

Pathways to Freedom Project  
The Jackson Family of Georgia, Alabama, and Texas  
The Search for Matilda Hicks  
Jackson Ranch Church  
Awareness through Education

A Research Report Prepared by  
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for the  
CHAPS Program at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
July 2023

Part I

The search for Matilda Hicks – Common-law wife of Nathaniel Jackson  
Documenting the Jackson Family journey to the Rio Grande Valley of Texas

Part II

Technological Mapping and Sensing of Jackson Ranch Church and Cemetery

Part III

TEKS-aligned lesson plans for K-12 Education  
Place-based and community-based learning options

## INTRODUCTION

The Community Historical Archaeology Project with Schools Program, better known by its acronym as the CHAPS Program, is dedicated to preserving the regional history and cultural resources of the Rio Grande Valley of Texas and the surrounding borderland region. Initiated in the summer of 2009, the CHAPS Program is a multi-disciplinary program at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) that has launched several research initiatives since its inception. The CHAPS Program mission is to identify and study local cultural and natural resources using the skill sets of the historical sciences (anthropology, biology, geology, history), actively integrate them into K-12 education, promote cultural heritage tourism, and build a sense of community pride. The CHAPS Program is an award-winning program that is dedicated to community engaged research that yields knowledge greater than the sum of its parts.

In 2015, the CHAPS Program launched a project known as the *Rio Grande Valley Civil War Trail*. Research efforts resulted in various topics such as military activity, battlefield archaeology, borderland trade and commerce, and the migration of mixed-race families that settled along the banks of the Rio Grande in Hidalgo County prior to the US Civil War. Further investigation into these bi-racial antebellum settlers through family reports and oral history tradition revealed that these families encountered self-emancipators at their riverside ranches and assisted them over the international border to freedom in Mexico. One such family is the Jackson family that arrived in the Rio Grande Valley in 1857. They traveled overland in five covered

wagons from Alabama, led by family patriarch Nathaniel Jackson, his common-law wife Matilda Hicks, and their adult children, grandchildren, and extended families.<sup>1</sup>

Attention to the histories of southbound pathways to freedom has increased over the past decade as emerging scholars publish their research. The Jackson Ranch property has not only gained attention at the local, regional, and state levels, but at the national and international levels as well. In 2017, border wall construction threatened access to the Jackson Ranch historic church and cemetery and the family made efforts to halt the project with appeals to local and national elected officials, citing the historical significance of the property and physical damage to headstones and grave markers.

In addition to sparking scholarly interest regarding self-emancipators on their quest for freedom across the international border into Mexico, this topic speaks directly to racial identity in the Texas-Mexico borderlands as well. The population of the Rio Grande Valley of Texas is described ethnically as more than 94% Hispanic with most of the population being of Mexican origins, and approximately 79% of the population able to speak Spanish.<sup>2</sup> The Hispanic population identifies racially as white combined with “some other race” noted as American Indian or indigenous Mexican.<sup>3</sup> This research shows that a percentage of the population, descendants of the Jackson and related families, also contain African American origins.

The CHAPS Program included the Jackson Ranch property in numerous aspects of the *Rio Grande Valley Civil War Trail* project because of the uniqueness of their story and their relation to antebellum activity along the US-Mexico borderlands. Additional efforts are

<sup>1</sup> Diana Cardenas, “The Eli Jackson Cemetery” (typescript July 2004), Hidalgo County Historical Commission, Edinburg, TX and Francis W. Isbell, “Jackson Ranch Church” (typescript, December 1982), Hidalgo County Historical Commission, Edinburg, TX. (Also found at <https://scholarworks.utrgv.edu/hidalgohist/>)

<sup>2</sup> RGV Health Connect website – 2023 Demographics <https://www.rgvhealthconnect.org/demographicdata?id=281259&sectionId=935>, accessed June 30, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> US Census Bureau, The Hispanic Population: 2010 Census Briefs, May 2011, p. 13 -15.

underway to assist the family in obtaining recognition of the Jackson Ranch church and cemetery on the *National Register of Historic Places* through the Texas Historical Commission. Property surveys were required to complete this nomination package, and with funding from the CHAPS Program, we conducted a GIS Mapping survey to mark the headstones and monuments within the graveyard, along with a ground-penetrating radar survey and canine forensic survey to detect possible unmarked graves. An application to the National Park Service's *Network to Freedom Trail* is underway to add a location to the present national trail, which to date contains only three locations in Texas. The increased attention to the Jackson Ranch church and cemetery made it clear that further research was required to discover the origins of this bi-racial family, beginning with how Matilda Hicks came to be a slave on the Jackson family property. Since both Nathaniel (born 1798) and Matilda (born 1800) were born in Georgia near the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and their children were born after the family moved to Alabama, a research trip, sponsored by the CHAPS Program, was embarked upon to search for the evidence to chronicle their travels that ultimately led to their settlement in Hidalgo County on the US side of the Rio Grande. This report will reveal the results of that research. Finally, in an effort to maintain the CHAPS mission to bring important regional history into the K-12 classrooms, local educators were tasked to develop TEKS-aligned lesson plans about the Jackson family story, and the role they played in the assistance of freedom seekers across the international boundary to Mexico.

## **PRE-PROJECT STATUS OF KNOWLEDGE**

Our baseline knowledge of this story comes in the form of written reports and interviews with family members regarding the narrative of the Jackson family's journey from Alabama to the US-Mexico border in Hidalgo County, Texas. We know that Nathaniel, Matilda and their

extended family of children, grandchildren, and other relatives traveled from Wilcox County, Alabama and stopped short of crossing the Rio Grande into Mexico in 1857. Nathaniel purchased 5,535 acres of land and the family settled a riverside colony in today's San Juan, Texas, calling it the Jackson Ranch.<sup>4</sup> There they built a Methodist church, farmed the land, raised cattle, and assimilated into local Tejano culture. Some family members became Hidalgo County elected officials such as county commissioner and district clerk. Family folklore tells the story of how Nathaniel brought his slaves on the journey and emancipated them.<sup>5</sup>

One theory of how Nathaniel and Matilda came together comes from the knowledge that both were born in Georgia at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It seemed logical that perhaps Matilda was the child of a Jackson family slave and Nathaniel and Matilda grew up together on his father's farm. Nathaniel's father, Joseph Jackson left Georgia in 1812 and moved his family and slaves to Alabama, known at the time as Mississippi Territory. By 1829, Nathaniel and Matilda had their first child. Together they had a total of seven children. We are told that Matilda had three daughters with a man named Smith in Alabama before she had children with Nathaniel and family stories describe them as Nathaniel Jackson's stepdaughters.<sup>6</sup> Nathaniel Jackson appears in the 1830 Alabama census with 8 slaves listed on his property, in the 1840 census with 9 slaves, and in the 1850 census with 25 slaves (Figure 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3).<sup>7</sup> Since slaves were not named by census takers, they were noted with check marks in boxes on the census form as a male or female slave of certain ages, i.e., Matilda most likely was represented as a female slave aged 40-50 on Nathaniel's property in the 1850 census. After Nathaniel Jackson's death in 1865, his property

<sup>4</sup> Hidalgo County Courthouse, Deed Records, Book A, E.D. and Mary Smith to Nathaniel Jackson, 5,535 acres, July 27, 1857, p. 315-318.

<sup>5</sup> Cardenas, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> US Federal Census – 1830, 1840, and 1850, slave schedules Wilcox County, AL, [database on-line]. Lehi, Utah, USA. Ancestry.com Operations, Inc. 2004.



An Enumeration of the Inhabitants of Wilcox County, 1850.											An Enumeration of the Inhabitants of Wilcox County, 1860.										
Names of Individuals or Heads of Families.											Names of Individuals or Heads of Families.										
White Males over 21 years.	White Males over 15 and 45.	White Females over 21.	Inmate within County.	Inmate sent abroad.	Number of free persons of color.	Total INHABITANTS.	White Males over 21 years.	White Males over 15 and 45.	White Females over 21.	Inmate within County.	Inmate sent abroad.	Number of free persons of color.	Total INHABITANTS.								
1	2	1	6	1	1150	1150	1	2	1	6	1	1150	1150								
2	1	1	1	1	1151	1151	1	1	1	1	1	1151	1151								
3	1	1	1	1	1152	1152	1	1	1	1	1	1152	1152								
4	1	1	1	1	1153	1153	1	1	1	1	1	1153	1153								
5	1	1	1	1	1154	1154	1	1	1	1	1	1154	1154								
6	1	1	1	1	1155	1155	1	1	1	1	1	1155	1155								
7	1	1	1	1	1156	1156	1	1	1	1	1	1156	1156								
8	1	1	1	1	1157	1157	1	1	1	1	1	1157	1157								
9	1	1	1	1	1158	1158	1	1	1	1	1	1158	1158								
10	1	1	1	1	1159	1159	1	1	1	1	1	1159	1159								
11	1	1	1	1	1160	1160	1	1	1	1	1	1160	1160								
12	1	1	1	1	1161	1161	1	1	1	1	1	1161	1161								
13	1	1	1	1	1162	1162	1	1	1	1	1	1162	1162								
14	1	1	1	1	1163	1163	1	1	1	1	1	1163	1163								
15	1	1	1	1	1164	1164	1	1	1	1	1	1164	1164								
16	1	1	1	1	1165	1165	1	1	1	1	1	1165	1165								
17	1	1	1	1	1166	1166	1	1	1	1	1	1166	1166								
18	1	1	1	1	1167	1167	1	1	1	1	1	1167	1167								
19	1	1	1	1	1168	1168	1	1	1	1	1	1168	1168								
20	1	1	1	1	1169	1169	1	1	1	1	1	1169	1169								
21	1	1	1	1	1170	1170	1	1	1	1	1	1170	1170								
22	1	1	1	1	1171	1171	1	1	1	1	1	1171	1171								
23	1	1	1	1	1172	1172	1	1	1	1	1	1172	1172								
24	1	1	1	1	1173	1173	1	1	1	1	1	1173	1173								
25	1	1	1	1	1174	1174	1	1	1	1	1	1174	1174								
26	1	1	1	1	1175	1175	1	1	1	1	1	1175	1175								
27	1	1	1	1	1176	1176	1	1	1	1	1	1176	1176								
28	1	1	1	1	1177	1177	1	1	1	1	1	1177	1177								
29	1	1	1	1	1178	1178	1	1	1	1	1	1178	1178								
30	1	1	1	1	1179	1179	1	1	1	1	1	1179	1179								
31	1	1	1	1	1180	1180	1	1	1	1	1	1180	1180								
32	1	1	1	1	1181	1181	1	1	1	1	1	1181	1181								
33	1	1	1	1	1182	1182	1	1	1	1	1	1182	1182								
34	1	1	1	1	1183	1183	1	1	1	1	1	1183	1183								
35	1	1	1	1	1184	1184	1	1	1	1	1	1184	1184								
36	1	1	1	1	1185	1185	1	1	1	1	1	1185	1185								
37	1	1	1	1	1186	1186	1	1	1	1	1	1186	1186								
38	1	1	1	1	1187	1187	1	1	1	1	1	1187	1187								
39	1	1	1	1	1188	1188	1	1	1	1	1	1188	1188								
40	1	1	1	1	1189	1189	1	1	1	1	1	1189	1189								
41	1	1	1	1	1190	1190	1	1	1	1	1	1190	1190								
42	1	1	1	1	1191	1191	1	1	1	1	1	1191	1191								
43	1	1	1	1	1192	1192	1	1	1	1	1	1192	1192								
44	1	1	1	1	1193	1193	1	1	1	1	1	1193	1193								
45	1	1	1	1	1194	1194	1	1	1	1	1	1194	1194								
46	1	1	1	1	1195	1195	1	1	1	1	1	1195	1195								
47	1	1	1	1	1196	1196	1	1	1	1	1	1196	1196								
48	1	1	1	1	1197	1197	1	1	1	1	1	1197	1197								
49	1	1	1	1	1198	1198	1	1	1	1	1	1198	1198								
50	1	1	1	1	1199	1199	1	1	1	1	1	1199	1199								
51	1	1	1	1	1200	1200	1	1	1	1	1	1200	1200								
52	1	1	1	1	1201	1201	1	1	1	1	1	1201	1201								
53	1	1	1	1	1202	1202	1	1	1	1	1	1202	1202								
54	1	1	1	1	1203	1203	1	1	1	1	1	1203	1203								
55	1	1	1	1	1204	1204	1	1	1	1	1	1204	1204								
56	1	1	1	1	1205	1205	1	1	1	1	1	1205	1205								
57	1	1	1	1	1206	1206	1	1	1	1	1	1206	1206								
58	1	1	1	1	1207	1207	1	1	1	1	1	1207	1207								
59	1	1	1	1	1208	1208	1	1	1	1	1	1208	1208								
60	1	1	1	1	1209	1209	1	1	1	1	1	1209	1209								
61	1	1	1	1	1210	1210	1	1	1	1	1	1210	1210								
62	1	1	1	1	1211	1211	1	1	1	1	1	1211	1211								
63	1	1	1	1	1212	1212	1	1	1	1	1	1212	1212								
64	1	1	1	1	1213	1213	1	1	1	1	1	1213	1213								
65	1	1	1	1	1214	1214	1	1	1	1	1	1214	1214								
66	1	1	1	1	1215	1215	1	1	1	1	1	1215	1215								
67	1	1	1	1	1216	1216	1	1	1	1	1	1216	1216								
68	1	1	1	1	1217	1217	1	1	1	1	1	1217	1217								
69	1	1	1	1	1218	1218	1	1	1	1	1	1218	1218								
70	1	1	1	1	1219	1219	1	1	1	1	1	1219	1219								
71	1	1	1	1	1220	1220	1	1	1	1	1	1220	1220								
72	1	1	1	1	1221	1221	1	1	1	1	1	1221	1221								
73	1	1	1	1	1222	1222	1	1	1	1	1	1222	1222								
74	1	1	1	1	1223	1223	1	1	1	1	1	1223	1223								
75	1	1	1	1	1224	1224	1	1	1	1	1	1224	1224								
76	1	1	1	1	1225	1225	1	1	1	1	1	1225	1225								
77	1	1	1	1	1226	1226	1	1	1	1	1	1226	1226								
78	1	1	1	1	1227	1227	1	1	1	1	1	1227	1227								
79	1	1	1	1	1228	1228	1	1	1	1	1	1228	1228								
80	1	1	1	1	1229	1229	1	1	1	1	1	1229	1229								
81	1	1	1	1	1230	1230	1	1	1	1	1	1230	1230								
82	1	1	1	1	1231	1231	1	1	1	1	1	1231	1231								
83	1	1	1	1	1232	1232	1	1	1	1	1	1232	1232								
84	1	1	1	1	1233	1233	1	1	1	1	1	1233	1233								
85	1	1	1	1	1234	1234	1	1	1	1	1	1234	1234								
86	1	1	1	1	1235	1235	1	1	1	1	1	1235	1235								
87	1	1	1	1	1236	1236	1	1	1	1	1	1236	1236								
88	1	1	1	1	1237	1237	1	1	1	1	1	1237	1237								
89	1	1	1	1	1238	1238	1	1	1	1	1	1238	1238								
90	1	1	1	1	1239	1239	1	1	1	1	1	1239	1239								
91	1	1	1	1	1240	1240	1	1	1	1	1	1240	1240								
92	1	1	1	1	1241	1241	1	1	1	1	1	1241	1241								
93	1	1	1	1	1242	1242	1	1	1	1	1	1242	1242								
94	1	1	1	1	1243	1243	1	1	1	1	1	1243	1243								
95	1	1	1	1	1244	1244	1	1	1	1	1	1244	1244								
96	1	1	1	1	1245	1245	1	1	1	1	1	1245	1245								
97	1	1	1	1	1246	1246	1	1	1	1	1	1246	1246								
98	1	1	1	1	1247	1247	1	1	1	1	1	1247	1247								
99	1	1	1	1	1248	1248	1	1	1	1	1	1248	1248								
100	1	1	1	1	1249	1249	1	1	1	1	1	1249	1249								
101	1	1	1	1	1250	1250	1	1	1	1	1	1250	1250								
102	1	1	1	1	1251	1251	1	1	1	1	1	1251	1251								
103	1	1	1	1	1252	1252	1	1	1	1	1	1252	1252								
104	1	1	1	1	1253	1253	1	1	1	1	1	1253	1253								
105	1	1	1	1	1254	1254	1	1	1	1	1	1254	1254								
106	1	1	1	1	1255	1255	1	1	1	1	1	1255	1255								
107	1	1	1	1	1256	1256	1	1	1	1	1	1256	1256								
108	1	1	1	1	1257	1257	1	1	1	1	1	1257	1257								
109	1	1	1	1	1258	1258	1	1	1	1	1	1258	1258								
110	1	1	1	1	1259	1259	1	1	1	1	1	1259	1259								
111	1	1	1	1	1260	1260	1	1	1	1	1	1260	1260								
112	1	1	1	1	1261	1261	1	1	1	1	1	1261	1261								
113	1	1	1	1	1262	1262	1	1	1	1	1	1262	1262								
114	1	1	1	1	1263	1263	1	1	1	1</											



