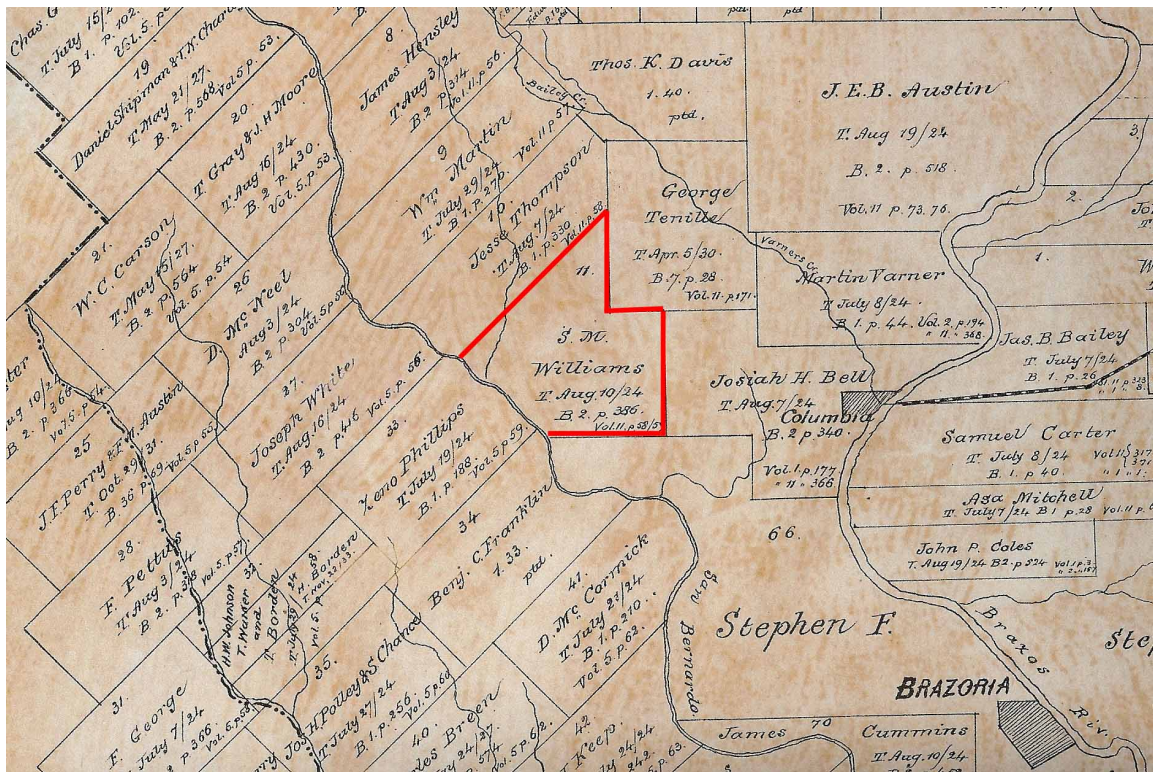


# Brazosport Archaeological Society

Zeno Phillips initially developed his plantation from the Samuel May Williams League on the east side of the San Bernard River along Mound Creek west of the town of Columbia. After the death of Zeno Phillips in 1835, his wife Eliza M. Westall Austin Phillips married William G. Hill in 1836. The Zeno Phillips estate was administered by William G. Hill. Before Eliza's death in 1847 William and Eliza Hill had been raising their family and her son by James E. B. Austin (her 1<sup>st</sup> husband) and her daughter by Zeno Phillips at Waverly Place (named by William G. Hill) the property of her deceased second husband. After the death of Eliza M. Hill and her daughter Sarah Olivia Phillips, the heirs of Zeno Phillips would gain control of Waverly Place while William G. Hill moved with his children to the north of Columbia to establish Osceola Plantation. Principally James R. and Sidney Phillips would remain on the property with their families through the Civil War. They farmed the land producing small cotton crops with a limited number of slaves. The James R. Phillips family stayed at Waverly Place until it was sold by his son John G. Phillips in 1887 to Harris Masterson. Several land developers owned the property until it was bought by James U. and O. R. Teague in 1941. The property remained with the heirs of the Teague family until sold in 2006 to Annette W. Williams of Alvin, Texas.



Map 1879 Texas General Land Office

Elizabeth Martha Westall (1807-1847) was the daughter of Thomas and Sarah Westall who lived at the Westall Plantation on the west side of the lower Brazos River. James Elijah Brown Austin (1803-1829), the brother of Stephen F. Austin, married Eliza M. Hill March 20, 1828 at San Felipe de Austin. Noah Smithwick added that Brown Austin was anxious to show

due respect for the Mexican law and had notified Padre Muldoon but the padre failed to arrive on time: "The bride was ready and so was the feast, but everything had to await the pleasure and convenience of the dilatory priest."<sup>1</sup> Stephen F. Austin wrote to James F. Perry, "You are doubtless ere this informed by Brothers letters of the important change that has take place in his situation. He was married on the 20 of this month at this place to Miss Eliza Westall—he has made a good choice and I think has secured his domestic happiness—we are trying to arrange matters to set him and John Austin<sup>2</sup> up in the Mercantile business..."<sup>3</sup> A few months later Brown wrote to Stephen, "As to our future plans I have concluded to remain here for the present year, and am now employed putting the Gin in good order for the present crop...I am going to make a crop this season and if the Negroes hire low we should hire them..."<sup>4</sup> The location of Brown's gin is not exactly clear. He may have been working on his 3 league tract on the west side of the Brazos above Columbia. A portion of this property is often referred to as the "Gin Tract"<sup>5</sup> or on the out skirts what was to become Brazoria. He was required by Mexican law to show improvement on his property. Stephen F. Austin wrote a short time later to his sister Emily Perry, "You ask me how I like my sister in law—I am very well pleased with her, and think Brown has made a happy choice—they live very happily together and have the prospect of an heir this winter or early in the spring..."<sup>6</sup> February 1829 their only child Stephen Fuller Austin II (1829-1837) was born.<sup>7</sup> James E. B. Austin went into partnership with John Austin in a mercantile business fifteen miles upstream on the west side of the Brazos River. Stephen F. Austin gave the name "Brassoria" to this location.<sup>8</sup> The partnership was expanded to include a mercantile store in Brazoria. John Austin and Brown made their home in Brazoria. Brown's home and possibly the gin with out buildings were on the out skirts of town.

The next year Stephen F. Austin wrote to Emily again, "I am now at brothers who has settled at this place probably for life or at least for a few years—he is quite in the woods as yet, tho comfortable, and has a fine Boy as ever I saw—this place is 20 miles by water from the Mouth of the river and about 10 miles from the coast in a direct line. I think it will become a place of business."<sup>9</sup> Brown wrote to Emily Perry about the coming year just before sailing to New Orleans, "Crops look fine and we have every prospect of an abundant harvest, about 500 Bales of Cotton was made last year for exportation and about sixty or 80 hogsheads of Sugar. This year the Sugar crop will treble and a much larger Cotton crop than ever before."<sup>10</sup> Having left his family July 3, 1829 on a business trip to New Orleans James E. B. Austin died there August 14, 1829 of yellow fever.<sup>11</sup>

Died of yellow fever in New Orleans on Friday the 14<sup>th</sup> of August, after 63 hours of sickness in the 26<sup>th</sup> year of age, MR. JAMES E. B. AUSTIN, a native of Potosi, Washington County,

<sup>1</sup> Smithwick, Noah, The Evolution of a State, Stec-Vaughn Company, Austin, Texas, 1968, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> John Austin was a close friend of Stephen F. Austin but may have been only a distant relative.

<sup>3</sup> Barker, Eugene C. ed., Letter Stephen F. Austin to James F. Perry, March 31, 1828, San Felipe de Austin, The Austin Papers, Vol. II, American Historical Association, United States Government Printing Office, Washington D. C., 1928, pp. 28-29.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., Letter James E. B. Austin to Stephen F. Austin, September 16, 1828, pp. 107-109.

<sup>5</sup> The "Gin Tract" in the James E. B. Austin 3 League tract would become the Maner Plantation.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., Letter Stephen F. Austin to Emily M. Perry, October 24, 1828, pp. 135-136.

