, which we are assured it is. As we don't take sugar in our'n we are not prepared to speak by the card but if we were a gal we'd like to have a barrel of it to make candy for our beaux.

The syrup is a clear, amber colored article, of good consistency and excellent taste. It is from Kyle & Terry's...⁷⁶

W. J. Hutchins sold the China Grove plantation to the Hutchins Land and Trust Company in July 1876 for \$40,000.⁷⁷ Just before the sale of the property W. J. Hutchins is mentioned as one of the lessees of convict labor in 1876.⁷⁸

The plantation now included an additional 200 acres known as the Taylor place out of the lower part of League 11 and another 400 acres out of the west end of the W. D. C. Hall league. James G. Brown of Englewood, New Jersey then bought the plantation before the end of 1876.⁷⁹ The plantation now included 40 mules, 6 cane wagons, 2 cane carts, 2 wagons, 19 plows, 2 subsoil plows, 5 cultivators, 1 stalk cutter, 3 harrows, 2 bagass carts, 1 fluke plow, 2 dozen hoes, 1 dozen axes, 2 dozen cane knives, 1 pea balance, 3 sets of wagon harness, 16 pairs trace, 16 sets of harness, 6 solid swoops, 1 anvil vice, Hammer & tongs, 1 lot plantation tools, 1 lot of iron bar, 1 corn planter, 7 yoke of working cattle, 3 ponies, 40 hogs, 1 Buckeye mower, engines, boilers, tanks, mills, and general machinery used in connection with sugar house and cotton gin, and all the produce in their store.⁸⁰ All the crops in the field were turned over to Jesse M. Kirkland.⁸¹ In addition a large number of cattle were roaming on the prairie.

James G. Brown was in business with Samuel M. Dodd of New Jersey under the style of Dodd, Brown & Company. They would be able to contract with the State of Texas to use convict labor until January 1883. From 1878 to 1880 thirty eight convicts are listed with Dodd, Brown,

⁷⁵ Julia Beazley, "HUTCHINS, WILLIAM J.," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fhu51>), accessed January 04, 2016. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association

⁷⁶ *Houston Daily Mercury*, November 29, 1873, Houston, Texas

⁷⁷ BCDR: P 569/70 William J. Hutchins died in 1884.

⁷⁸ *Report of the Lessees of the Texas State Penitentiary*, April, 1876, Telegraph Steam Book and Job Print, Houston, Texas, 1976, p.28.

⁷⁹ BCDR: P 618/19

⁸⁰ BCDR: R 472/74

⁸¹ BCDR: R \$&\$/75

& Co.⁸² In the 1880 Federal Census there were 26 convicts and 4 guards listed on China Grove. Jesse M. Kirkland is listed as farm manager with his wife Bessie.

For the year 1881 Jesse Kirkland contracted to Dodd, Brown & Co. to be manager for \$150 per month and part interest in the cattle on the plantation.⁸³ From 1880 to 1882 there were listed 22-31 convicts. China Grove produced 200 hogsheads on 175 acres and 50 bales of cotton on 100 acres.⁸⁴

A notice in the *Galveston Daily News* October 11, 1882:

China Grove plantation is owned by Messrs. Dodd, Brown, & Co., of St. Louis. They have 150 acres of plant, and twenty-five acres of stubble cane, worked by twenty-one convicts and a few free laborers. The place has contracted for sixty convicts for the next five years, and will greatly enlarge its planting operations.

China Grove station grew up on the Columbia Tap Railroad across the tracts from the plantation as early as 1877-1892 when the town Custer was established. In 1896 a black school in China Grove had 87 pupils.⁸⁵

James G. Brown and his wife sold the property to Frederick W. Krause of Chicago, Illinois in 1884 for \$65,000 for a nice profit.⁸⁶ The Krause family moved to the plantation. Krause may have not have been able to make his payments on the absurd price; James G. Brown sold the China Grove plantation to John Claflin of New York October 1886 for \$35,000.⁸⁷

John Claflin was another of the in absentia owners that seemed to keep the plantation producing cotton and sugar whose records we do not have. George G. Adams may have been the manager at the time the plantation was offered for sale:

FOR SALE—China Grove sugar plantation, situated about halfway between Houston and Velasco, on the International railroad. The plantation consists of 1620 acres, of which 1000 acres are under fence and 600 under cultivation, divided into cotton, sugar, and corn. A good sugar house, cotton gin, a comfortable dwelling, and plenty of tenement houses for laborers are on the place. Everything in the way of animals and farming implements required are on the place and will be included in the sale.⁸⁸

However, John Claflin was the owner at a most inopportune time in 1892:

⁸² *Biennial Reports of the Directors and Superintendent of the Texas State Penitentiary at Huntsville, Texas Commencing December 1, A.D. 1878 and terminating October 31, A.D. 1880*, News Book and Job Office, Galveston, Texas, 1881, p. 51.