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Inquiries numbered 7, 16, and 17 are not to be asked in respect to infants. Inquiries numbered 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, and 20 are to be answered merely by an affirmative mark, as /.

SCHEDULE 1. Inhabitants in Precinct Number One, in the County of Hidalgo, State of Texas, enumerated by me on the 2nd day of August, 1870.

Post Office: Edinburg

John P. Taylor, Ass't Marshal.

1	2	3	4		7	8		10	11		13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
			4	5		8	9		11	12								
The name of every person whose place of abode on the first day of June, 1870, was in this family.		DESCRIPTION.		Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male or female.		VALUE OF REAL ESTATE OWNED.		Place of Birth, naming State or Territory of U. S.; or the Country, if of foreign birth.		PARENTAGE.		EDUCATION.		Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.		CONSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS.		
51	50	Jackson, Elie	38	M	Farmer	10000	5000	Alabama										
		Elizabeth	23	F	Washing house			Texas										
		Alisa	5	F	"			"										
		Robert	2	M	"			"										
52	51	Webster, John	21	M	Farmer			Kentucky										
		L. D. Jackson	45	M	"			Mexico	/	/								
53	52	Jackson, Matilda	40	F	Washing house			Georgia										
		Columbus	44	M	Farmer	4000	4500	Alabama										
		Marion	53	F	"			"										
		John	31	M	"			"										
54	53	Jackson, Matilda	33	F	"			"										
		Matilda	30	F	Washing house			Mexico	/	/								
		Companion	11	F	"			Texas	/	/								
55	54	Anderson, Edward	35	M	Farmer			Alabama										
		Viley	50	M	Washing house			"										
		Juliana	14	F	At home			Texas										
		James	12	M	"			"										
		Lucinda	4	F	"			"										
		Artilda	6	F	"			"										
		William	6	M	"			"										
		Amey	4	F	"			"										
56	55	Lea, Susan	60	F	Stock raiser			Mexico	/	/								
		Louisa	22	F	Washing house			"	/	/								
		Carroll	5	M	"			"	/	/								
		Phoenia	7	F	"			Texas	/	/								
57	56	Lea, Matias	38	M	Farmer			Mexico	/	/								
		Antonio	30	M	"			"	/	/								
58	57	Quinn, Thomas	40	M	Farmer			"	/	/								
		Matilda	35	F	Washing house			"	/	/								
		Yvonne	14	F	Farmer			"	/	/								
		Christina	14	F	"			"	/	/								
		Antonia	12	F	"			"	/	/								
		Delfina	12	F	At home			Texas	/	/								
		Martha	12	F	"			"	/	/								
		Luisa	8	F	"			"	/	/								
		Episcopia	4	F	"			"	/	/								
		Sara	3	F	"			"	/	/								
		Isabel	7	F	"			Texas	/	/								
59	58	Garcia, Antonio	36	M	Farmer			Mexico	/	/								
		Delfina	22	F	Washing house			"	/	/								

No. of dwellings, 59. No. of white females, 48. No. of males, foreign born, 65. 1 Insane. No. of insane, —

" " families, 58. " " colored males, 14. " " females, " 54.

" " white males, 44. " " " females, 14. " " blind, —

Figure 1.4 – 1870 US Census Bureau, Hidalgo County, Texas, population schedule, Township Edinburg, Precinct 1, p. 336 handwritten, dwelling # 53, Matilda Jackson (and sons), August 2, 1870 (note: Edinburg is now known as Hidalgo, TX-not to be confused with today's Edinburg, TX located 19 miles north of the Rio Grande).

## EARLY HISTORIOGRAPHY OF JACKSON FAMILY RESEARCH

Attention to the Jackson family's valuable contribution to American history began as early as the 1890s when Lt. W.H. Chatfield, a surveyor for the US Army, recognized the Jackson Ranch community as a "negro settlement"<sup>9</sup> in his report to the US government while assessing the feasibility of commercial irrigation across the region.<sup>10</sup> In 1912, more research was conducted when James B. Wells, a lawyer in Brownsville, investigated the chain-of-title records to lands once owned by the Jackson family, as part of an original Spanish land grant known as *Porcion* No. 71. The validity of the recorded chain-of-title was challenged by attorney Frank C. Pierce who intended to negate legal possession of the property by Nathaniel Jackson's heirs by claiming Nathaniel and Matilda, the mother of his children, were never married. Wells' opinion clarified the recognition of Nathaniel and Matilda as married by common-law in the state of Texas, citing "constitutional and statutory provisions" and therefore "have and hold, perfect title to all said Porcion." This concluded Wells' opinion that in fact, Matilda and her children were the rightful heirs to that property and had every right to sell it when they did.<sup>11</sup> In 1929, the murder of Polo Jackson, jailer at the Hidalgo County Jail and the grandson of Nathaniel and Matilda (through their son Eli), was noted as a "Negro" in the headline of the *Brownsville Herald* newspaper that reported his murder.<sup>12</sup> In 1942, an article in the *Brownsville Herald* labeled the nearby Capote Ranch as Jackson's Ranch that "grew up from the settlement of runaway slaves" comprised of people that "intermarried with the Mexican and Indians" while

<sup>9</sup> Note: the author provides a quote directly from a source that uses a racial slur when discussing the racial distinction of the Jackson family community indicating that people of African American descent do not appear in large numbers in the antebellum US-Mexico borderland region. This applies to all subsequent uses of the word.

<sup>10</sup> W.H. Chatfield, *The Twin Cities of the Border and the Country of the Lower Rio Grande*, E.P. Brandao: New Orleans, 1893, p. 42.

<sup>11</sup> James B. Wells, *Opinion of James B. Wells upon title of Nathaniel Jackson to Porcion 71, Town of Reynosa, original grantee Narciso Cavazos*, 1912. <https://scholarworks.utrgv.edu/hidalgohist/>

<sup>12</sup> *Brownsville Herald*, "Pharr Negro Killed: Pioneer Settler Ambushed and Shot by Unknown Enemies," November 23, 1929, p. 1.

noting that “Eli Jackson occupied a prominent place in Hidalgo County as the commissioner from Precinct 2.”<sup>13</sup> In 1952, Mary Alice Ramirez, the great-great-granddaughter of Nathaniel and Matilda (through their son Martin) wrote a report for her high school history class about Nathaniel Jackson as a pioneer settler of Hidalgo County. This essay was featured in the *Edinburg Daily Review Newspaper* for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Centennial Edition that celebrated the founding of Hidalgo County in 1852.<sup>14</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s, several Hidalgo County Historical Commission (HCHC) members felt this was a unique story, and a research initiative was launched to capture this history through interviews with family descendants.

In 1982, Frances Isbell wrote a report for the HCHC about the Jackson Ranch Church. In that report, she collaborated with other HCHC members and Jackson family descendant Maynor Jackson Lopez (granddaughter of Nathaniel and Matilda through their son Martin Jackson) about the Jackson Ranch Church and the family’s story. Maynor provided the primary benefit of having heard the family stories directly from her father, Martin Jackson, who endured the venturesome journey from Alabama to Hidalgo County in 1857. This report was utilized for the Texas Historical Commission marker application that was awarded in 1983.<sup>15</sup> In 2004, Jackson family descendant Diana Cardenas (great-great-great granddaughter of Nathaniel and Matilda through their son Eli Jackson), wrote a report for the HCHC about the Eli Jackson Cemetery which provided the commentary necessary to be awarded a Texas Historical Commission marker in 2005.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Brownsville Herald, Capote Ranch, Jackson’s Ranch, 1942.

<sup>14</sup> Edinburg Daily Review, “Nathaniel Jackson – 1858,” December 17, 1952, Centennial Edition.

<sup>15</sup> Texas Historical Commission Marker No. 2706, Atlas Number 5215002706, 1983.

<sup>16</sup> Texas Historical Commission Marker No. 13730, Atlas Number 5507013730, 2005.

Other reports and sources written by regional historians include the following:

- Hidalgo County Historical Collection at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Special Collections and Archives, Edinburg Campus and via Scholarworks: <https://scholarworks.utrgv.edu/hidalgohist/><sup>17</sup>
  - Hidalgo County Historical Commission, Jackson Ranch, undated, Container: 79, Box: 7, Folder: 27, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Special Collections and Archives, Edinburg Campus.
  - Diana Cardenas, Eli Jackson Cemetery Pharr, Texas 108, 2004-2006, Container: 79, Box: 3, Folder: 35, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Special Collections and Archives, Edinburg Campus.
  - Jackson Ranch Church, 1982-1986, David Mycue, Jackson Ranch Church, 1982-1986, Container: 79, Box: 5, Folder: 30, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Special Collections and Archives, Edinburg Campus.
  - From Hidalgo County Historical Commission Collection, Series IV, Historical Research, 1969-2013, consists of research for historical marker applications. "News Release, Tourist Edition", Eli Jackson Cemetery Pharr, Texas, 1973-2009, Container: 79, Box: 11, Folder: 2, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Special Collections and Archives, Edinburg Campus.
  - Jackson Ranch Church, 1982 by Frances Isbell, From the Hidalgo County Historical Commission Collection, Series I, Historical Markers I, 1964-2013, consists of applications and research pertaining to historical markers and historical cemeteries. Container: 79, Box: 1, Folder: 36, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Special Collections and Archives, Edinburg Campus.
  - Anne L. Magee, Hidalgo County Historical Commission Collection, Series IV, Historical Research, 1969-2013, consists of research for historical marker applications. "First Methodist Episcopal Church North" Jackson Ranch Church, 1982-2008, Container: 79, Box: 11, Folder: 1.2, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Special Collections and Archives, Edinburg Campus.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Note that some are available at the Museum of South Texas History's archive in the Closner Ramsey Collection.