<sup>7</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/AA/fau8.html> (accessed December 11, 2008).

<sup>8</sup> Creighton, James A., A Narrative History of Brazoria County, Texian Press, Waco, Texas, 1975, p.37.

<sup>9</sup> Barker, Eugene C. ed., Letter Stephen F. Austin to Emily M. Perry, May 26, 1829, Brasoria, The Austin Papers, Vol. II, American Historical Association, United States Government Printing Office, Washington D. C., 1928, p. 217.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., Letter James E. B. Austin to Emily M. Perry, Brasoria, May 26, 1829

<sup>11</sup> Creighton, James A., A Narrative History of Brazoria County, Texian Press, Waco, Texas, 1975, p.37.

Missouri, and for the last eight years, a resident of Texas. He visited New Orleans on business, had been there but a few days, and was to have left the day he was taken sick.<sup>12</sup>

H. D. Thompson wrote to Stephen F. Austin from New Orleans after Brown Austin's death stating Brown had met with Thompson and Captain Harris at about 6 a.m. on an excessively hot day, and had made arrangements to meet Thompson again at his home that evening. Brown had complained of "being a little unwell" but did not appear in any way seriously ill. At 1 p.m., however, he complained of a pain at the pit of his stomach and a slight pain in the head. A physician was called, but by 3 a.m. the following day, Brown Austin was dead. He was interred at 5p.m. the same day "and had a deasent funeral".<sup>13</sup>

The first of the next year, Eliza M. Austin wrote to Emily M. Perry, "...I scarcely know what to say. You must long before this heard of the death of your dear Brother. You my dear Sister can well imagine what my feelings are; looseing all that was Dear to me in this world, my Husband, my friend, my protector, my all. But my Sister there is no remedy for the decrees of providence, but submission. Brother Stephen was at the same time very sick and not expected to live. We all thought that every moment was his last but God was merciful to us, and spared him to take care of his dear little Stephen...As I think it is not prudent for me to keep house alone in this new country, I intend to have me a room put up joining Capt. Austins. He has always been to me a brother and his wife a sister. We have lived together so long that I cannot think of leaving them...Little Stephen has been very sick with a singular breaking out. I at first thought it was the hives. He is now getting much better and thank you very much for his cap and beeds. He could walk a few steps before he was taken sick. He is now beginning to talk..."<sup>14</sup>

Shortly after the death of her first husband Eliza M. Austin was courted by Zeno Phillips. Zeno Phillips was one of Stephen F. Austin's Old Three Hundred colonists. He had received a league of land west of Columbia on the west side of the San Bernard River in 1824 and bought a portion of Samuel May William's league on the opposite side of the river. The census of March 1826 classified him as a farmer and stock raiser, a single man aged between twenty five and forty, with one servant and twenty-two slaves. In 1829 he was in partnership with John R. Harris in one of the first contracts for cotton in Texas, when they bought about 100 bales from Jared E. Groce.<sup>15</sup> Though there may have been several years' difference in their ages, Zeno and Eliza were wed May 1830 according to some court documents. The couple was already together when Moses Austin Bryan son of Emily M. Perry visited his aunt in January 1830:

...went to my Aunts about five miles from Mr. Bells they were extremely glad to see me and I am very much pleased with her & Col Phillips. I stayed their 10 days and then I came hear and stayed with Mr. Williams 7 or 8 days...I didnt have pleasure of seeing my Uncle nor my little cousin my uncle started 3 weeks before we got hear and my cousin was down at Mr Westales my Aunt wanted me to wait & she would go down and fetch him up but I was very anxious to get up hear that I could not wait...<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *The Texas Gazette*, October 3, 1829

<sup>13</sup> Jones, Marie Beth, *Peach Point Plantation The First 150 Years*, Texian Press, Waco, Texas, 1982, p.13.

<sup>14</sup> Barker, Eugene C. ed., Letter Eliza M. Austin to Emily M. Perry, January 6, 1830, Brazoria, *The Austin Papers*, Vol. II, American Historical Association, United States Government Printing Office, Washington D. C., 1928, pp. 318-319.

<sup>15</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/PP/fph5.html> (accessed December 11, 2008).

<sup>16</sup> James F. Perry and Stephen S. Perry Papers, Letter Moses Austin Bryan to William Joel Bryan, San Felipe, February 5, 1830.

While Moses A. Bryan expressed he was “very much pleased” with Eliza and Zeno Phillips being together this did not sit well with the rest of the family; perhaps the mourning period was a bit short. Before the end of the year Eliza Phillips was in communication with Stephen F. Austin who was the executor of James E. B. Austin’s estate<sup>17</sup> and another side of Eliza’s personality started to emerge:

...writing now and I am anxious to know how the business is or will be settled. You told me last spring you would send me down a pertition to sign—for one league of land—on Galveston. I want to know if the pertition was answered—or whether you are authorized to grant it. I also wish to know what right John (Austin) had to Lease out my hous and 10-acres for five years. that I always considered my property. and it is hard to give it up. I loaned John last spring My watch on a business day. he has not returned it. that I wish to reserve myself for Stephen his father bought it for him and gave it to me to keep it. the house John knows the circumstance very well...<sup>18</sup>

Stephen F. Austin was hearing the other side of the story from his close personal friend John Austin at nearly the same time:

...I do not Comprehend the whole affair if I have taken a liberty with the place to rent it etc. I thot. it yours and done what I believed to be of your interest, I never have received one cent of the rent Eliza has received it all, I have paid for some repairs making a chimney, etc, If she has complained of me I wish to know it, I never had any other feeling for her than I ought to have had for a sister. My conduct towards her will prove it in me she found a friend and protector if she complains of a liberty that I have taken with anything she conceived her property I am astonished for She has taken as many liberties with my things as my wife and has always been welcome...<sup>19</sup>

The property under contention was later appraised “House and out buildings at the Prairie-\$225.00” and “The gin house and cotton gin, as it stands-\$140.00”.<sup>20</sup> The only other description was given by John Austin, “The buildings are good the Gin house is sound with the exception of some of the posts on which it stands not much work to replace them...”<sup>21</sup> There were several local residents interested in leasing the property but Jesse Thompson gave them the best offer to rent the Gin Place and may have won the deal.

Eliza and Zeno Phillips would have a daughter Sarah Olivia Phillips ( ?-1841). In order to receive an education Stephen F. Austin II would stay at Peach Point, the plantation home of Emily Perry, Stephen F. Austin’s sister. Eliza paid tuition of \$2.00 per month for seven months in 1834 to Thomas J. Pilgrim, who had several students from the area.<sup>22</sup> Stephen F. Austin wrote to James Perry expressing “I wish to spare no pains or care in having little Stephen...well educated,” and “There will be enough out my property to educate him and Guy<sup>23</sup> in the best manner possible. I wish them to have a finished education and to study law so as to take care of future interests of the family.”<sup>24</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Barker, Eugene C. ed., Letter Stephen F. Austin to Thomas Barnett, July 6, 1830, Brazoria, The Austin Papers, Vol. II, American Historical Association, United States Government Printing Office, Washington D. C., 1928, pp. 442-443.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., Letter Eliza Phillips to Col. Stephen Austin, October 24, 1830 p. 521.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Letter John Austin to Stephen F. Austin, ~Oct 24, 1830, p. 522.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., Report of Appraisers, November 1, 1830, pp. 526-527.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., Letter John Austin to Stephen F. Austin, November 1, 1830, pp. 525-526.

<sup>22</sup> James F. Perry and Stephen S. Perry Papers, Letter Eliza M. Phillips to T. J. Pilgrim, 1834

<sup>23</sup> Guy M. Bryan son of Emily Perry by her 1<sup>st</sup> husband James Bryan.

<sup>24</sup> Jones, Marie Beth, Peach Point Plantation The First 150 Years, Texian Press, Waco, Texas, 1982, p. 71.