⁸³ BCDR: U 507/08

⁸⁴ *Biennial Reports of the Directors and Superintendent of the Texas State Penitentiary at Huntsville, Texas Commencing November 1, A.D. 1880 and terminating October 31, A.D. 1882*, R. W. Swindells, State Printer, Austin, Texas, 1882, p. 36. & *Burke's Texas Almanac and Immigrants' Handbook*, J. Burke, Jr., 1883, p. 89.

⁸⁵ See 1879 map on page 10.

⁸⁶ BCDR: X 19/21

⁸⁷ BCDR: Y 606/07

⁸⁸ *The Galveston Daily News*, November 16, 1892, Galveston, Texas

jlsmith1946@sbcglobal.net December 2015

LOTS OF SUGAR BURNED

..The mills and crop on the China Grove plantation are reported also to have been burned...It is said that the fire originated from fires having been banked several hours before on account of it being Christmas day, and the norther which suddenly came up last night rekindled them and caused the loss.⁸⁹

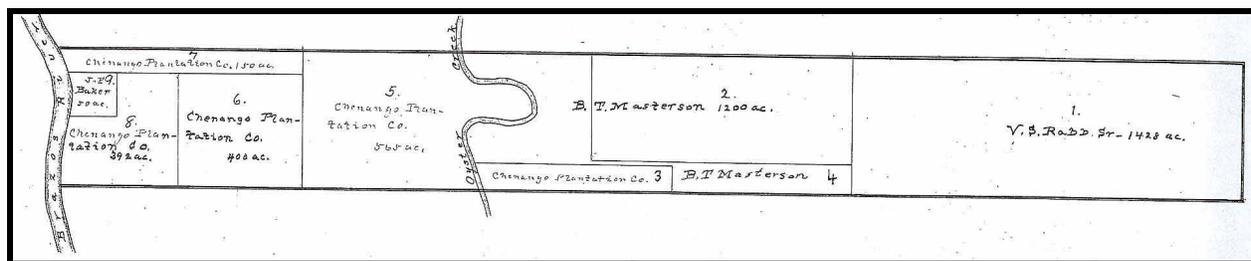
A few days later another report:

The Loss at China Grove

It was thought at first that the gin on the China Grove plantation was destroyed with the sugar mills, but a letter received here says it was not, although only about forty or fifty feet from it. On account of the sugar mill being of the old style of machinery the loss is not near so heavy as was first thought. There were forty hogsheads of sugar and fifteen bales of cotton destroyed. The mill was insured by S. O. Cotton & Bro. of this city for \$2000. It is understood that they also have an insurance of \$4000 in St. Louis.⁹⁰

Another article quite a few years later related that the home may have also burned March 24, 1897: "The old residence of Albert Sidney Johnston at China Grove Plantation in Brazoria County, burned down today."⁹¹

From this point the plantation may have ceased to be profitable to keep running. Based on the next several sales of the property the value of the plantation had been reduced substantially.⁹² V. D. Rabb bought the place in November 1901 for \$12,500 and moved onto the plantation where he remained for several years.⁹³



John W. Hall League 10

The Kanawha Texas Company bought the property in 1911 in hopes of dividing the property into lots, but sold the whole tract before it was subdivided. Claud B. Hamill bought the

⁸⁹ *The Galveston Daily News*, December 27, 1892, Galveston, Texas

⁹⁰ *The Galveston Daily News*, December 29, 1892, Galveston, Texas

⁹¹ *The Houston Post*, March 24, 1922

⁹² BCDR: 48 103/04 & 48 425/27

⁹³ BCDR: 54 394/96

land lastly and it is still under the Hamill family ownership. None of the site has been surveyed archeologically. Locations of the home site and sugar have not been determined by the author.