<sup>18</sup> Note: there are a few items under question within this report; the report refers to Nathaniel Jackson's wife as Myrtle Smith - this is one place where we see a reference to a surname indicating a Smith as a spouse – questions are being researched as to Matilda's origins in Oklahoma. The Magee report incorrectly states Nathaniel Jackson's date of death. "El Souze Ranch" should be spelled "El Sauz."

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED**

Further investigation into this story brought up certain questions to be answered.

- Where was Nathaniel Jackson born, who were his parents, and where did this story begin?
- Where was the Jackson family living before they went to Alabama?
- How, when, and why did Nathaniel Jackson partner with Matilda Hicks?
- Were Nathaniel and Matilda ever officially married?
- Where did Matilda's surname of Hicks come from?
- Do emancipation papers exist for Matilda and all her children?
- Who was the father of Matilda's first three daughters born in Alabama?
- Why did they leave Alabama? Who were the families that traveled with them?
- Why did they head south toward Mexico?
- Why did they settle on the US side of the Rio Grande instead of Mexico?
- How do the complexities of racial identity play a role in this story?

## **JOSPEPH AND MARY BURK JACKSON IN WILKES COUNTY, GEORGIA**

Through research coordinated with family descendants and reports supplied to them by genealogical research organizations such as Family Search, My Heritage, and Ancestry.com, we find that Nathaniel Jackson's parents were Joseph and Mary (Burk) Jackson.<sup>19</sup> They began their life together in Wilkes County, Georgia and within a few years, started a family and became property owners.

<sup>19</sup> Note: a family descendant (who wishes to remain anonymous) has been instrumental in providing research results through Ancestry.com research project conducted in 2016. These results were shared with the author via private email correspondence beginning on October 19, 2019.

Georgia was the last of the original thirteen colonies to be established by the British in 1733. The Province of Georgia was one of the thirteen colonies that revolted against British rule in the American Revolution, signing the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The State of Georgia's first constitution was ratified in February 1777. In that same year, Wilkes County, Georgia became the first county founded in the state. Georgia was established as the fourth US state to join the union in 1788.<sup>20</sup> Wilkes County was carved from land originally held by Creek and Cherokee peoples but was lost to white settlers through a treaty signed with the British Crown in 1773. Wilkes County is in the eastern part of the state, near the border with South Carolina, and was formed north of the Little River (Figure 2.1). It was named after John Wilkes, an English parliamentarian who supported American independence.<sup>21</sup> The county seat was established in the town of Washington in 1780 where the county courthouse currently stands.

Joseph Jackson moved to Wilkes County from a Quaker settlement in Wrightsboro [Wrightsborough], Georgia in 1780. Wrightsboro was a new town, founded in 1768 (Figure 2.1). The community has been described as a "raw frontier where supplies were hard to get, and the Friends had to live rather primitively, and made do with what they had at hand."<sup>22</sup> Joseph was expelled from the Quaker community because he took up arms and planned to marry outside of his religion.<sup>23</sup> Joseph and Mary married in 1783 and were landowners in Wilkes County by 1784. Deed records indicate their property was located on the waters of Stewarts Creek on the Beaverdam and on the waters of the Little River (Figure 2.2). Joseph and Mary Jackson owned

<sup>20</sup> The United States Census Bureau, Georgia 235<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Statehood (1788), <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/stories/georgia-admission-anniversary.html>, accessed July 10, 2023.

<sup>21</sup> Georgia Genealogy Trails, Wilkes County, Georgia History, <http://genealogytrails.com/geo/wilkes/wilkeshistory.htm> accessed July 27, 2022.

<sup>22</sup> Baker, Pearl, The Story of Wrightsboro 1768-1964, typescript for the Wrightsboro Restoration Foundation, Thomson, Georgia, August 1965, pp. 3-4.

<sup>23</sup> Genealogy Trails History Group, Wrightsborough Monthly [Quaker] meeting 1 April 1780, St. Paul's Parrish, McDuffie County, GA. [http://genealogytrails.com/geo/mcduffie/wrightsborough\\_mthly\\_mtg.htm](http://genealogytrails.com/geo/mcduffie/wrightsborough_mthly_mtg.htm) accessed July 27, 2022.

several slaves but none of the records in the Wilkes County courthouse referred to a slave named Matilda. Joseph and Mary had seven children (Table 1). As per the Georgia Archives of the University of Georgia System, there are no birth records in Georgia that predate 1919.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, it is not possible to find a birth record for Nathaniel Jackson or his siblings in Georgia.

#### TABLES AND FIGURES

William – born 1784, died 1859
Isaac – born 1789, died 1831
Joseph – born 1792, died 1859
Benjamin – born 1794, died 1863
<b>Nathaniel – born 1798, died 1865</b>
Burk – born 1799, died 1858
Mary – born 1801, died 1880

Table 1 – Children of Joseph and Mary Jackson as listed in divorce settlement, August 3, 1801 (while Mary was pregnant with the youngest child). Early Georgia Pioneer Records, Vol 2, 3 August 1801, pp. 507-508 [Wit: A. Bedell, Phil. Hunter, E. Park J.P. Reg].

<sup>24</sup> Georgia Archives, University of Georgia website, Research, Pre-1919 Birth Records, [https://www.georgiaarchives.org/research/birth\\_records](https://www.georgiaarchives.org/research/birth_records), accessed August 25, 2022.

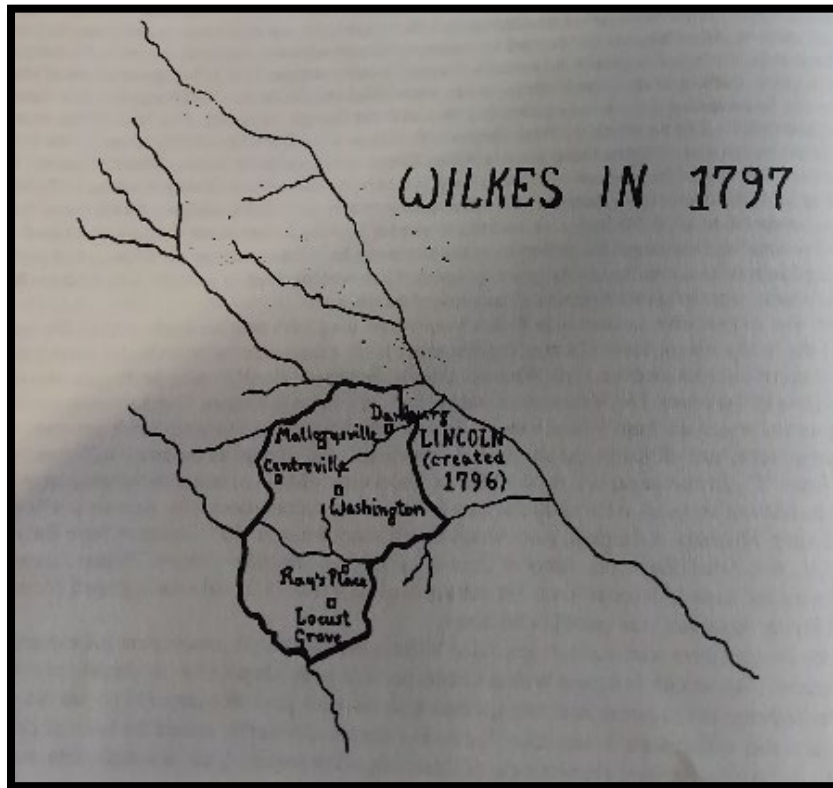
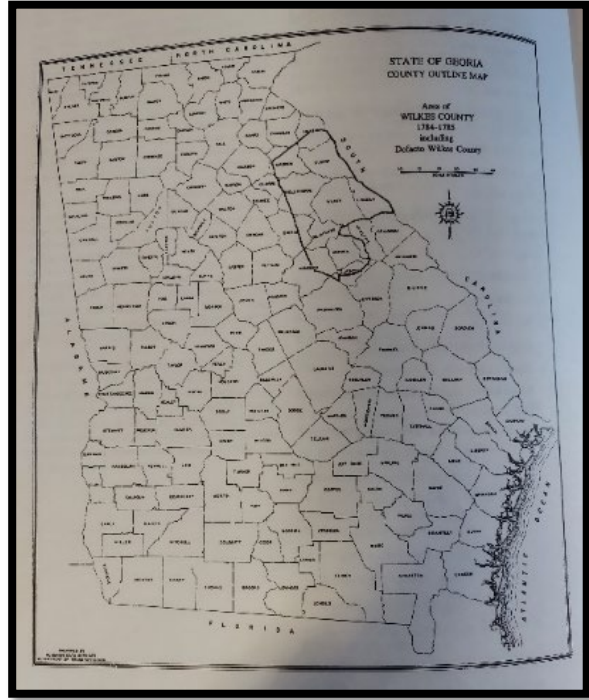
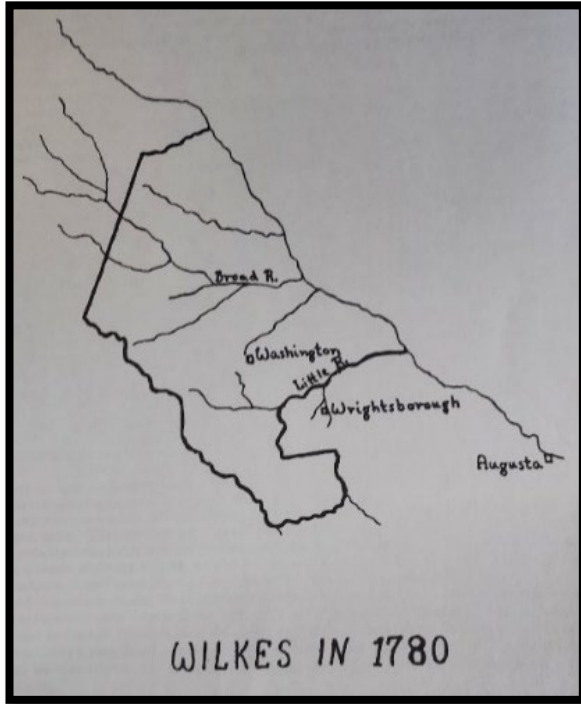


Figure 2.1 - Location of Wilkes County, Georgia in 1780, 1784-85, and 1797 according to the maps provided in The History of Wilkes County Georgia, by Robert M. Willingham, Jr., Wilkes Publishing, 2002, page 22, 26, 48.

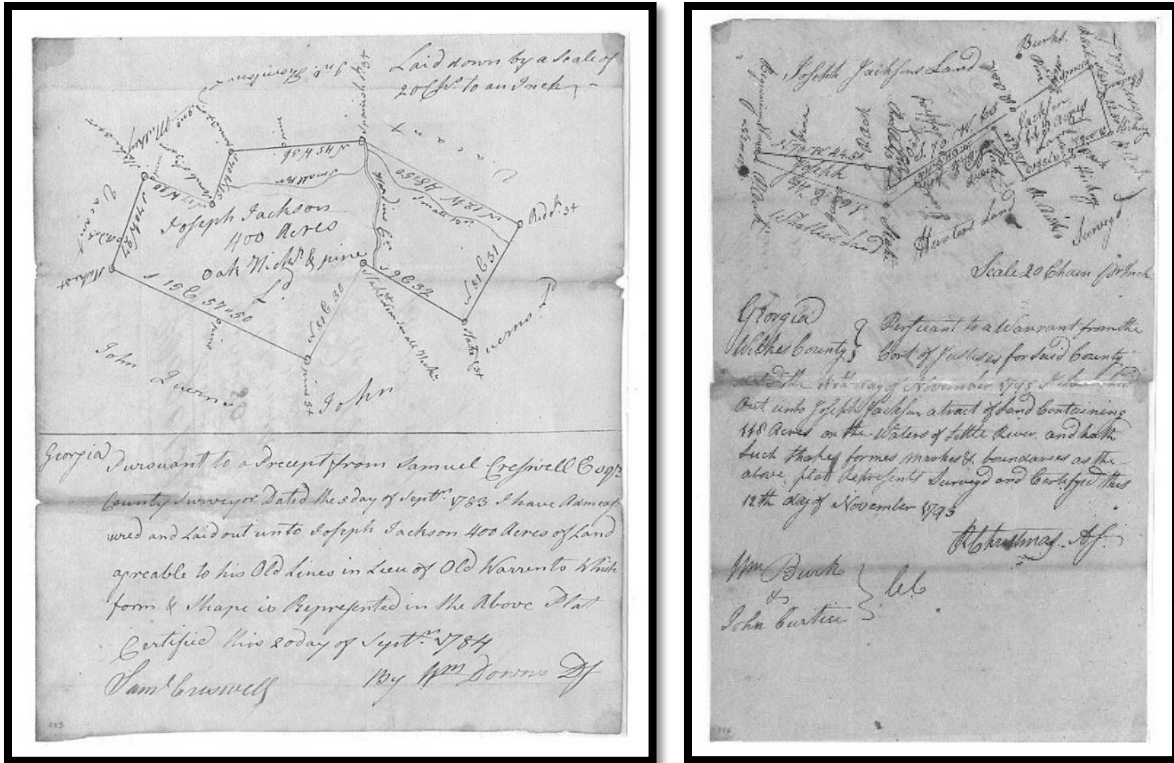


Figure 2.2 – (left) Jackson, Joseph – plat 400 acres (Folio 132, No. 397) and 118 acres (Folio 201, Book 2, p. 153, No. 474) purchased in Wilkes County, GA September 5, 1783 - Headright and Lottery Loose Plat File, Georgia Surveyor General, RG 3-3-26, Record ID 1286, Georgia Archives.