James F. Perry wrote to Stephen F. Austin on the progress of his namesake's schooling and an ominous bit of information on the health of Zeno Phillips:

...Mr. Pilgrim continues with us the children are very well. Stephen F. Austin is going to school to him and begins to learn fast. Col. Philips is in a very bad health it is doubtful whether he will recover...<sup>25</sup>

A year later, May 22, 1835 Zeno Phillips died and may have been at the beach for the healthful sea breezes before his death. Emily Perry wrote to her husband James F. Perry from Peach Point:

...I hear that the Scarlet Fever is above Mrs Phelps is very ill with it, not expected to live, it is very ketching, & Dr. Jones informed me, with grown Persons generally Fatal; do not go where it is for God Sake; I shall not see one moments comfort until I see you; Col Phillips is Dead, & the Family have all left the Mouth- I expect you will be Solisted to settle his estate; I hope you will have nothing to do with it...<sup>26</sup>

Emily Perry should not have worried that her husband would have to settle Zeno Phillips' estate. William Green Hill (1801-1860) would become administrator of the estate and more. In 1825 William G. Green had married Mary Catherine Hall in Madison County, Alabama. They moved to Nashville, Tennessee where their two children were born. Shortly after the birth of their son Thomas Elihu Hill on May 23, 1829, Mary Catherine died. Thomas E. Hill would be raised by his grandparents in Tennessee until he was 16 or 17 when he joined his father in Texas. William G. Hill entered Texas in 1830.<sup>27</sup>

In 1835 he entered the Texas army as a private in Fannin's Brazos Guards. He fought at the battle of Concepcion on October 28, the Grass Fight on November 26 and the siege of Bexar on December 5-10. By January 1836 he had moved to the rank of captain of cavalry.<sup>28</sup> February 25, 1836 he took leave of his military duties and entered into a \$10,000 bond marriage with Eliza M. Phillips, widow of Zeno Phillips. Another less than customary time of mourning led to more whispers among the community and to another family which would later be cause for concern to the Hill family as Zeno Phillips had several brothers and sisters in Texas. Instead of returning to the army William G. Hill took steps to take care of his new family and property during Santa Anna's advance across Texas. William Fairfax Gray encountered him at Ballow's Ferry on the Sabine River:

At the ferry we found Colonel Wm. G. Hill, late of the San Bernard, who had been to take his family and that of E. Waller to the United States. He is now on his return. Waller, whom I saw at

<sup>25</sup> Barker, Eugene C. ed., Letter James F. Perry to Stephen F. Austin, May 13, 1834, San Felipe de Austin, The Austin Papers, Vol. II, American Historical Association, United States Government Printing Office, Washington D. C., 1928, pp. 1055-1056.

<sup>26</sup> James F. Perry and Stephen S. Perry Papers, Letter Emily M. Perry to James F. Perry, Peach Point, May 26, 1835.

<sup>27</sup> In 1833 is a letter of introduction from an old friend of Stephen F. Austin: "This letter will be handed you by my friend Col. William K. Hill of this place, he is on a visit to Texas for the purpose of making a permanent location for himself and family; You will find him a gentleman of intelligence, and every way worthy of your attention and friendship... he has been for several years clerk to the Senate of this State And discharged his duties with approved ability and skill..." Barker, Eugene C. ed., Letter Charles W. Webber to Stephen F. Austin, February 15, 1833, Columbia, Tennessee, The Austin Papers, Vol. II, American Historical Association, United States Government Printing Office, Washington D. C., 1928, pp. 928-929. Some family sources have his arrival as 1830. This may not be William G. Hill but he was known as Col. Hill before any service with the Texas army.

<sup>28</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. " ", <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/HH/fhi27.html> (accessed December 11, 2008).

Beaumont, has charge of the negroes belonging to himself and Hill. They are trying to take them up Red River. Hill's address will be Alexandria, La.<sup>29</sup>

From June to October 1836 Hill served in Capt. Washington H. Secrest's company of Columbia Cavalry.<sup>30</sup>

Zeno Phillips's estate:

1 Negro Man named	Eoline	\$1000
1 Do Do Do	Lewis	1000
1 Do Do Do	Abram	1000
1 Do Woman Do	Lucy	700
1 Do Do Do	Lila	600
1 Do Boy Do	Lew	1000
1 Do Girl Do	Adeline	120
1 Do Child Do	Hastings	200
1 League of land on the Brazos & Navasota		2214
	Total	\$7714 <sup>31</sup>

This inventory completed in 1837 does not include the Zeno Phillips League and the portion of the Samuel M. Williams League which he had purchased. This is also a substantial less number of slaves than he had in 1826.

In December 1836 Stephen F. Austin would die of pneumonia at Columbia and in February 1837 Stephen F. Austin II<sup>32</sup> would also. Many in the county had felt that through Eliza's neglect her son by J. E. B. Austin had died and she was not entitled to his and her first husband's estate but the courts would decide otherwise. A lawsuit was filed in the Brazoria District Court in 1838 by the Perry's against Eliza M. Hill and later taken all the way to the Republic of Texas Supreme Court where it was settled in 1842. The question at issue came from the construction of a single clause in the olographic will executed by Stephen F. Austin April 19, 1833 before seven witnesses, which is as follows:

"That all the residue of my property shall be divided into two equal portions, as nearly as may be, and I give unto my sister Emily F. Austin, wife of James F. Perry, one of said portions, and the other portion I give and bequeath to my nephew Stephen F. Austin, son of my brother James E. B. Austin, and Eliza Martha Westall his wife. In case my said nephew should die *without legal issue*, then the bequest to him *shall pass to, and be inherited by my sister Emily*, and her heirs, and no other person whatsoever."<sup>33</sup>

Whereas most of us who read this clause in Stephen F. Austin's will feel we know that Austin wanted all his property to go to his sister Emily Perry if his nephew did not live and have any children; we are not students of Spanish law. William G. Hill was a lawyer and understood the necessity of getting a good lawyer to present their case. It is not clear who made the final presentation for the plaintiffs but Patrick C. Jack made the plea for the defendants James F. Perry

<sup>29</sup> Gray, William Fairfax, From Virginia to Texas, 1835 Diary of Col. Wm. F. Gray, Fletcher Young Publishing Co., Houston, Texas, 1965, pp. 169-170.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Probate Case #382 Zeno Phillips

<sup>32</sup> Stephen F. Austin Jr. possibly buried at Waverly Plantation. I have not been able to locate grave.

<sup>33</sup> Streeter Collection, Document # 667 Argument prepared by \_\_\_\_ Andrews for the Plaintiffs *Eliza M. Westall & Wm. G. Hill vs James F. Perry & Wife*.

& Wife. His presentation may not have been on the highest level.<sup>34</sup> The elaborate argument prepared by the plaintiffs makes the plea that the additional provision made by Austin which directed the bequest to the sister, if the nephew died without issue, was contrary to the Civil Law and also the Constitution of Texas. This clause is a disposition of the kind known in the civil law as a *fideicommissary substitution*. All *fideicommissary substitutions* are a branch of, and included under the general name of *fideicommissa*. All *fideicommissa* were strictly prohibited by the express legislation of both Spain and Mexico at the time the will was written. The case was therefore governed by the Civil Law, as the English common law did not replace the Civil Law in Texas until January 20, 1840.<sup>35</sup> The Texas Supreme Court ruled for the plaintiffs. Eliza M. Hill became the instant owner of many thousands of acres of land in several different Texas counties. The entire Bryan and Perry families would continue to harbor considerable bitterness toward the Hills for many years.<sup>36</sup>



William G. Hill Sr. Unknown Date

William G. Hill named Zeno Phillips' homestead on the east bank of the San Bernard "Waverly". At this home Eliza and William began their family. Six children would be born to them while they lived there. Andrew McCormick whose father had a neighboring plantation described Eliza Hill and a brief encounter he had with William G. Hill:

...She was a widow the time when she married Colonel Hill...but was still young and very attractive. She had been educated in the best schools in "The States," was handsome and highly intellectual. She received from her first husband a large estate. Colonel Hill and his family lived sumptuously at their Bernard home, which was everywhere known as "Waverly," which he had

<sup>34</sup> Jones, Marie Beth, Peach Point Plantation The First 150 Years, Texian Press, Waco, Texas, 1982, pp.92-93.