Appendix A

Albert Sidney Johnston Family

- Albert Sidney Johnston b. February 2, 1803 Washington, Kentucky (John Harris Johnston & Abigail Harris)
 d. April 6, 1862 Shiloh, Tennessee KIA Buried State Cemetery Austin, Texas
 m. 1st 1829
- Henrietta Preston b. February 23, 1803 Washington, Kentucky (William Preston & Caroline Hancock)
 d. August 12, 1835 Louisville, Kentucky
- A. William Preston Johnston b. January 5, 1831 Louisville, Missouri d. July 16, 1899 Virginia
 d. July 16, 1899
 m. 1st July 7, 1853
- Rosa Elizabeth Duncan b. December 31, 1831 New Orleans, Louisiana
 d. October 19, 1885 Lexington City, Virginia
1. Mary Duncan Johnston b. January 10, 1855 Louisville, Kentucky d. 1894
 2. Henrietta Preston Johnston b. April 19, 1856 Virginia d. 1900
 3. Rosa Duncan Johnston b. December 9, 1858 Louisville, Kentucky d. 1929
 4. Albert Sidney Johnston b. June 21, 1861 Louisville, Kentucky d. 1885
 5. Margaret Wickliffe Johnston b. July 20, 1864 Dills Farm. Virginia d. 1922
 6. Caroline Hancock Johnston b. August 8, 1866 Louisville, Kentucky d. 1895
- m. 2nd April 24, 1888 Iberia, Louisiana
- Margaret Henshaw Avery b. October 16, 1848 Baton Rouge, Louisiana
 d. October 30, 1925 New Orleans, Louisiana
- B. Henrietta Preston Johnston b. April 18, 1832 Jefferson Barracks, Missouri d. July 31, 1906
- C. Maria Pope Johnston b. October 28, 1833 Jefferson Barracks , Missouri d. August 10, 1834 Hayfield, Kentucky
- m. 2nd October 3, 1843 Kentucky
- Eliza Croghan Griffin b. December 26, 1821 Fincastle, Virginia
 d. September 25, 1896 Los Angeles, California
- A. Albert Sidney Johnston Jr. b. April 8, 1845 Hancock, Kentucky d. 1863
 - B. Hancock McClung Johnston December 28, 1847 China Grove Plantation d. September 1904
 - C. Mary Hancock Johnston b. January 29, 1850 Galveston d. November 29, 1850 Louisville, Kentucky
 - D. Margaret Strother Johnston b. December 11, 1851 Austin, Texas d. January 6, 1922 San Francisco, California
 - E. Griffin Johnston b. March 21, 1857 Texas d. November 25, 1895 Los Angeles, California
 - F. Eliza Alberta Johnston b. August 30, 1861 California d. February 2, 1947 Los Angeles, California

Appendix B
Deed Records China Grove Plantation

GRANTORS	GRANTEES	Kind of Instrument	Book	Page	Month	Day	Year	Acres	Description
Mexican Government	John W. Hall	Deed	SR		July	10	1824		2 Leagues 10 & 11
Warren D. C. Hall	George A. Smith of Virginia	Bond	A	6	Feb	15	1837	3111	Agreement to purchase 3111 acres
John W. Hall	Warren D. C. Hall	Deed	A	13	March	3	1837	4428	To his brother League 10 \$5000 on which W.D.C. Hall resides
John W. Hall	Warren D. C. Hall	Deed	A	14	March	3	1837	1111	\$1000 acreage in League 11
John W. Hall	Warren D. C. Hall	Deed	A	15	March	3	1837	1000	\$2000 acreage just east of 1111 acre tract
Warren D. C. Hall	John W. Harris E. M. Pease	DT	A	371/73	Oct	20	1840	1000	\$6868 due Thomas J. Allcorn Land + slaves as security
John W. Hall	Warren D. C. Hall	Deed	D	594/95	May	4	1837	2400	\$13500 remainder of League 11 which hadn't been sold the league is actually 1 ½ leagues
Warren D. C. Hall	George A. Smith	Deed	C	88	Dec	2	1837	3111	1111 acres League 11 2000 acres League 10
Warren D. C. Hall	Samuel M. Williams Thomas McKinney	DT	B	11/12	Jan	9	1841		\$6715.65 Land & slaves as security + 180 bales cotton
Warren D. C. Hall	Samuel M. Williams Thomas McKinney	Mortgage	B	111/12	Feb	3	1842		Crops of cotton & corn Slaves to close out his note to them
Warren D. C. Hall	Thomas F. McKinney	Deed	B	112/13	Feb		1842		\$15,900 27 slaves Hall retains until Jan 1, 1843
Sheriff Robert J. Calder	Robert J. Townes	Deed	B	282	Dec	10	1842	1444 + league	Suit by William B. Alldridge Thomas Davis
Warren D. C. Hall	A. Sidney Johnston Albert T. Burnley	Agreement	B	209	Jan	20	1843	1428 + League	China Grove Plantation + Hall's headright league \$30.00/acre-cultivated \$4.00-timbered \$0.375-prairie-\$14,684
Warren D. C. Hall	A. Sidney Johnston Albert T. Burnley	Agreement	B	284/85	Jan	20	1843	1428 + League	China Grove Plantation + Hall's headright league \$30.00/acre-cultivated \$4.00-timbered \$0.375-prairie-\$14,684
Warren D. C. Hall	A. Sidney Johnston Albert T. Burnley	Deed	B	283/284	Aug	12	1843	1428 + League	\$15704.36 Surveyed