## FINDING MATILDA - GREENE COUNTY, GEORGIA

Greene County was the eleventh county created by the Georgia legislature in 1786 and included portions of adjacent Wilkes County.<sup>25</sup> It was named after General Nathaniel Greene, a general in the Continental Army of the American Revolution. In 1780, Greene was “instrumental in expelling the British from Georgia.”<sup>26</sup> Throughout the years, the borders for these counties shifted and many of the property transactions are recorded in the Greene County Courthouse. Deed records include property transactions for the sale and purchase of slaves.

<sup>25</sup> Rice, Thaddeus Brocket and Carol White Williams, History of Greene County, Georgia 1786-1876, Macon, GA: The J.W. Burke Company, 1961, p. ix

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, p. 390.

A search through the Greene County Courthouse deed records yielded an interesting find. Joseph Jackson purchased several slaves during and after his marriage to Mary Burk Jackson. When searching for documents that indicated the purchase of a slave named Matilda, a transaction in the deed record books dated the 27<sup>th</sup> day of March in 1804 showed that Joseph Jackson paid \$200 for a “certain negro girl named “Tilley” about four years old” (Figure 3.1). The 1860 and 1870 Hidalgo County census records show that Matilda Hicks/Matilda Jackson was born in/about the year 1800 (Figure 3.2). Since certain 19<sup>th</sup> century nicknames commonly known for the name “Matilda” include Tilly, Tillie, Tilda, and others, one can conclude that this find represents the closest document that aligns with the birth year of Matilda as well as her first name.<sup>27</sup> On the same day, courthouse records show that Joseph Jackson paid \$400 for “consideration of a negro woman named Nance about 22 years of age” (Figure 3.3). On the 24<sup>th</sup> of April in 1804, Joseph Jackson paid \$200 for a “certain negro boy named Lewis about two years old” and recorded it on the same day (Figure 3.4). The 1860 Hidalgo County census shows Louis Hicks, two years younger than Matilda, residing in the dwelling next to Nathaniel Jackson and Matilda Hicks. The spelling of Lewis in the deed record is different than the spelling of Louis in the Hidalgo County census record but can be considered the same given name. From the 1860 census, we determine that Louis is Matilda’s brother as both have the same surname, both are born in Georgia, and their ages match those of the two small children sold to Joseph Jackson in 1804. There is nothing in the Greene County courthouse records that states Tilley and Lewis were sister and brother, nor does it state that Nance was their mother. We can only imagine that

<sup>27</sup> Note: Tilley or Tildy is a nickname for Matilda. The date of the transaction and age of Tilley match the age of Matilda Hicks (born in the year 1800). Family Tree website, <https://familytreemagazine.com/names/first-names/female-first-names-nicknames/> accessed July 25, 2023. Data Mining DNA website shows other nicknames for Matilda in the 19<sup>th</sup> century such as Tilly, Tilda, Tillie <https://www.dataminingdna.com/nicknames-in-genealogy/> accessed July 24, 2023.

Nance was the mother of Tildey and Lewis as she was sold to Joseph Jackson at/around same time as the children.

Nance, Tildey, and Lewis were sold as slaves to Joseph Jackson by a man named William Anderson. We know that Lewis (Louis) made the journey with the Jackson family from Alabama in February of 1857. A woman named Nance does not appear in later Texas public records alongside Matilda and Lewis. Matilda named one of her three daughters Nancy (born in 1819 in Alabama). It is possible that Matilda named one of her daughters after her mother to maintain a kin network of identity throughout the generations.

At the time 4-year-old Tildey was enslaved by Joseph Jackson, his son Nathaniel was six years old. Since young slave children were oftentimes “exempted from routine labor,” they were often “left alone to raise one another” or “play[ed] with companions.”<sup>28</sup> We note that Nathaniel and Matilda had opportunity to interact with each other while they grew up together on his father’s farm. It was somewhat common practice that young slave children played with the white children while their parents were enslaved laborers in the fields.<sup>29</sup> This is where their friendship began.

<sup>28</sup> Wiggins, David K., “The Play of Slave Children in the Plantation Communities of the Old South 1820-1860,” *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 7, No. 2, Summer 1980, p. 23.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

FIGURES

Book AA p. 21  
 Dec. of Joseph Jackson two hundred Dollars in full consideration  
 for a certain Negroe girl named Tildy about four years Old and  
 here with delivered to the said Jackson the right and title of the said  
 Negroe girl I do hereby Oblige myself my He to warrant for ever defend  
 to the said Joseph Jackson his heirs & assigns for ever in fee Simple  
 given under my hand and seal this 27th day of March 1804

Test  
 John Rice  
 Geo. Foster

William Anderson

Register: 27th Apr 1804  
 J. Fanner

Geo. W. Foster

State of Georgia I Person ally Appeared before me John Rice and after  
 being duly Sworn Faith he was a Subscribing  
 Witness to the within Bill of Sale and that he heard William  
 Anderson Acknowledge the same I sign to before me this  
 27th April 1804  
 Geo. W. Foster

Figure 3.1 – Deed of sale of 4-year-old girl named Tildy to Joseph Jackson on March 27, 1804. Green County Courthouse, Greensboro, GA, Book AA, p. 21.

SCHEDULE 1.—Free Inhabitants in \_\_\_\_\_ in the County of Hidalgo State of Texas enumerated by me, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of July, 1860. J. P. Barr Ass't Marshal  
 Post Office Edinburgh

1	2	3	Description			7	Value of Estate Owned		10	11	12	13	14
			Age	Sex	Color		Value of Real Estate	Value of Personal Estate					
1	2/25	Unoccupied											
2	2/26	"											
3	2/27	"											
4	2/28	"											
5	2/29 1833	Matthew Jackson	60	M	W	Farmer	1000	500	Georgia				
6		Matilda Hicks	59	F	M	House Servant			Ala.				
7		Eli Jackson	50	M	M	Farm Laborer			"				
8		Columbus	26	M	M	"			"				
9		John	21	M	M	"			"				
10	2/30 1834	Emily Jackson	35	F	M	House Wagon			"				
11		Agg. Singletary	14	F	M	"			"				
12		Saml.	14	M	M	Farm Laborer			"				
13		Minerva	13	F	M	"			"				
14		Luzia	12	F	M	"			"				
15		Malinda	9	F	M	"			"				
16		Agnes	7	M	M	"			"				
17		Daria	3	M	M	"			"				
18	2/1 1835	Louis Hicks	55	M	M	Farm Laborer			Georgia				
19		Lucy	40	F	M	Servant			S. C.				
20	2/30 1834	Marion Jackson	24	M	M	Farm Laborer		400	Ala.				
21		Becky	20	F	M	Servant			"				
22		Joseph	1	M	M	"			Texas				
23	2/30 1837	Christ Jackson	21	M	M	Farm Laborer		300	Ala.				
24		Lucy	21	F	M	Servant			"				
25		Judith Ann	9	F	M	"			Texas				
26		James	1	M	M	"			"				
27	2/34 1838	Enchus Polona	35	M	M	Farmer		400	Ala.				
28		Matilda Jackson	26	F	M	Servant			"				
29		Caroline Polona	8	F	M	"			"				
30		Cossey	8	M	M	"			"				
31		Peppan	4	M	M	"			"				
32		Nathaniel	1	M	M	"			Texas				
33	2/35 1839	Abner Buttrick	35	M	M	Farmer	1000	600	Ala.				
34		Nancy Jackson	29	F	M	Servant			"				
35		Marion Buttrick	19	F	M	"			"				
36		Mammie	17	F	M	Farm Laborer			"				
37		Sarah	12	F	M	"			"				
38		Mary Ann	14	F	M	"			"				
39		Isaac	8	M	M	"			"				
40		Martha Ann	6	F	M	"			"				

No. white males, \_\_\_\_\_ No. colored males, \_\_\_\_\_ No. foreign born, \_\_\_\_\_ No. blind, \_\_\_\_\_  
 No. white females, \_\_\_\_\_ No. colored females, \_\_\_\_\_ No. deaf and dumb, \_\_\_\_\_ No. insane, \_\_\_\_\_ 2000 2200  
 No. pauper, \_\_\_\_\_ No. convict, \_\_\_\_\_

Figure 3.2 – 1860 U.S. census, Hidalgo County, Texas, population schedule, Township Edinburgh, p. 206 handwritten, dwelling # 2629, Jackson Family, July 23, 1860. Note the name “Matthew” Jackson as Nathaniel.

611 Rec<sup>d</sup>. of Joseph Jackson four hundred dollars in full consideration for a certain negroe Woman named Nance About twenty two years of age and here with delivered to said Jackson the right title of the said Negroe Woman I do hereby Oblige myself my heirs &c to Warrant & for ever defend to the said Joseph Jackson his heirs & assigns for ever in fee simple given under my hand and seal this 27<sup>th</sup> day of March 1804

Test John Hill  
Reed Foster

William Anderson

State of Georgia } Personally appeared before me John Hill J after being  
Greene County } duly Sworn saith he was a subscribing witness to the  
within bill of Sale & that he heard William Anderson acknowledge the  
same Sworn to before me this 27<sup>th</sup> Apr<sup>l</sup> 1804

Geo W Foster J<sup>r</sup> Register 27<sup>th</sup> Apr<sup>l</sup> 1804

John Hill

S. J. Lammie pro  
The Cartton book

Figure 3.3 – Deed of sale of 22-year-old woman named Nance to Joseph Jackson on March 27, 1804. Green County Courthouse, Greensboro, GA, Book AA, p. 22.

612 Rec<sup>d</sup>. of Joseph Jackson two hundred dollars in full consideration for a certain negroe boy named Lewis about two years old and here with delivered to the s<sup>d</sup>. Jackson his right and title to the s<sup>d</sup>. negroe boy I do hereby Oblige myself &c to Warrant & for ever defend to the s<sup>d</sup>. Joseph Jackson his heirs and assigns for ever in fee simple given under my hand and seal this 24<sup>th</sup> day of April 1804

Test Little B. Postwick  
John Heard

William Anderson

Georgia } Personally came before me Little B. Postwick I made oath that  
Greene County } he saw W<sup>m</sup> Anderson sign & deliver the property named for the  
purpose within mentioned Sworn to before me this 24<sup>th</sup> of Apr<sup>l</sup> 1804

John Armer J<sup>r</sup> Registered this 24<sup>th</sup> Apr<sup>l</sup> 1804

Figure 3.4 – Deed of sale of 2-year-old boy named Lewis to Joseph Jackson on April 24, 1804. Green County Courthouse, Greensboro, GA, Book AA, p. 21.

## **JOURNEY TO MISSISSIPPI TERRITORY – CLARKE AND WILCOX COUNTIES, AL**

Joseph and Mary Jackson divorced on August 3, 1801.<sup>30</sup> Joseph married Anna Rainey on January 18, 1804, but it is not clear how many years they were together. Joseph moved his family to the Mississippi Territory and married Jincy Smith in 1814 (Figure 4.1) and had three more children: Robert, Turner, and Susan.<sup>31</sup> The 1816 Clarke County, Alabama census lists Joseph Jackson as the owner of 17 slaves.<sup>32</sup>

Little is known about Joseph Jackson's second wife, Anna Rainey, but we do know that Jackson successfully made it to emerging Clarke County as it was forming while still within Mississippi Territory. Since this part of the journey coincided with the events of the War of 1812 and the expansion of US territory to the west, the Jackson family had the option to travel along the federal road between Washington, DC and New Orleans. As the road crossed from Georgia into Mississippi Territory toward the gulf port of Mobile, the federal road passed close to the Alabama River near where the Jacksons eventually settled in the Lower Peach Tree section on the border of Wilcox and Clarke Counties (Figure 4.2).

Joseph Jackson died in 1834. Nathaniel and his brother William were the executors of the estate.<sup>33</sup> Once his estate was settled and debts were paid, the eight recipients of Joseph's estate

<sup>30</sup> Early Georgia Pioneer Records, Vol 2, 27 August 1801, pp. 507-511 [Wit: A. Bedell, Phil. Hunter, E. Park J.P. Reg].