<sup>35</sup> Streeter Collection, Document # 667 Argument prepared by \_\_\_\_ Andrews for the Plaintiffs *Eliza M. Westall & Wm. G. Hill vs James F. Perry & Wife*

<sup>36</sup> Jones, Marie Beth, Peach Point Plantation I The First 150 Years, Texian Press, Waco, Texas, 1982, pp.89-95.

given it. He loved company, and organized his home with the view of indulging his taste in that direction and so that he might entertain much company well and easily. After he had been living at Waverly a number of years, he and his family were one day visitors at Madam Bell's, when she casually made allusion to some of the inconveniences of living on the public road. "Think Madam," he said "what it must be at the *end* of the public road."<sup>37</sup>

In September 1841 Sarah Olivia Phillips died and was buried at Waverly near her father Zeno Phillips and his brother John Clark Phillips. In 1842 the Zeno Phillips estate is listed on the tax rolls as having 7 slaves and 13,084 acres of land. William G. Hill's own property is listed as 27 slaves and 36,681 acres of land plus many lots in various towns, a great portion of which was Eliza's inheritance. The surveying and division of property with the Perrys would take several years. William G. Hill wrote many times to James F. Perry during the early 1840's concerning the surveying that was progressing much too slowly for him and Eliza.<sup>38</sup> All of these communications were addressed "On Bernard" or "Waverly" indicating the family was still living at Waverly Place.

William and Eliza's last child, Charles Norfleet Hill, was born in 1846 and Eliza died in June or July 1847. All her property was placed in her estate with William G. Hill as executor. Immediately after her death James R. Phillips applied as executor but was not allowed as he was part of a law suit against Eliza and William G. Hill.<sup>39</sup> Since Zeno Phillips had died intestate and Sarah Olivia Phillips was a minor after her death the Phillips family was claiming a portion of the slaves and land owned by Zeno Phillips before his marriage. Their suit was initially filed August 1, 1843. This case was taken to the Texas Supreme Court but was sent back for further litigation.<sup>40</sup> Additional litigation ended with the Phillips family receiving ownership of much of Zeno Phillip's property including Waverly Place.

In 1848 William G. Hill is listed in the tax record as still the administrator of Zeno Phillips' estate and by 1850 James R. and Sidney Phillips are listed as the property owners. James R. Phillips had married Mary Rector, the widow of Stephen Rector and daughter of "Old 300" colonist George S. Pentecost, August 8, 1847 in Fort Bend County, Texas.

James Ray Phillips was born January 16, 1804, in Greene County, Georgia. He had at least three brothers, Zeno, Sidney and John Clark Phillips. All four brothers migrated from Alabama to Texas during the colonization by Stephen F. Austin. On April 14, 1828 he took the oath of allegiance to both laws and religion of Mexico as required by Article 2, of the Colonization Law of the State of Coahuila and Texas dated 25 March 1825. He was then 26 years old and single, 8 dependants from Alabama and responsible for 9 souls total (#331 Austin's

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<sup>37</sup> McCormick, Andrew Phelps, Scotch –Irish in Ireland and America, Private Publishing, New Orleans, Louisiana, 1897, p. 142.

<sup>38</sup> James F. Perry and Stephen S. Perry Papers, July 19, 1839 Bernard, September 16, 1842 discusses division of property "below me on the Bernard", April 7, 1845 Waverly, July 20, 1845 Waverly, January 13, 1846 Waverly, February 28, 1846 Waverly, June 15, 1846 Bernard, and August 20, 1846 Waverly, Brazoria County Historical Museum, Angleton, Texas

<sup>39</sup> Probate Case # 258 Eliza M. Hill, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas.

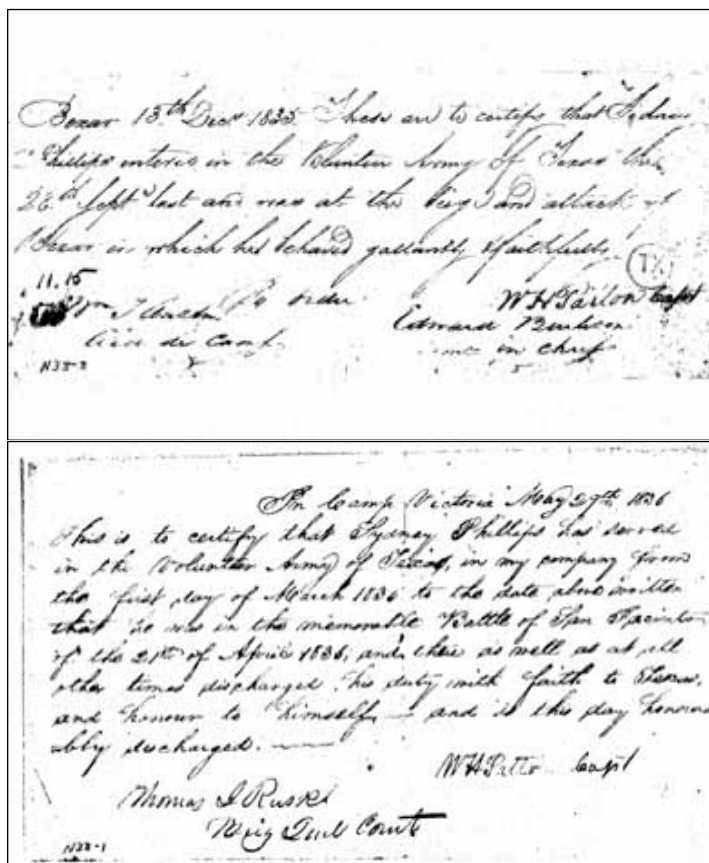
<sup>40</sup> Civil Cases 974 & 975 *James R. Phillips et al vs Eliza M. Hill & William G. Hill*, County Clerk's Office, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas and Webb, James and Duval, Thomas H., Reports of Cases Argued and Decided in the Supreme Court of The State of Texas During December Term 1848, The Gilbert Publishing Company, St. Louis, Missouri, 1881, pp. 397 - 400.



Register of Families) December 10, 1830, James took to the north sixteen passports for other families who were required to immigrate from Alabama within one year.

April 23, 1831, one league of land situated west of Cummins Creek and north of LaBahia Road known as #11 west of said creek was issued to James Ray Phillips by the Mexican Government.<sup>41</sup> June 25-28<sup>th</sup> 1832 James Ray Phillips fought with Henry S. Brown's Division 1, at the Battle of Velasco.<sup>42</sup>

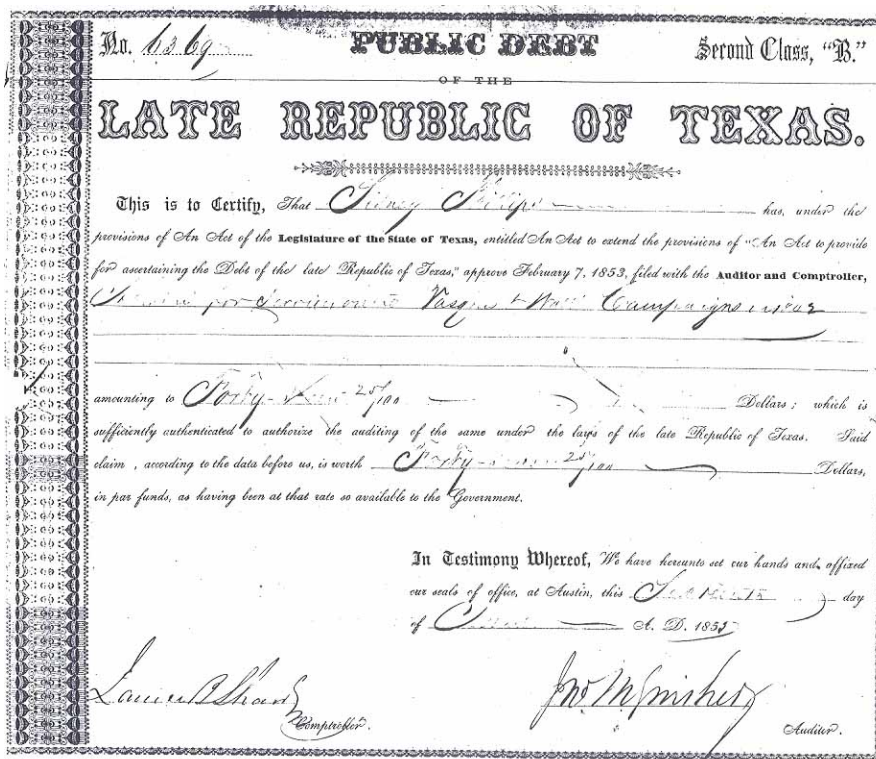
Sidney Phillips had arrived in Texas in May, 1834, as is shown in the Headright Certificate issued to him February 19, 1838 by the Fort Bend County Board for one-third of a league of land, he is listed as being with Henry S. Brown's 2<sup>nd</sup> Division at the Battle of Velasco in 1832. He was a member of Captain John York's Company in the siege of Bexar in 1835. On May 25, 1838 he was issued Bounty Certificate No. 3564 for 640 acres of land for having served in the army from September 8, 1835 to May 29, 1836. In Service Record No. 541 it is stated that he enlisted in Captain William H. Patton's Company March 6, 1836. On May 24, 1838 he was issued Donation Certificate No. 48 for 640 acres of land for having participated in the Battle of San Jacinto. He also participated in the Vasquez and Woll Campaigns in 1842. He married Ophelia Gertrude Johnson October 18, 1849 in Fort Bend County.