Robert J. Townes	A. Sidney Johnston Albert T. Burnley	Deed	B	283	Aug	12	1843	1428 + League	\$10..00 Probably quit claim
A. Sidney Johnston Albert T. Burnley	Warren D. C. Hall	DT	B	286	Aug	12	1843	1428 + League	Mortgage
Albert T. Burnley	Albert Sidney Johnston	Deed	E	8/9	May	4	1846		Johnston to assume all debt Burnley released his half ownership
E. M. Pease	Albert Sidney Johnston	Deed	D	638/40	June	26	1847		Foreclosure sale on Hall \$302
Sheriff Robert J. W. Reel	E. M. Pease R. J. Townes	Deed	F	368/70	Feb	4	1851		\$2050 Foreclosure of Johnston
E. M. Pease R. J. Townes	William Preston Johnston	Deed	F	530/31	April	18	1853	1428 + League	\$12234.28 China Grove + Hall's headright league
E. M. Pease R. J. Townes	William Preston Johnston Louisville, Ken.	Release	G	285/86	April	13	1855	1428 + League	Release lien paid in full
William P. Johnston Louisville, Ky	William J. Hutchins Houston, TX	Deed	J	493/94	June	20	1860	1428 + League	\$20,000
William J. Hutchins	Hutchins Land & Trust Company	Deed	P	569/70	July	11	1876	1428 +	\$40,000 China Grove + 2 other tracts 2031 acres total
Hutchins Land & Trust Company	James G. Brown New Jersey	Deed	P	618/19	Oct	4	1876	1428 +	\$44,000 China Grove + 2 other tracts
James G. Sarah Brown	Frederick W. Krause Chicago, Illinois	Deed	X	19//21	March	14	1884		\$65,000 includes Cotton Gin and Sugar Mill
James G. Brown St. Louis	John Claflin New York, NY	Deed	Y	606/07	Oct	30	1886		\$35,000
John Claflin New York	Joseph R. Thompson Mount Vernon, NY	Deed	48	103/04	Aug	1	1898		\$1.00
Joseph R. Thompson	Jacob Weaver	Deed	48	425/27	Jan	19	1899		\$12,600
Jacob Weaver	V. S. Rabb	Deed	54	394/96	Nov	23	1901		\$12,500
V. S. Rabb	Federal Land & Investment Co.	Deed	90	250/55	Oct	8	1909		\$45,618
Federal Land & Investment Co.	W. R. Allison	Deed			Dec	17	1910		
W. R. Allison	Kanawha Texas Co.	Deed			Feb	13	1911		Subdivided Plat 15June1911
Kanawha Texas Co.									Sold before subdivided
			144	281					
			528	486					

Hudson Dearman	J. A. Gray		593	416/20	April	1	1954	1447	Still contains portion from all three leagues ½ interest
			605	441/49					
	Claud B. Hamill	Deed	749	654/58					

Appendix C
Slave List Warren D. C. Hall February 3, 1842 Mortgage

Dory a man	17				
Venus his wife	31				
Her children	Adam	13			
	Ben	11			
	Jane	5			
	Tom	4			
	Elijah	1 ½			
Evaline	36				
Her children	Rose	13			
	Julliet	4			
	Infant not named				
Mina	28				
Her children	Louisa	9			
	Lucinda	9 Twins			
	Jackson	4			
Tom Bowlin	28				
Elizabeth his wife	26				
Her children	Moses	6			
	Mary Jane	3			
Indian Bob	26				
Charlotte his wife	25				
Her children	Henry	9			
	Evaline	7			
	Pane	5			
	Margaret	3			
	Catherine	1			
George	30				
Pheney his wife	23				
Her child	Edward	4			
Jim (carpenter)	23				
Mahala his wife	23				
Her children	Lowis	6			
	Judah	5			
Henry	60				
Lydda	35				
Rose	40				
Her child	Robert	10			
Lizzy	32	Ben	42	Caesar	23
Fanny	10	Sandy	12	Calvin	14
Tecumseh	24	Felix	18	Jack	70
				Peter Jack	40
				Taylor	11

Appendix D
List of Slaves Sold by Warren D. C. Hall February 3, 1842

Abecomba	26		
Ebbo his wife	18		
Her children		Harriet	6
		Delia	1
Ojo	24		
Big Sarah	17		
Peter Smith	35		
Ijama his wife	15		
Her child		Maria	2
Cojo	26		
Sarah his wife	17		
Jacco	25		
Fanny his wife	16		
Essba	30		
Jane his wife	19		
Her children		Emily	4
		Columba	1
Bob	24		
Galalvo	20		
Sypis	17		
Lowis	19		
Ojo	17		
Sam	15		
OShaw	15		
Malinda	19		
Her two children			

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