<sup>31</sup> Note: The Jackson family arrived in Mississippi territory when Clarke County was created in late 1812. The location where they settled was established as Clarke and Wilcox Counties in what would then become the US State of Alabama (1819). Per Alabama.gov, when the western half of the Mississippi Territory was granted statehood in 1817, the eastern portion became Alabama Territory and "*on December 14, 1819, President James Monroe signed a congressional resolution accepting the new Alabama constitution, thereby formally admitting Alabama as the 22nd state of the United States.*" We also must acknowledge that these lands were territories of the Creeks and Cherokees before they were ceded to Great Britain and the US.

<sup>32</sup> Mississippi Archives, Clarke Co MS Territory census returns 1816, transcribed by Colleen O'Neal Sanders, [http://genealogytrails.com/ala/clarke/census\\_1816\\_2nd.html](http://genealogytrails.com/ala/clarke/census_1816_2nd.html), accessed August 4, 2023.

<sup>33</sup> Clarke County (AL) Courthouse, Probate Records, Estate of Joseph Jackson, deceased, administrators of said estate, Nathaniel & William Jackson, Box 14, Folder 40, settled February 1837 [recorded in Book D, pages 161-162].

received and equal inheritance of \$1,933.41 in 1837 (Figure 4.3).<sup>34</sup> The heirs to Joseph Jackson's estate were William Jackson, Benjamin Jackson, Joseph Jackson, Nathaniel Jackson, Burk Jackson, Mary Jackson, Napoleon Lyon,<sup>35</sup> and the living children of Isaac Jackson from the Province of Texas.<sup>36</sup> Nathaniel was put in charge of the hiring out of some of the family slaves and purchased three 40-acre lots in southwestern Wilcox County for \$436.<sup>37</sup> The only familiar name within the group of slaves listed in the file was Lewis.

## FIGURES

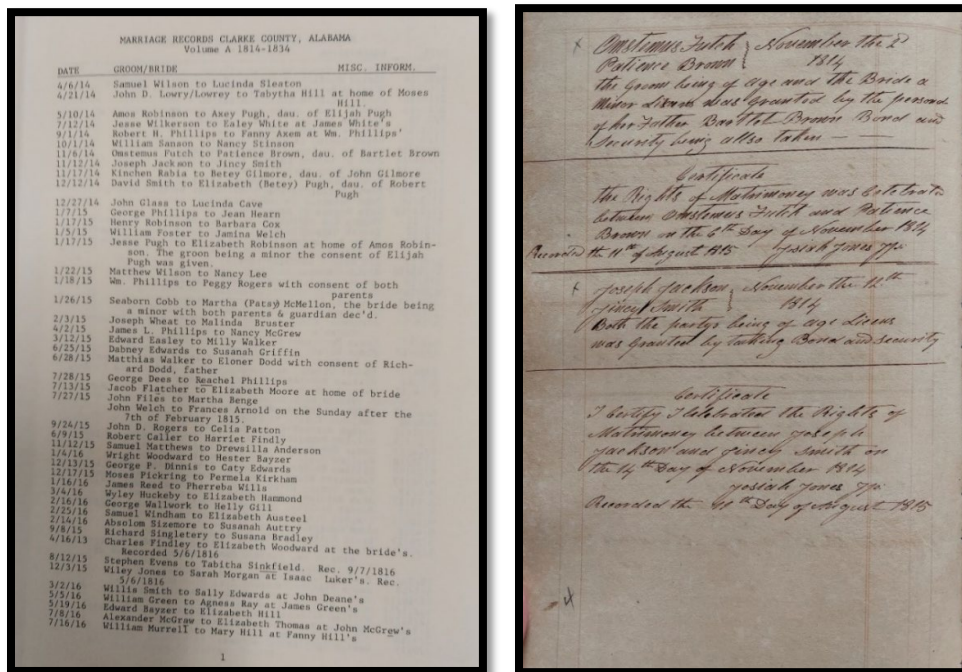


Figure 4.1 – (left) Clark County, Alabama Records Book 1814 – 1885, page 1 – List of marriages in Clarke County, Joseph Jackson to Jincy Smith November 12, 1814 – (right) Clarke County (AL) Courthouse, Marriage Record Book Clarke County 1814-1834, p. 4. Also found in WPA Indices to Marriage Records, by County, 1814-1934. Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

<sup>34</sup> Items in his estate included ginned cotton, land with a [cotton] gin, mill, and horse stables, slaves, furniture and kitchen supplies, farm equipment, books, etc. Clarke County (AL) Courthouse, Estate of Joseph Jackson, deceased, administrators of said estate, Nathaniel & William Jackson, Box 14, Folder 40, settled February 1837 [recorded in Book D, pages 161-162].

<sup>35</sup> Napoleon Lyon was the husband of Mary Jackson. Mary Jackson was the youngest and only daughter of Joseph and Mary Burk Jackson.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Joseph Jackson's probate records, Clarke County Courthouse.



We the undersigned Commissioners appointed  
 Said after being duly sworn proceed to m

Wm Jackson advance property	1438 28
one negro Bradal	450
Cash paid	45 13 1/2
	<u>1933 41 1/2</u>
Benjamin Jackson advance property	638
Rachel & children & fill his husband	1400
+ Paid in to the Estate	2038 00
	<u>7144 38 1/2</u>
	<u>1933 41 1/2</u>
H. B. Lyon to advance property	368 34
+ 2 negroes Black Lewis & Terry	1550
to Cash	250 1/2
	<u>1933 41 1/2</u>
Joseph Jackson advance	342 40
2 negroes Mary & Tom	15 00
+ Cash	90 1 1/2
	<u>1933 41 1/2</u>
Nathaniel Jackson advance	830 00
yellow Luce & negro man	12 00 00
+ Paid over in cash	2030 00
	<u>9658 1/2</u>
	<u>1933 41 1/2</u>
Burke Jackson advance	872 76
2 negroes Ned & Margret	11 00
+ paid over in cash	1972 76
	<u>239 34 1/2</u>
	<u>1933 41 1/2</u>
Mary Jackson advance	15 00
one negro man July	130 00
in cash	0618 41 1/2
	<u>1933 41 1/2</u>
Ennis Laffer Gardner for the minor heirs of Isaac Jackson Decd	
to advance	1190 00
one negro Luce	8 00
Cash	43 31 1/2
	<u>1932 31 1/2</u>
	<u>\$1547.32</u>

Figure 4.3 - Clarke County (AL) Courthouse, Probate Records, Estate of Joseph Jackson, deceased, administrators of said estate, Nathaniel & William Jackson, Box 14, Folder 40, settled February 1837 [recorded in Book D, pages 161-162].

## NATHANIEL JACKSON PURCHASED LAND IN ALABAMA 1835

One of the first parcels of land purchased by Nathaniel Jackson was a 40-acre lot in Wilcox County, Alabama in 1835 (Figure 5.1). Per Joseph Jackson's probate file, Nathaniel also purchased 80 adjacent acres in the northwest quarter of Section 34 in Township 11 within Range 4 from his father's estate.<sup>38</sup> The slave census of 1840 Wilcox County, Alabama shows that Nathaniel Jackson had nine slaves on his property (Figure 1.2). Slaves are listed on his property not by name, but by age and sex. By 1850, Nat Jackson had twenty-five slaves on his property (Figure 1.3). The ages and sex of the enslaved persons noted on these census records correspond to those of Matilda Hicks, her children, and grandchildren. There is no evidence that Matilda Hicks and her children were emancipated slaves even though there was opportunity to list them as "freed persons of color" on the census; that option was not selected.

Nathaniel and Matilda started to have children together in 1829 with the birth of their daughter Lucinda. No marriage certificate or recorded courthouse record of their marriage has been found. No paperwork or warranty deed has been found that states Nathaniel has emancipated all the people of color on his property. Nathaniel and Matilda continued to have children until the birth of their youngest son John in 1839 (see Table 2 for the list of the Jackson family members who traveled from Alabama to South Texas in 1857). They lived along the waters of Bear Creek that fed into the Alabama River in the Lower Peach Tree section of Wilcox County (Figures 5.2, 5.3. 5.4).<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Discussion of how and when it was permissible to emancipate slaves in Alabama saw much debate. Per the Alabama Legislature 1834, free black people were banned from living in the state. (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, <https://calendar.eji.org/racil-injustice/jan/17>). During this time laws were enacted throughout the state that addressed how to govern the behavior of freed slaves Other acts passed by the Alabama General Assembly dictated if/when/where emancipated slaves could reside in the state. More research necessary to determine possible reasons why Nathaniel's family members were not freed.

FIGURES AND TABLES

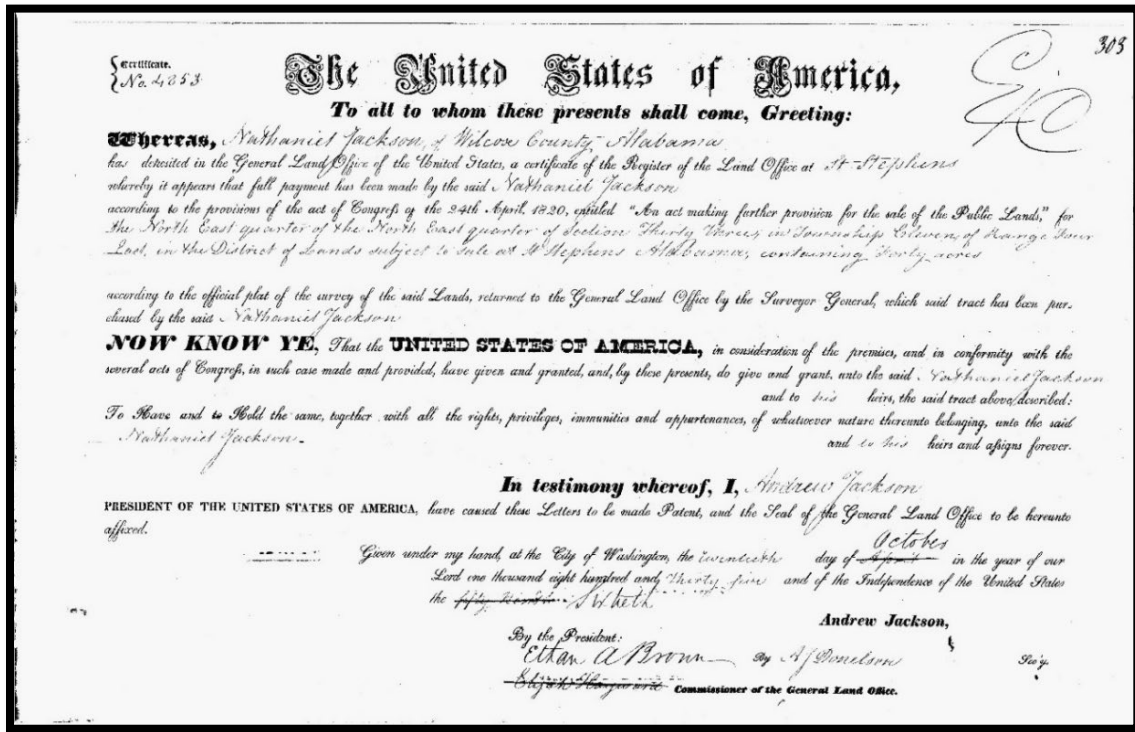


Figure 5.1 – Nathaniel Jackson’s land certificate No. 4253, 40 acres in Wilcox County, Alabama General Land Office at St. Stephens, October 20, 1835, p. 303. Certificate of property ownership signed by President Andrew Jackson.

Nathaniel Jackson Born 1798 Died 1865
Matilda Hicks Born 1800 Died 1870
Myria (Maria) Jackson (Alexander McHaney, Claiborne Champion) Born 1815, Died 1880
Nancy Jackson (Abraham Rutledge) Born 1819, Died 1915
Emily Jackson (Singleterry, Dr. Joseph H. Bowie, John Dorsey) Born 1825, Died 1900
Lucinda Jackson* (Fayette Lyon) Born 1829 date of death not known – died before 1878
Columbus Jackson (not married) Born 1830 Died 1896 (first to be buried Jackson Ranch Church)
Eli Jackson (Elizabeth or Isabel Kerr) Born 1832 Died 1911
Matilda Jackson (Richard Roland) Born 1834 Died 1911
Bryant Jackson (Vickey) Born 1834 Died 1875
Martin Jackson (Becky/Vickey, Albina Cano, Espiridiona Carillo) Born 1837, Died 1913
John Jackson (Elsie Webber) Born 1839, Died 1900

Table 2 – Nathaniel Jackson, Matilda Hicks, and children – including known partners/spouses/father of children, birth and death dates. Jackson Ranch, undated Hidalgo County Historical Commission report (missing pages), Nathaniel Jackson descendants, p. 14. University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Special Collections and Archive, Frances Isbell papers/scholarworks. \*Note: US Census evidence from Cameron County, Texas in 1860 shows an L. Jackson, female a mixed-race person living in the 34<sup>th</sup> Ward City of Brownsville, aged 31, a seamstress born in Alabama with a 15-year-old mixed race female named Julian Clinton, also born in Alabama. Note that Nathaniel Jackson lived with an Andrew J Clinton as per the 1850 Wilcox County Census.