Pensions of the Republic, Texas State Archives, Austin, Texas

<sup>41</sup> Original Mexican Title issued to James Ray Phillips, in The Spanish Collection Box 10, Folder 17, of the General Land Office, Austin Texas

<sup>42</sup> Boddie, Mary Delaney, Thunder on the Brazos, Taylor Publishing Company, 1978, p. 47.



James R. Phillips had nine slaves listed in the 1850 Census. Both James and Sidney had 100 acres under cultivation according to the Agricultural Census.

The 1850 Census lists James R. and Sidney Phillips as two separate households:

Sidney Phillips (Farmer)	36 M	Alabama
Ophelia G. Phillips	17 F	Alabama

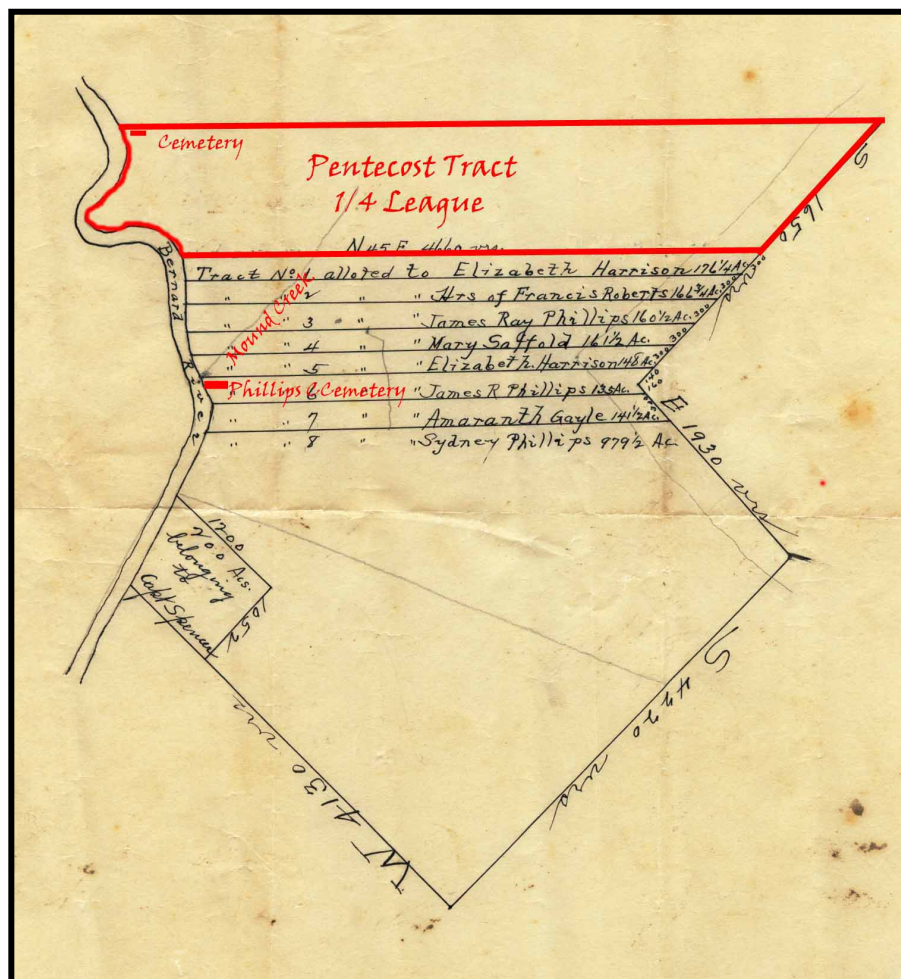
James R. Phillips (Farmer)	46 M	Georgia
Mary Phillips	26 F	Alabama

Joseph Phillips, the first son of James R. and Mary Phillips was born in 1848 in Fort Bend County and is not listed in the census. Their second son George Washington Phillips born at Waverly in 1850 is not listed either.

By 1850 William G. Hill had moved his family to Osceola Plantation. This 6500 acre cotton plantation was on the west bank of the Brazos River above Columbia in the James E. B. Austin 3 League tract which had been inherited by Eliza Hill. The 1850 Census lists the Hill family with only his daughter Ann E. missing probably at school:

William G. Hill	49 M	North Carolina
Wm. G. Jr.	4 M ?	Texas (Should be 11 or 12 years old)
James W.	9 M	Texas
A Eenas (A. E. Phelps)	7 M	Texas
John B.	5 M	Texas
Charles N.	3 M	Texas
B. C. Jeffries (Bricklayer)	24 M	Virginia

Although the lawsuit, *James Ray Phillips vs William G. Hill & Wife*, was not decided for several years, the partition of Zeno Phillips' land among his heirs began in 1851. Zeno Phillips' whole-blooded sisters and brothers were given two shares out of nine while the half- sisters and half-brothers were given one share each (Under Texas law of descent and distribution, the half-blood relatives receive only  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the shares going to the whole-blooded relatives). Eliza M. Hill, who had remarried, received none of the land because, under the law, property acquired before marriage was separate property (rather than community property of the marriage), and went by descent and distribution (when there is no will) to the blood relatives. Commissioners were appointed to divide the property along the San Bernard River among the three collateral heirs of full blood, (1) Mrs. Elizabeth Harrison, (2) Mrs. Mary Saffold, and (3) James Ray Phillips [two shares each], and the three collateral heirs of half-blood, (1) Mrs. Frances Roberts, deceased, (2) Mrs. Amaranth Gayle, and (3) Sidney Phillips. James R. Phillips would receive Tract 6 the land on which Waverly Place was located and Sidney Phillips received 997  $\frac{1}{2}$  acres down stream. Sidney Phillips would make his 200 acre homestead on the part of his tract bordering the San Bernard River.



Samuel May Williams League Zeno Phillips Heirs Partition 1851 Courtesy Brazoria County Historical Museum 1988.070c.0166

### Samuel May Williams League Plat Modified With Partitions Added<sup>43</sup>

James R. Phillips bought and traded several tracts during the mid 1850's until he owned most of tracts 4, 5, 6, and 7, a little over 600 acres.<sup>44</sup> With lands for Waverly Place consolidated into one area he mortgaged the land and twelve slaves to Ammon Underwood to obtain operating cash and mercantile supplies for the plantation for the years 1854-1856.<sup>45</sup> Records do not indicate his return on investment but in 1858 James R. Phillips attempted to sell Waverly Place as well as many of his other land holdings:

#### Desirable Residence, Land and Negroes for Sale

Waverly Place containing 614 acres of land, is beautifully situated on the San Bernard River 6 miles west of Columbia in Brazoria County, and directly on the Houston, Columbia, and Wharton Railroad Route. This place is well adapted both for agricultural purposes and for stock raising. The improvements consist of a good dwelling house, large brick cistern, all the necessary buildings—large garden, orchard, shrubbery and about thirty-five acres of land in a good state of cultivation, now prepared and ready for planting. I will sell with the place several valuable negroes, horses, mules, oxen, stock of hogs, corn and farming implements. I will also sell on the west side of the Bernard, out of the Phillips league, the following tracts of land viz: 938 acres opposite my residence, over 100 acres of which is improved land, the balance all timber—438 ½ acres off the lower part of said league adjoining Mr. Corker and directly opposite Capt. Spencers place. 890 acres adjoining a tract of land belonging to Mr. Williams about 40 acres of which is improved, the balance all timbered land.—This land will be sold in separate tracts, or altogether, as the purchaser may desire, and on *very reasonable* terms. Apply on the premises to

J. R. PHILLIPS

Columbia Feb 16to '58<sup>46</sup>

Evidently a buyer could not be had as the 1860 Census lists the James R. and Sidney Phillips families.