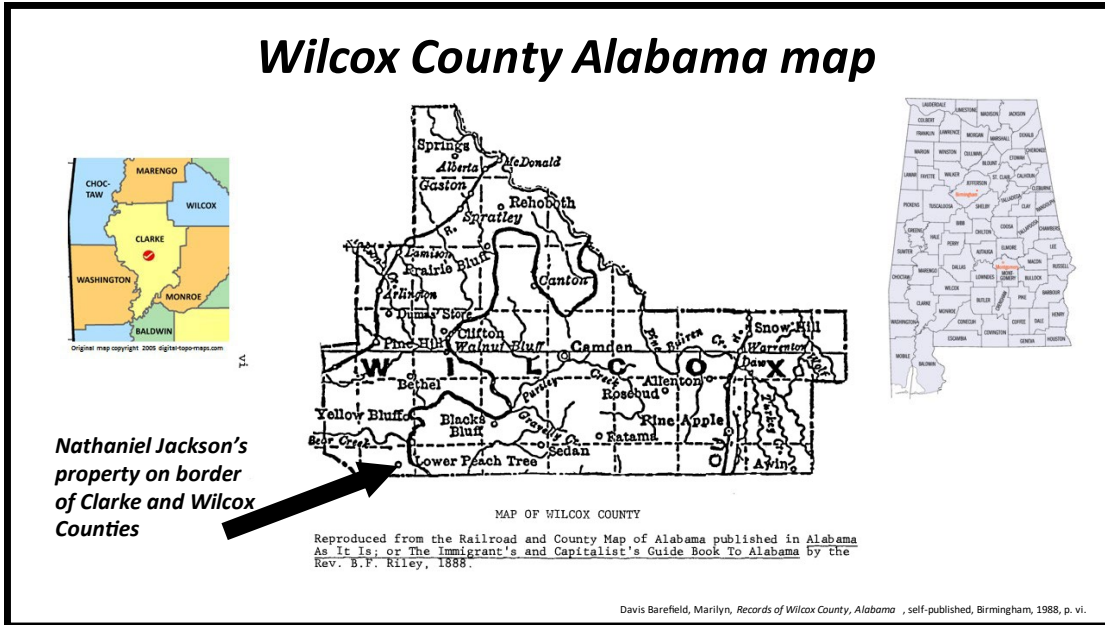


Figure 5.2 – Clarke and Wilcox Counties in Alabama were adjacent to each other at the time that Nathaniel Jackson owned property there.

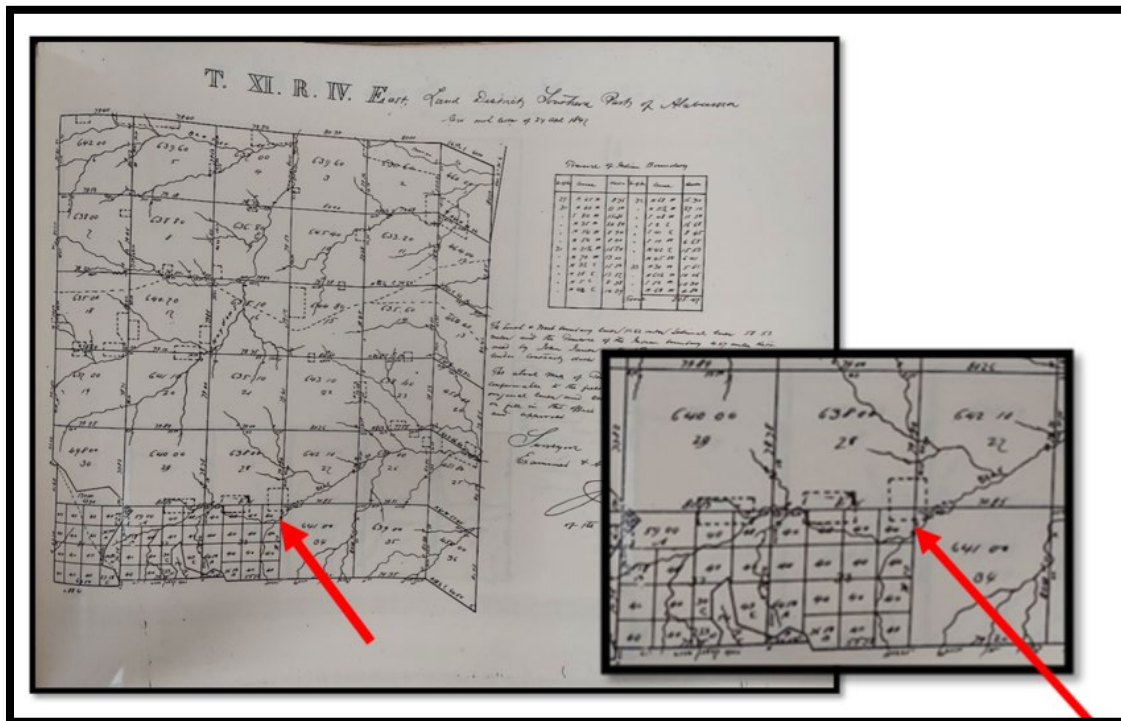


Figure 5.3 – Nathaniel Jackson purchased property on the Northeast quarter of the Northeast quarter of Section Thirty-Three in Township Eleven of Range Four East in the District of [Public] Lands subject to sale at St. Stephens Alabama, containing 40 acres on October 20, 1835. Map courtesy of Clarke County Courthouse, Map & Tract Book, Original Survey, Clarke County, Alabama, surveyed 16 April 1847. Note that the property is located on a waterway. The enlarged section of map above shows the subdivisions of Section 33 and the portion Nathaniel Jackson bought in 1835 of the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 33, between Section 32 and 34 and below section 28.

SCHEDULE I.—Free Inhabitants in Wilcox in the County of Wilcox State Alabama  
of Alabama enumerated by me, on the 10 day of Oct 1850. A. Duff Ass't Marshal 362

Dwellings numbered in the order of visitation.	Families numbered in order of visitation.	The Name of every Person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1850, was in this family.	DESCRIPTION.			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each Male Person over 15 years of age.	Value of Real Estate owned.	Place or Birth. Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Marr'd within the year.	Attended School within the year.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.	
			Age.	Sex.	Color, (black or white.)							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		William	2	M				Ala				
241	241	E. Thomas	37	M		Carpenter		Pa				
		Cynthia	47	F				Pa				
		M. Francis	18	F				Ala				
		Caroline	16	F				Ala				
		John	14	M				Ala				
		Eraline	11	F				Ala				
		J. R. McLeod	36	M				M. C.				
		Ann	21	F				Ala				
		Caroline	2	F				Ala				
242	242	B. W. Jenkins	37	M		Farmer	1600	Pa				
243	243	Nathaniel Jackson	52	M		Farmer	1800	Pa				
		Andrew J. Clinton	25	M		Farmer		Ala				
244	244	James T. Jones	28	M		Lawyer	250	Ala				
		Ellie E.	20	F				Ala				
245	245	Charles Campbell	53	M		Farmer	4000	Ala				
		Ann	25	F				G. C.				
		Wm. Campbell	22	M		Farmer		Ala				
		Charles	19	M				Ala		(1)		
		Eliza	16	F				Ala		(1)		
		Martina	14	F				Ala		(1)		
		Elizabeth	12	F				Ala		(1)		
		Ann	11	M				Ala		(1)		
		Andrew J.	5	M				Ala				
		Ann	2	F				Ala				
		Leanna	3/2	F				Ala				
246	246	Joseph Luckey	62	F			1500	Pa				
		James Luckey	26	M		Farmer		Pa				
		Elizabeth	23	F				Ala				
247	247	John Winbrough	25	M		Blacksmith		M. C.				
		Mary	21	F				Ala				
		Estlin Jr.	1/12	M				Ala				
		Anderson Singleterry	22	M		Watchman of Telegraph		Ala				
248	248	James B. Pharr	40	M		Farmer	500	Ala				
		Ann E.	36	F				G. C.				
		Martina	12	F				Ala		(1)		
		Mary G.	10	F				Ala		(1)		
		Alfred B.	8	M				Ala		(1)		
		Emerson	5	F				Ala				
		Ephraim	2	M				Ala				
		Ann Ritchie	60	F				G. C.				
249	249	R. D. Hawkins	34	M			2000	Ala				

Figure 5.4 – US Census Bureau, 1850 Wilcox County Alabama Census, October 10, 1850, p. 362  
Note: the other white man listed in Nathaniel Jackson’s dwelling is Andrew J. Clinton aged 25. Also note: Campbell family is also listed along with Anderson Singleterry, a 22-year-old male watchman of the telegraph. Also note James B. Pharr.

## **MATILDA'S FIRST THREE DAUGHTERS AS "SMITH"**

A letter dated September 1976 from Maynor Jackson Lopez states that "Matilda Smith and Nathaniel Jackson were the parents of [her father] Martin Jackson."<sup>40</sup> A family report notes that Matilda Hicks had three daughters from a previous marriage to John Smith.<sup>41</sup> Since interracial or slave marriages were not sanctioned in Mississippi Territory or in the newly formed state of Alabama during the time Matilda's first three daughters were born, it is difficult to confirm of this claim.<sup>42</sup> While researching marriage and probate records in the Clarke and Wilcox County, Alabama courthouses, we have established that Matilda's owner, Joseph Jackson married Jincy Smith of Clarke County in 1814. There are several men with the surname Smith listed in the records in both county courthouse records. Within a year of Joseph's marriage to Jincy Smith, Matilda gave birth to Myria in 1815. It is likely that one of Jincy's male family members took advantage of Matilda for several years while she was a slave on Joseph Jackson's property. The power and privilege white men exerted over female slaves was a dreadful, yet common practice. Without Matilda's direct testimony, it is difficult to identify the Smith responsible for her first three daughters, yet somehow this part of the story was passed down through her granddaughter Maynor.<sup>43</sup> Marginalization of enslaved persons occurred within the public record where little to no validation of their identity appeared before slavery was abolished in the US. Although Texas was a slave state, it had not yet seceded from the Union until February of 1861. Clearly, the census takers in Hidalgo County provided opportunity for people

<sup>40</sup> Hidalgo County Historical Commission, Jackson Ranch, undated, Container: 79, Box: 7, Folder: 27, p. 7. University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Special Collections and Archives, Edinburg Campus.

<sup>41</sup> Cardenas, p. 2.

<sup>42</sup> Clarke County AL Marriage Record Book 1814 – 1834 reveal no such marriage for a Matilda and John Smith.

<sup>43</sup> Note: there was a John F. Smith in the Clarke Co. Probate records with recorded contents of his estate 1847. There was a John Smith in the Clarke Co. Probate records with recorded contents of his estate January 10, 1845. The latter John Smith died owning 6 slaves – none of which correspond to names in Matilda's family. Many men named Smith were slave owners, cotton & corn farmers, etc. Clarke County Courthouse probate records for John Smith (1845 Estate) and John F Smith (1847 Estate), Box 24, Folder # 22 & 24.

of color to be counted in 1860. Once Matilda, her children, and grandchildren could do so, they were counted and recognized by US census takers in 1860.<sup>44</sup> They declared both first and last names, yet Matilda's daughters Nancy and Emily identified as Jacksons and not Smith.<sup>45</sup>

## **PUSH/PULL FACTORS – OUT OF ALABAMA AND TOWARD MEXICO**

Nathaniel Jackson, Matilda Hicks, their grown children and partners, and grandchildren embarked on their journey toward Mexico in the early months of 1857 after Nathaniel sold his property in Clarke County for \$3,500.<sup>46</sup> The timing of their departure coincided with some imposing circumstances that were instrumental push factors for bi-racial families' desire to leave the American south. The Fugitive Slave Act that had been re-enacted in 1850 continued as a prevalent legislation throughout the decade.<sup>47</sup> This Act called for American citizens to apprehend runaway slaves and return them to their owners which also horrified formerly enslaved persons who worried about illegal capture and sale into slavery. The Dred Scott decision was determined by the US Supreme Court in March 1857. This decision was of grave concern to freed men and women of color, as well as those seeking emancipation because it allowed for an enslaved person to be transported over state lines, into a free state, and yet not automatically obtain freedom. This decision "argued that, as someone's property, Scott was not a citizen and could not sue in federal court."<sup>48</sup> In 1856, the Supreme Court of the nearby state of Louisiana expressed its opposition to

<sup>44</sup> Note that in the 1860 Hidalgo Co. census, Matilda was labeled as a "house servant" instead of a "housekeeper."

<sup>45</sup> US Census Bureau, 1860 Hidalgo County, Texas Census. Note: we see Matilda and Lewis Hicks in the census records but do not see indication of Matilda's daughters Myria, Nancy, or Emily listed as Smiths in the public record – they are also listed as "Jackson." We will continue to look for such connections.

<sup>46</sup> US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Records, Alabama, St. Stephens, Township 11.0N, Range 4.0E, Section 34, Accession AL008\_.304 [recorded on 03/01/1859] and Clarke County, AL courthouse, Deed Record Book H, Nathaniel Jackson to EJ Pate, February 13, 1857, p. 416.

<sup>47</sup> Note: The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 put all slaves on notice. This law allowed for the capture and return of runaway slaves to their owners, but also after the US Supreme Court decision in *Prigg v Pennsylvania* (1842), freedmen/women had cause to worry that they would be apprehended, regardless of their proof of freedom and returned to servitude.

<sup>48</sup> Britannica, Dred Scott Decision, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Dred-Scott-decision>, accessed May 1, 2023.

emancipation and “declared the act that allowed emancipation unconstitutional.”<sup>49</sup> In March of 1857, “on the same day the Dred Scott Decision was delivered, the Louisiana Legislature prohibited all emancipation.”<sup>50</sup>

Other pull factors at that time drew freedom seekers and free people of color south to Mexico. As Benito Juárez completed his exile in New Orleans in 1855, he planned his return to rule in Mexico. Sympathetic to the plight of indigenous peoples along with anti-slavery viewpoints, Juárez made it clear that African Americans would be welcome in Mexico upon his return.<sup>51</sup> The Mexican government made efforts to draw the African American population to settle there with the promise of free land without slavery.<sup>52</sup> In 1857, Luis N. Fouché, a free person of color from Florida, was granted land near Veracruz in exchange for filling an agricultural colony known as Eureka with one hundred black families. This settlement was referred to as Fouché’s Migration and was developed on the trade route along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico between New Orleans, Veracruz, and the Caribbean Islands, a location chosen for optimal economic opportunities.<sup>53</sup> Finally, Article 2 of the Mexican Constitution of 1857 states that “slaves who set foot upon the national territory shall recover, by that act alone, their liberty, and shall have a right to the protection of the laws.”<sup>54</sup> Could these combined events ignited the Jackson family to leave Alabama and journey toward Mexico?

<sup>49</sup> Judith Kelleher Schafer, *Roman Roots of the Louisiana Law of Slavery: Emancipation in American Louisiana, 1803-1857*, Vol. 56, No. 2, February 1, 1996, p. 421.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 422.

<sup>51</sup> Britannica online, Benito Juárez President of Mexico, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Benito-Juarez>, July 14, 2023.

<sup>52</sup> Bacha-Garza, Roseann, Christopher L. Miller, and Russell K. Skowronek, *The Civil War on the Rio Grande 1846-1876*, College Station, TX: Texas A&M Press, 2019, p. 104-105.

<sup>53</sup> Schwartz, Rosalie, *Across the Rio to Freedom: US Negroes in Mexico*, El Paso, TX: Texas Western Press, 1975, p. 49-50.

<sup>54</sup> Dodd, Walter Farleigh, *Modern Constitutions: A Collection of the Fundamental Laws of Twenty-Two of the Most Important Countries in the World, with Historical and Biographical Notes*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Vol. II, *The Mexican Constitution February 5, 1857, Section I, The Rights of Man, Article 2*, p. 40.

**MATILDA’S SURNAME “HICKS” – WHERE DID IT COME FROM?**

The 1860 Hidalgo County census records note that Matilda and her brother Louis (Lewis) identified themselves by the last name Hicks. Where did the name “Hicks” come from? Was it the previous owner of Matilda, her brother, and her mother? Was it the name of the slave company that traded in enslaved persons and sold them for profit? There were several Hicks families both in Georgia and Alabama but none with direct ties to Matilda Hicks, Nathaniel Jackson, or any other Jackson immediate family member. The following are the names of persons with the last name of Hicks and similar surnames contemporary with her life in Georgia and Alabama (Table 3):

**TABLES**

<b><i>Hicks in Georgia</i></b>	<b><i>Hicks in Alabama</i></b>
<b><i>Jerril (Jesse L) Hikes – Greene County</i></b>	<b><i>B.F. Hicks – Wilcox County</i></b>
<b><i>Edmond B. Hix – Greene County</i></b>	<b><i>J.A. Hicks – Clarke County</i></b>
<b><i>Nathan(iel) &amp; Frances Hicks – Greene Co.</i></b>	<b><i>David P. Hicks – Clarke County</i></b>
<b><i>Samuel Hicks – Greene County</i></b>	<b><i>Henry G Hicks – Clarke County</i></b>
<b><i>Edouard B. Hix – Greene County</i></b>	<b><i>Robert G Hicks – Clarke County</i></b>
<b><i>John Hicks – Wilkes County</i></b>	<b><i>Joseph A (O)Hicks – Clarke Co.</i></b>
<b><i>Nancy Hicks – Wilkes County (1795)</i></b>	<b><i>Letitia Hicks – Clarke County</i></b>
<b><i>John Hicks – Wilkes County</i></b>	<b><i>William B Hicks – Clarke County</i></b>

Table 3 – list of Hicks surnames of various spelling in the county courthouse records compiled by the author of this report, August 2022. Georgia lists those present between 1775 and 1810 and the Alabama list those present between 1812 and 1855.

## THE ROLE OF RACIAL COMPLEXITIES IN THIS STORY

It is believed that in efforts to maintain her identity and the identity of her children, Matilda Hicks took the first opportunity she had to list herself in the public record with a first and last name. Her brother, Louis Hicks, and her children did the same (Figure 3.2). In the 1860 Hidalgo County census, an 82-year-old black woman named Nance does not appear as a resident among the Jackson family dwellings, therefore we can determine that Nance had either already passed away by 1860 or was not part of the Jackson caravan journey to the US-Mexico borderlands in 1857. A reference made to a slave on a Jackson property named Nance or Nancy appeared in Nathaniel's brother Isaac Jackson's will that was recorded in the Clarke County courthouse in 1839. Several enslaved persons, one named Nancy, was listed in Isaac Jackson's probate papers as a slave willed to David Hall on January 4, 1840, with a value of \$500.<sup>55</sup>

Matilda's daughters have often been referred to as "Smiths." If the desire to keep the surname was present, perhaps it was because there were more siblings fathered by the same man named Smith back in Alabama. There were several residents living in Clarke and Wilcox County, Alabama named Smith while the Jacksons were there.<sup>56</sup> We may never know which Smith fathered Matilda's daughters, but maintaining identity with one's surname was an important tool in efforts to find relatives from whom they were inhumanely separated from throughout their lifetime. Once the US Civil War was over and all enslaved persons were emancipated, "Runaway Slave" ads in the classified sections of newspapers across the US were replaced with "Information Wanted" ads. Although an advertisement like the one shown below (Figure 6.1) has not yet been found to exist referencing anyone related to Matilda Hicks Jackson

<sup>55</sup> Clarke County, Alabama courthouse, Box 14, Folder 34, Inventory of the Estate of Isaac Jackson deceased, 1839.

<sup>56</sup> Note: 2004 Cardenas report refers to Matilda being married to another white man in Alabama before starting a family with Nathaniel. See Cardenas, p. 2. In the Clarke County Courthouse Marriage Records book, there is not a record of a Matilda Hicks married to a man named John Smith or otherwise. More research is necessary.

or her (Smith) daughters, this was a manner in which a slave who was torn from his/her family could hopefully reunite with loved ones. When Matilda, Lewis and Nance were sold to Joseph Jackson in 1804, there was no corresponding sale of a male slave that could possibly have been Matilda's father. Perhaps he was torn apart from his family and sold at auction to a new owner? Perhaps they were sold away from their original owner while Matilda's father remained behind? These questions have yet to be answered.

## FIGURES

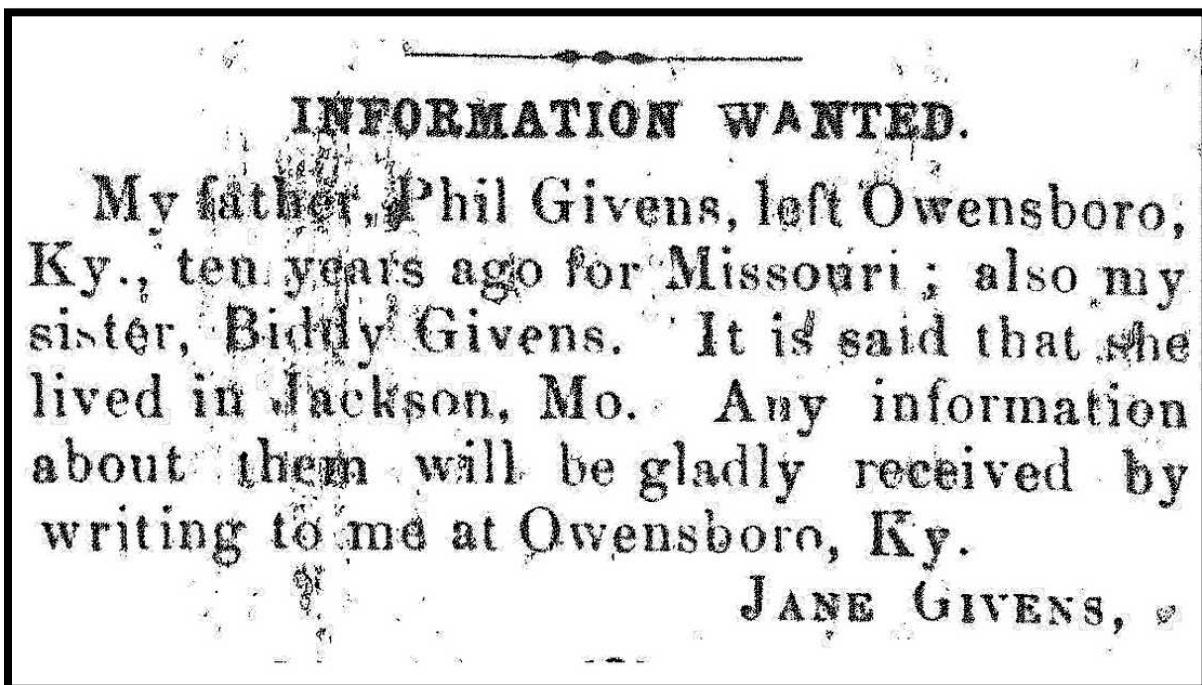


Figure 6.1 – Example of an “Information Wanted” classified advertisement after emancipation, Jane Givens searches for her father, Phil, and sister, Biddy, through an ad placed in Cincinnati's *The Colored Citizen* in 1866, <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2017/02/22/516651689/after-slavery-searching-for-loved-ones-in-wanted-ads>, accessed April 29, 2023.

## **FAMILIES IN THE JACKSON CARAVAN 1857 – EVIDENCE IN ALABAMA**

According to the family reports, there were other families that traveled overland to the Rio Grande Valley with the Jackson caravan in 1857. They were the Campbell, Champion, Hicks, McHaney, Miller, Singleterry, and Rutledge families.<sup>57</sup> Along with Matilda's brother Louis Hicks, four of those seven families have direct relations to the adult children of Nathaniel and Matilda. Since marriage between slaves and interracial marriages were not permitted across the American south, these couples were only considered as partners and common law spouses once the trip to Texas was complete and their residence as families were documented in the US censuses as listed within the Jackson Ranch community. Myria (Maria) Jackson had a McHaney child and then was partnered with Claiborne Champion. Emily Jackson traveled without a partner in the Jackson caravan but brought seven "Singleterry" children with her. Nancy Jackson and Abraham Rutledge were together in Alabama and had six children before embarking on the journey to Texas. Abraham and Nancy were officially married in Texas in 1872 (Figure 7.1). The following sections contain items and information found in Clarke and Wilcox County, Alabama with regard to people with these surnames.

### **ABRAHAM RUTLEDGE**

Rutledge is a surname that appears within Jackson family history dating back to Joseph Jackson's time in Georgia. On May 3, 1801, a Thomas Rutledge accompanied Joseph Jackson and his father-in-law Charles Burk into Georgia through Tallahassee, Florida – given permission by the Governor of Georgia via issued passports.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> The Monitor newspaper, Military headstone for Confederate soldier Abraham Rutledge to be dedicated Nov. 17 in the Jackson Ranch Churchyard, Pharr, Hidalgo County, Texas, November 17, 2012.

<sup>58</sup> Ancestry.com report (2016) via anonymous family descendant.

There was a man named Abraham Rutledge who resided in Clarke County, Alabama, and was married to Nancy Ann Wells.<sup>59</sup> It is believed that they were Abraham Rutledge's (born 1819) parents. In 1817, Abraham Rutledge was granted a 'road return' to his property in the northeast section of Clarke County signed by William Anderson and others.<sup>60</sup> Nancy (Wells) Rutledge registered a cattle brand on August 18, 1820.<sup>61</sup> Abraham Rutledge appears in the 1816 Clarke County census residing in a household with two adults over the age of 21 (1 male and 1 female) and four children under the age of 21 (2 male and 2 female – no specific ages listed). They were not slaveowners.<sup>62</sup> However, in Clarke County's Orphan's Court (May 1821) it was ordered that Abraham Rutledge's estate be inventoried and recorded.<sup>63</sup> His son, Abraham, was two years old. Nancy (Wells) Rutledge married Julius Nichols on August 12, 1822.<sup>64</sup> An examination of the US Census records for both Clarke and Wilcox Counties in Alabama does not yield a listing for an Abraham Rutledge beyond 1816.