James R. Phillips (Planter)	56 M	Georgia
Mary	35 F	Alabama
Joseph	12 M	Texas
George W.	9 M	Texas
Mary J.	6 F	Texas
James R.	4 M	Texas
John G.	2 M	Texas
Mary Rector	13 F	Texas
Sidney Phillips (Planter)	46 M	Alabama
Ophelia G.	28 F	Alabama
Ophelia G.	9 F	Texas
John C.	8 M	Texas
Laura	2 F	Texas

<sup>43</sup> BCDR 4 94

<sup>44</sup> BCDR: F 565/66, G 39/40, G 139/40, G 140/41, G 281/82

<sup>45</sup> BCDR: F 787 & G 633/34

<sup>46</sup> *Democrat And Planter*, Columbia, December 21, 1858

Sid

3/12M Texas

Tax records for 1860 list James R. Phillips with 15 slaves, 8 head of horses, and 200 head of cattle. Sidney Phillips had 5 slaves, 8 horses, and 150 head of cattle. There were three slave dwelling and two slave dwellings on their respective properties according to the 1860 Slave Census. James R. Phillips was the agent for Mary Saffold, Mrs. E. Harrison, and Mrs. Amaranth Gayle so the family still controled most of the Zeno Phillips League on the west bank of the San Bernard River as well as a large portion of the Samuel May Williams League on the east bank.

In August 1860 James R. Phillips and his wife Mary lost an infant son, Milton Saffold. He was buried in the family cemetery next to his infant brother Zeno who had died in 1852. The next year their oldest son Joseph died May 1861. Later in the year Mary Jane Phillips would die October 9, 1861 and another infant son Isaiah would soon follow December 24, 1861. All were buried at Waverly Place.<sup>47</sup>

The family remained at Waverly Place through the Civil War and the 1870 Census lists James R. Phillips' family and some of the minor children of Sidney Phillips who had died February 1865 residing with him:

James Phillips (Farmer)	67 M	Georgia
Mary	16 F	Texas
George (Stock Raiser)	19 M	Texas
James	14 M	Texas
John	12 M	Texas
Gertrude	18 F	Texas (Sidney Phillips)
Laura	12 F	Texas (Sidney Phillips)
Joseph	10 M	Texas (Sidney Phillips)

The siblings of John Gayle Phillips conveyed Waverly Place over to him in 1876. This transaction included Lot 6 "including the dwelling and improvements of J. R. Phillips Sr".<sup>48</sup> George W. Phillips married Mary Ida Sweeney and moved to a portion of Tract 1 between the San Bernard and Mound Creek which had previously been bought by Sam Sweeny. He went into business with B.F. Sweeny in Columbia selling wines, liquors, and tobacco as well as planting cotton and raising stock until he sold out his stock of liquors in 1882.<sup>49</sup> According to the 1880 Census James R. Phillips was living with the family of George W. Gayle who had married his daughter Mary. Presumably they were staying at Waverly Place as John Gayle Phillips is not listed in the county. In 1881 James R. Phillips Sr. died and was buried at Waverly.

John G. Phillips sold out to Harris Masterson in February 1887<sup>50</sup> and married Jennie Price.<sup>51</sup> Harris Masterson sold Waverly Place along with several other tracts of land to the South Texas Development Company of New York in 1905.<sup>52</sup> The South Texas Development Company sold the property to A. W. Gardiner of Houston, Texas in 1910.<sup>53</sup> The Bankers Mortgage Company sold the 217.5 acres tract to A. R. Rucks in 1922. In the deed description are three

<sup>47</sup> Phillips Family File 12A & 12B, Brazoria County Historical Museum, Angleton, Texas

<sup>48</sup> BCDR: P 622/23

<sup>49</sup> BCDR: U 128/29 X 135/36

<sup>50</sup> BCDR: Z 165/66

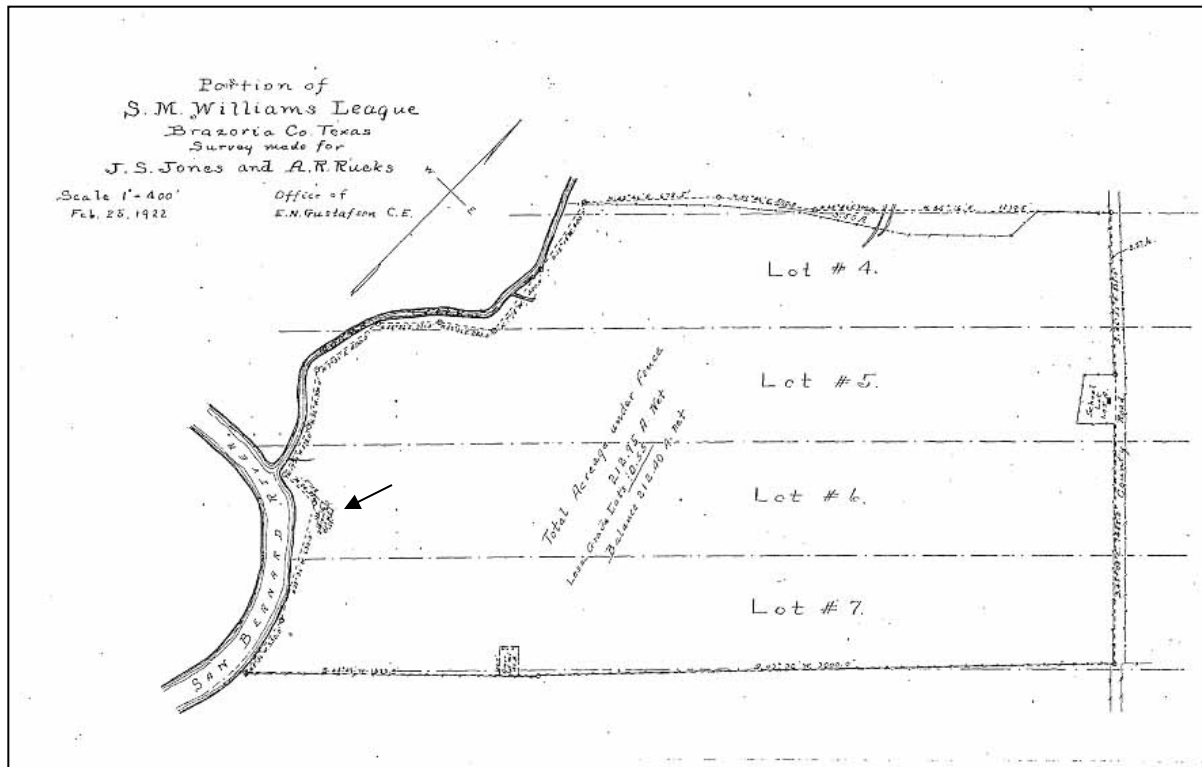
<sup>51</sup> Phillips Family File 12A & 12B, Brazoria County Historical Museum, Angleton, Texas

<sup>52</sup> BCDR: 67 544+

<sup>53</sup> BCDR: 90 572



exclusions: Grave Lot #1 0.35 acres (Black Cemetery), Grave Lot #2 0.20 acres (Phillips Cemetery), and School Lot 1.05 acres. A survey made at this time shows all three of these locations with the Phillips Cemetery being nearest the San Bernard River located 350 feet east of the mouth of Mound Creek.<sup>54</sup>



Survey for A. R. Rucks and J. S. Jones February 25, 1922<sup>55</sup>

A. R. Rucks sold the property to James Udell and O. R. Teague in 1941 with the exclusions of the grave lots still included in the transaction.<sup>56</sup> The Teague family would retain ownership for the rest of the century. Half interest was transferred to Margot Teague Madsen in 1991.<sup>57</sup> Annette W. Williams bought the property in December 2006.<sup>58</sup>

In an interview with Alton G. Rogers in February 2009 he related that he had visited the site in the 1950's and at that time there were a number of tombstones and an iron fence around the graveyard. Early in 1991 John Gayle Phillips Jr. and Gerald Brooks visited the site and reported one broken tombstone with the Phillips name on the location but no visual evidence of other tombstones or the iron fence that once surrounded the old cemetery. In March 1992 Gerald Brooks made another trip with Thelma Phillips Thompson and Esther Beard. A search of the nearby slough and the river bank did not reveal any tombstones. One of the questions concerning this graveyard is whether Stephen F. Austin II or Eliza M. Hill is buried in this graveyard. A

<sup>54</sup> BCDR: 173 534/38

<sup>55</sup> BCDR: 173 538

<sup>56</sup> BCDR 351 69/71

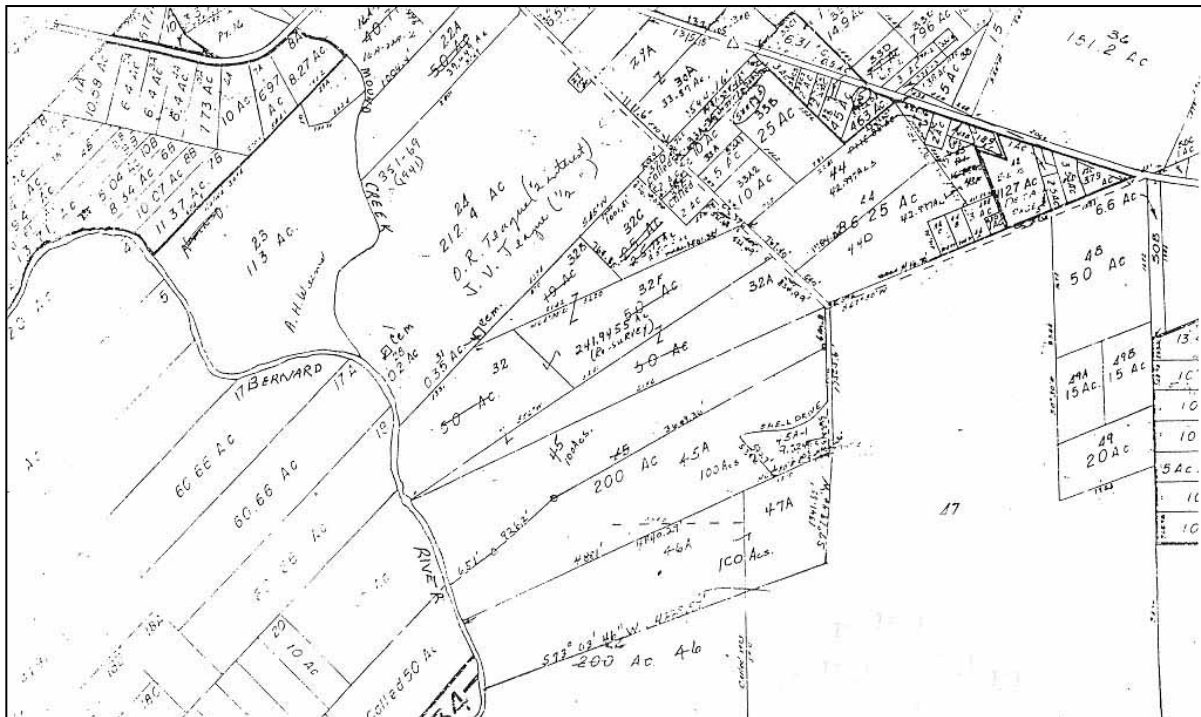
<sup>57</sup> BCDR: 891 829

<sup>58</sup> BCDR: 2006074632

state historical marker is located at the end of CR 697.<sup>59</sup> The location of the home site has not been investigated.

Zeno J. Phillips, son of Sidney Phillips, sold out the Sidney Phillips' 200 acres homestead January 1887 to Harris Masterson.<sup>60</sup> Located just down the San Bernard from Waverly Place this old homestead has not been investigated.

Deed records indicate that a cemetery is also located on the  $\frac{1}{4}$  league sold to George S. Pentecost which probably includes the grave of his wife Martha Ellen Denley Pentecost<sup>61</sup>.



Old Ownership Map in County Tax Office

<sup>59</sup> Phillips Family File 12A & 12B, Brazoria County Historical Museum, Angleton, Texas

<sup>60</sup> BCDR: 36 551/52

<sup>61</sup> BCDR: E 133/34 & E145/46.

## Appendix A Phillips Family Genealogy

Elizabeth Phillips b. 1790 Georgia (Col. Joseph Phillips & Jane Walker)  
d. 1863

m.  
Paschal Harrison b. 1780 Brunswick County, Virginia  
d. <1850  
7 Children

Mary Evelyn Phillips b. 1793 Georgia (Col. Joseph Phillips & Jane Walker)  
d. June 25, 1860

m. April 1811 Morgan County, Georgia  
Reuben Saffold II b. September 4, 1788  
d. February 15, 1847  
11 Children

John Clark Phillips b. (Col. Joseph Phillips & Jane Walker)  
d. 1835 (Buried at Waverly Place)

Zeno Phillips b. February 12, 1802 (Col. Joseph Phillips & Jane Walker)  
d. May 22, 1835 Brazoria County, Texas (Buried at Waverly Place)  
m.

Eliza Martha Westall Austin b. 1807 Tennessee (Thomas Westall and Sarah Henry)  
d. July 17, 1847 Brazoria County, Texas  
Sarah Olivia Phillips b. before 1835  
d. September 10, 1841 (Buried at Waverly Place)

James Ray Phillips b. January 16, 1804 Greene Co., Georgia (Col. Joseph Phillips & Jane Walker)  
d. October 18, 1881 Waverly Place

m. August 8, 1847 Home of her brother George W. Pentecost, Fort Bend County, Texas  
Mary Jane Pentecost Rector b. 1824 Alabama (George S. Pentecost & Martha Ellen Denley)  
d. October 9, 1861 Waverly Place

Joseph Phillips b. May 2, 1848 Waverly Place  
d. May 2, 1861 Waverly Place

George Washington Phillips b. September 28, 1850 San Felipe  
d.

Zeno Phillips b. November 5, 1852 Waverly Place  
d. November 11, 1852 Waverly Place

Mary Jane (Jennie) Phillips b. November 17, 1853 Waverly Place  
d. December 25, 1941 East Columbia

James Ray Phillips Jr. b. February 25, 1856 Waverly Place  
d.

John Gayle Phillips b. May 7, 1858 Waverly Place  
d. June 3, 1929 West Columbia Cemetery

Milton Saffold Phillips b. August 14, 1860 Waverly Place  
d. August 20, 1860 Waverly Place

Isaiah Phillips b. October 9, 1861 Waverly Place  
d. December 24, 1861 Waverly Place

Frances Medora Phillips b. ? ( Col. Joseph Phillips & Patsy Hall)  
d.

m.

Alfred Roberts

James D. Roberts

Amaranth E. Roberts

Medora Frances Roberts

Matthew G. Roberts

Amaranth Lowndes Phillips b. 1813 Alabama (Col. Joseph Phillips & Patsy Hall)  
d. 1894 West Columbia, Texas

m. 1829 Cahaba, Dallas County, Alabama

Matthew Gayle b. February 17, 1797 (John Gayle & Nancy Whitehead)  
d. January 27, 1867

Phillip Heustis Gayle

Amaranth Lowndes Gayle

John Gayle

Mary Arthur Gayle

Francis Swepstone Gayle

Zeno Ray Gayle

George Washington Gayle

Matthew Gayle

Sidney Phillips b. 1814 Alabama (Col. Joseph Phillips & Patsy Hall)  
d. February 1, 1865

m. October 18, 1849 Fort Bend County, Texas

Ophelia Gertrude Johnson b. ~1830 Alabama (Rev. Samuel Johnson & Hannah Douglas Harrison)  
d. before 1869

John Clark Phillips b. May 17, 1852 Texas

d.

Zeno Phillips b. Texas

d.

Ophelia Gertrude Phillips b. ~1851 Texas

d.

Laura Phillips b. ~1858

d.

Jack Phillips b.

d.

Appendix B  
DRT #18878

DEED OF TRUST from James R. Phillips & Sidney Phillips to C. W. Buckley, Trustee, was the 16th day of October 1847 filed in this office for record in the words and terms following to-wit:

THE STATE OF TEXAS        }  
COUNTY OF FORT BEND        }

Know all men by these presents that whereas our father Joseph Phillips of Alabama died possessed of a considerable estate boath [sic] real and personal a part of which is now in our possession and whereas our sister Amaranth Gayle of Dallas County State of Alabama, wife of Matt Gayle, Esq., was entitled to an equal share of said estate but has never received any part or parcel thereof, now for and in consideration of the right of the said Amaranth Gayle and the further consideration of one dollar to us in hand paid by Constantine W. Buckley of the County of Harris, State aforesaid, the receipt whereof is hereby fully acknowledged we James R. Phillips and Sidney Phillips both of the county first aforesaid have granted bargained, and released and by these presents do grant and release unto the said C. W. Buckley his heirs and assigns the following named and described negro slaves now in our possession, to wit: Hastings a man fifty five years old, malatto [sic] color -- [Jes?] se a black woman fifty five years old May Ann, copper color, twenty two years old and her two children Abram four years old and Lucy one year old -- Little Rose, black color, sixteen years old, Jud, black fourteen years old and Green black boy nine years old together with their further increase -- said negroes being the share of our said sister Amaranth in the property of the estate of our father in our possession -- to have and to hold the above described negro slaves and their future increase unto him the said C. W. Buckley his heirs and assigns forever upon Trust nevertheless for the sole consideration and exclusive use & benefit and behoof of our said Sister Amaranth Gayle and her heirs free from the Control of her Husband in any manner whatever. This transfer is made in full satisfaction of all claims and demands upon us by our said sister for and on account of her share of our father's estate in our hands or that ever has been under our Control. In witness whereof we have hereunto affixed our initials for seals and subscribed our names this Twenty eighth day of August A.D. one thousand Eight hundred and Forty Six.

Signed Sealed and delivered }				
in presence of }		James	R.	Phillips
(seal)				
John M Meeks }	Sidney Phillips	(seal)		
Alfred Roberts }				
Recorded 16th October 1847				



### Appendix C Deed Record Waverly Plantation

GRANTORS	GRANTEES	Kind of Instrument	Book	Page	Month	Day	Year	Acres	Description
Mexican Government	Samuel May Williams	Deed			Aug	10	1824		Samuel M. Williams 1 League
Samuel May Williams	Williams S. Brown	Deed	SR Trans	18/19	Nov	16	1825		\$100 South ½ of League (Joseph Mims lived at the mouth of Mound Creek at this time)
William S. Brown	Zeno Phillips	Deed	SR Trans	23/24	June	5	1826		\$385 South ½ of S.M. Williams League
Samuel May Williams	Zeno Phillips & Jesse Thompson	Deed		378/79	Mar	28	1829		Upper ½ of S. M. Williams League
Zeno Phillips & Jesse Thompson	George S. Pentecost	Deed	SR Trans	305/07	Dec	14	1832		\$300 1/4 League upper portion of S. M. Williams League with improvements
Zeno Phillips Estate	Heirs of Zeno Phillips	Record of Wills	E	136/41	Oct	24	1851	3780	Partition of Land in Samuel M. Williams & Zeno Phillips Leagues among heirs 3780 ¼ acres SM Williams Lg
Mary Saffold Alabama	Phillip A. Davenport	Deed	F	794/95	July	26	1852	1713	Tract 8 in SM Williams Lg \$3000 + other tracts
James R. Phillips	George W. Pentecost	Mortgage	F	689	March	8	1853		\$675 note 1 slave "Zeno" as security
Elizabeth Harrison of Alabama	James R. Phillips	PA	F	564	March	13	1853		Power of Attorney to sell Tract 1
Amaranth L. Gayle	James R. Phillips	Deed	F	565/66	June	2	1853	141	\$1200 Tract 7
Elizabeth Harrison	R. G. Salmon	Deed	G	138/39	June	12	1853	73	\$157. part of Tract 1
Elizabeth Harrsion	Daniel Geiser	Deed	G	39	June	26	1854	96.5	Tract 5
Daniel Geiser	James R. Phillips	Deed	G	39/40	June	26	1854	96.5	Tract 5
Mary Saffold	James R. Phillips	Agreemnt	G	139/40	Feb	4	1854	161	Tract 4 exchange to James R. Phillips
Sidney Phillips for Mary Saffold	James R. Phillips	Deed	G	281/82	April	1	1854	161	
James R. Phillips	Mary Saffold	Deed	G	140/41	April	21	1854	160	Tract 3 exchange to Mary Saffold
James R. Phillips	Ammon Underwood	Mortgage	F	787	May	1	1854		\$3336.65 note on parts tracts 3, 4, 6, & 7 + 12 slaves
James R. Phillips	Ammon Underwood	Mortgage	G	633/34	May	1	1856		Debts or advances to be made tracts 3, 4, 6, & 7 + 12 slaves
Horace & Amaranth Cone	James R. Phillips	Deed	H	92/93	Feb	9	1857	166	\$466.90 Tract 2 for Roberts Heirs
James R. & Mary Phillips	George Williams	Deed	H	36/37	Feb	12	1857		\$423.00
James R. Phillips	Isaac T. Tinsley	Deed	N	788/89	April	29	1873		Tracts 4, 6, & 7 SM Williams League
James R. Phillips	Isaac T. Tinsley	Deed	N	789/90	April	29	1873		\$2000 287 acres part Tract 3
Isaac T. Tinsley	Heirs James R. Phillips	Deed	N	757/58	April	29	1873		\$1000 Tracts 4, 5, 6, & 7

James R. Phillips Jr. George W. & Mary Jane Gayle	John Gayle Phillips	Deed	P	622	March	15	1876		Parts Tracts 4, 6, & 7 including dwelling & improvements
John G. Phillips	Wyatt Bennett	Deed	U	165/66	Dec	1	1881	70	Part Tract 5 \$100.00 down +\$125.00
Phillips & Gayle Heirs	H. Masterson	Deed	Z	165	Feb	17	1887		Parts Tracts 4, 5, 6, 7
H. Masterson	South Texas Development Co. N. Y.	Deed	67	544	Sept	18	1905		Many tracts of land sold at this time including Tract 6
South Texas Development Co. N. Y.	A. W. Gardiner	Deed	90	572	April	14	1910	218.6	\$1193.55
John G. Phillips Mrs. Mary Gayle G. W. Gayle et al	South Texas Development Co.	Deed	103	410/13	Feb	17	1911		Lot 4, 5, 6, & 7 reserved 1 acre graveyard
Bankers Mortgage Co.	A. R. Rucks et al	Deed	173	534/38	Feb	11	1922	217.5	\$6372.00 Lot 4, 5, 6, & 7
A. R. Rucks et al	J. U. & O. R. Teague	Deed	351	69/71	June	18	1941	217.5	\$4228.00
James U. Teague	Margot Teague Madsen	Warranty Deed	891	829	March	27	1991		½ Interest as trustee
Margot Teague Madsen	Annette W. Williams	Deed			Dec	16	2006	255.458	217.5 acres + part of other tract
Estate Sidney Phillips	Heirs & Owners	Deed	T	460/63	July	25	1881	997	Partition of Sidney Phillips Estate in S. M. Williams Lg & Zeno Phillips Lg. Lot 8 997 ½ acres in SM Williams Lg
Laura S. Rawls	Zeno Phillips	Deed	8	527/29	July	30	1881	200	Partition
Zeno J. Phillips	H. Harrison	Deed	36	551/52	Jan	16	1897	200	\$1250 Tract 2 of Tract 8 Sidney Phillips homestead

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