Abraham Rutledge and Matilda's daughter Nancy had six children before they traveled to Texas with the Jackson's in 1857. Abraham was listed in the 1860 Hidalgo County census as a white, male farmer, born in Alabama who owned \$1,000 of property and \$600 of possessions (Figure 3.2). Abraham and Nancy officially married in Hidalgo County, Texas on March 27, 1872 (Figure 7.1). At that time, Abraham Rutledge was an elected official who served as County Clerk for Hidalgo County. Their marriage certificate was signed by John McAllen, Justice of the

<sup>59</sup> Abraham Rutledge & Nancy Wells married October 16, 1805 in Tennessee, anon. Ancestry.com report 2016.

<sup>60</sup> Clark County, Alabama, Deed Record book A, 1814-1820 Clarke County, first Monday in February 1817, p. 33. Also note that William Anderson, although a common name, was the name of the person who sold Matilda, her brother and mother into slavery in 1800 in Greene County, Georgia.

<sup>61</sup> Clark County Marks and Brands Book A dated 1813-1880, Nancy Rutledge recorded brand, August 18, 1820, No. 292, p. 55.

<sup>62</sup> Mississippi Archives, Clarke Co MS Territory census returns 1816, transcribed by Colleen O'Neal Sanders, [http://genealogytrails.com/ala/clarke/census\\_1816\\_2nd.html](http://genealogytrails.com/ala/clarke/census_1816_2nd.html), accessed August 4, 2023.

<sup>63</sup> Clarke County Probate Record Book A, 1813-1825, Orphan's Court, May 1821, p. 72.

<sup>64</sup> Clarke County Courthouse Marriage Record Book A, 1814-1834, p. 2.

Peace.<sup>65</sup> Later, on December 6, 1878, Matilda Jackson, Nancy’s mother, conveyed 268 acres to her daughter for five dollars, as per the deed recorded in the Hidalgo County Courthouse, witnessed by her brothers Eli, Martin, and Columbus Jackson.<sup>66</sup>

## FIGURES

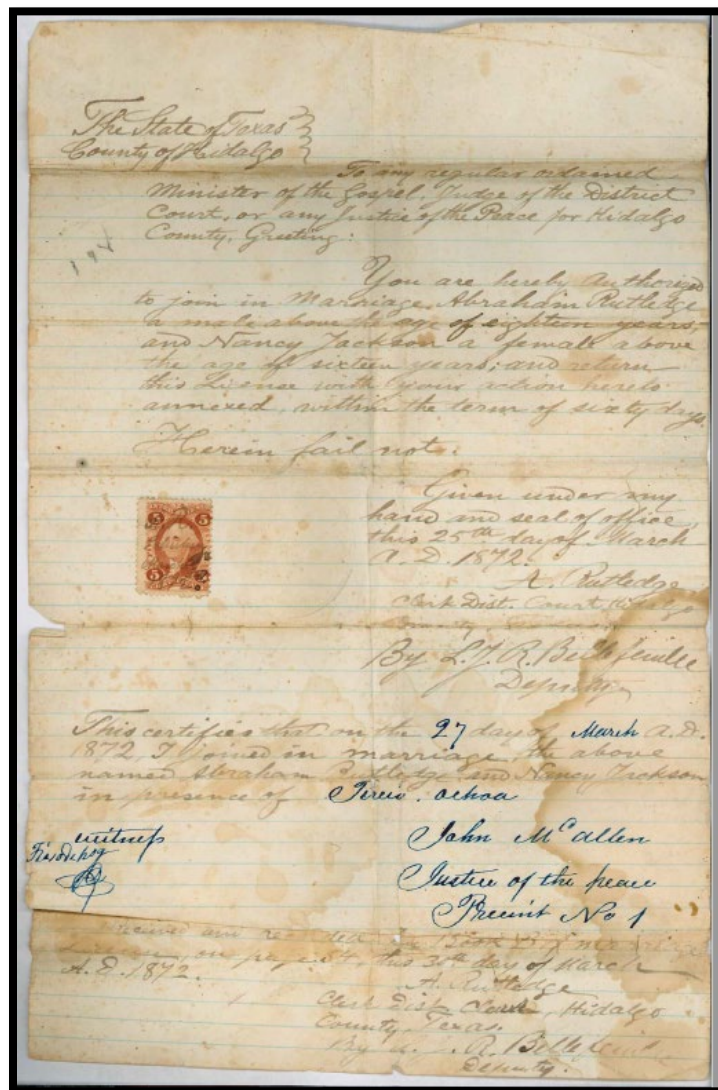


Figure 7.1 – Marriage certificate for Abraham Rutledge and Nancy Jackson dated the 27<sup>th</sup> day of March 1872 signed by John McAllen – Justice of the Peace. Abraham Rutledge was an elected official in Hidalgo County at the time.

<sup>65</sup> Stambaugh, J. Lee (compiled), History of Hidalgo County elected officials from 1852 to 1963, Austin, TX: Pharr Press, July 1963, p. 4, 6.

<sup>66</sup> Hidalgo County Courthouse, Matilda Jackson to Nancy Rutledge, 268 acres, deed record C, p. 118-119, December 6, 1878. This was done after Matilda received her portion of Nathaniel’s property after his death.

## **SINGLETERRY**

Emily Jackson traveled to the Rio Grande Valley with seven Singleterry children but without a husband or partner. Her oldest child, Samuel Singleterry, is listed as 19 years old in the 1860 Hidalgo County census (Figure 3.2). There are many Singleterrys listed in the Clarke and Wilcox County, Alabama courthouse records. There was a white man named Samuel Singleterry of Clarke County, Alabama who was born in 1835, however he was too young to have fathered Emily's son Samuel born in 1841. There was an Anderson Singleterry listed as a 22-year-old nightwatchman in the 1850 Wilcox County, Alabama census in a dwelling near Nathaniel Jackson's property. Anderson Singleterry could have been the father of Emily's children although Anderson would have been only 13 years old when Samuel was born (Figure 5.4). There were other Singleterrys in the region such as Anderson Singleterry's father, William Singleterry, listed in the 1850 Wilcox County census as a 57-year-old farmer, his wife Lavinia, and their children Ruben, Samuel, Bryant, Nait, Nancy, and Effey (Figure 8.2).<sup>67</sup> William Singleterry owned \$1,000 in property. Was this the person who fathered Emily's children?

## **McHANEY**

There were members of the McHaney family in Clarke County, Alabama in the early 1800s. There is an Alexander McHaney listed on the 1830 Clark County census (male between age of 50 and 60) as the owner of a property that consisted of fourteen free white people.<sup>68</sup> He is listed two landowners above Joseph Jackson who owned a property that contained five residents

<sup>67</sup> 1850 Clarke County Alabama census, taken 21 September 1850. Note: William and Lavinia's son Anderson lived in neighboring Wilcox County Alabama per 1850 census, dwelling 247, male, age 22 (occupation: watchman of telegraph). We know that Anderson Singleterry is William's son as he is named in William Singleterry's will, Clarke County Probate records, Clarke County Courthouse, March 27, 1858, Box 24, Folder 11, decree to sell land, page 2.

<sup>68</sup> 1830 Clarke County Alabama census, series M19 Roll 2, p. 240.



423

State 17

423

Ass't Marshal 213

SCHEDULE I.—Free Inhabitants in \_\_\_\_\_ in the County of Clarke State Ala

enumerated by me, on the 21 day of Sept 1850. Jno A Gould

1	2	3	DESCRIPTION.			7	8	9	10 11 12			13
			Age	Sex	Color, or Race, or Ethnicity				Married within the year.	Attended school within the year.	Persons over 15 years of age who can read and write.	
		<u>R. C. Pabel</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>F</u>			<u>Ala</u>		<u>1</u>			
		<u>Benjamin</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>M</u>					<u>1</u>			
		<u>Uriah</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>F</u>					<u>1</u>			
		<u>Opelia</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>F</u>					<u>1</u>			
		<u>Robert</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>M</u>					<u>1</u>			
		<u>Joseph</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>M</u>					<u>1</u>			
		<u>J. G. H. Case</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Doctor</u>		<u>NC</u>					
<u>120</u>	<u>121</u>	<u>Wm Singleterry</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Farm</u>	<u>1000</u>	<u>NC</u>					
		<u>Levina</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>F</u>			<u>Geo</u>		<u>1</u>			
		<u>Rubin</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>M</u>			<u>Ala</u>		<u>1</u>			
		<u>Samuel</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>M</u>					<u>1</u>			
		<u>Byrant</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>M</u>					<u>1</u>			
		<u>Ant</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>M</u>					<u>1</u>			
		<u>Nancy</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>F</u>								
		<u>Elly</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>F</u>								
		<u>Nancy Ettridge</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>F</u>			<u>NC</u>		<u>1</u>			
<u>121</u>	<u>121</u>	<u>Martha Thomas</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>F</u>			<u>NC</u>					
		<u>Joseph</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Far</u>		<u>Ala</u>					
		<u>John</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Do</u>							
		<u>William</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Do</u>							
		<u>Emily</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>F</u>								
<u>122</u>	<u>122</u>	<u>Martha Sabot</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>F</u>			<u>Geo</u>		<u>1</u>			
<u>123</u>	<u>123</u>	<u>Alex M Haney</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Far</u>		<u>Ala</u>		<u>1</u>			
		<u>Francis</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>F</u>					<u>1</u>			
<u>124</u>	<u>124</u>	<u>J. M. Duffey</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Do</u>	<u>1800</u>	<u>NC</u>		<u>1</u>			
		<u>Nancy</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>F</u>					<u>1</u>			
<u>125</u>	<u>125</u>	<u>Ellen Barber</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Far</u>		<u>NC</u>					
		<u>Sarah</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>F</u>			<u>NC</u>					
		<u>Mary</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>F</u>			<u>Ala</u>					
		<u>Nancy</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>F</u>								
		<u>Samuel</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>M</u>								
		<u>Emilia</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>F</u>								
<u>126</u>	<u>126</u>	<u>Mary M Haney</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>F</u>			<u>NC</u>					
		<u>Elizabeth</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>F</u>			<u>Ala</u>		<u>1</u>			
		<u>Joseph</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>M</u>								
		<u>Martha</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>F</u>								
		<u>Emily</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>F</u>								
		<u>George</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>M</u>								
		<u>Joseph</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>F</u>								
		<u>Henry</u>	<u>9/2</u>	<u>M</u>								
<u>127</u>	<u>127</u>	<u>J. M. Williams</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Physician</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>Geo</u>					
		<u>Isaac</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>F</u>			<u>Ala</u>					

D.V.  
2/2V

Figure 8.2 –US Census Bureau, 1850 Clarke County Alabama, September 21, 1850, p. 243 – containing Wm Singleterry and family [120], Alexander McHaney [123] and Francis, and Mary McHaney and Family [126].

D.

[7-596.]

Page No. 20  
Supervisor's Dist. No. 6  
Enumeration Dist. No. 80

Note A.—The Census Year begins June 1, 1870, and ends May 31, 1880.  
Note B.—All persons will be included in the Enumeration who were living on the 1st day of June, 1880. No others will. Children BORN SINCE June 1, 1880, will be OMITTED. Members of Families who have DIED SINCE June 1, 1880, will be INCLUDED.  
Note C.—Questions Nos. 13, 14, 22 and 23 are not to be asked in respect to persons under 10 years of age.

SCHEDULE I.—Inhabitants in Jackson Ranch, in the County of Hidalgo, State of Texas enumerated by me on the 16th day of June, 1880.

A.F. Kidder, Enumerator

Table with columns: In Cities, Name, Personal Description, Sex, Color, Age, Marital Status, Relationship, Occupation, Health, Education, Nativity. Rows list individuals such as Jackson, Eli, Elizabeth, etc., with their respective details.

NOTE D.—In making entries in columns 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 to 23, an affirmative mark only will be used—See /, except in the case of divorced persons, column 11, when the letter "D" is to be used.  
NOTE E.—Questions 10 and 11 will only be asked in cases where an affirmative answer has been given to question 10 or to question 11.  
NOTE F.—Questions 12, 13 will only be asked in cases where a qualified occupation has been given.  
NOTE G.—In column 7 an abbreviation in the name of the month may be used, as Jan., Apr., etc.

Page No.  
Supervisor's  
Enumeration

SCHEDULE

Table with columns: In Cities, Name, Personal Description, Sex, Color, Age, Marital Status, Relationship, Occupation, Health, Education, Nativity. Rows list individuals such as Jackson, Eli, Elizabeth, etc., with their respective details.

NOTE D.  
NOTE E.  
NOTE F.  
NOTE G.

Figure 8.3 – US Census Bureau, Hidalgo County, TX, Jackson Ranch by A.F. Kidder, June 16-17, 1880, page 20. This record lists Alex McHaney as a 31-year-old male mulatto born in Alabama.in dwelling [171] under M. Champion dwelling [170]

## CLAIBORNE CHAMPION

Claiborne Champion was a descendant of an English family that emigrated to America and settled in Virginia in 1643. They were slave owners.<sup>70</sup> Claiborne traveled from South Carolina to Alabama “after his father’s death and bought land in Wilcox County in 1845.”<sup>71</sup> He appeared in the 1870 Hidalgo County census in dwelling # 46 with his wife Maria and two sons (Figure 9.1). The 1900 Hidalgo County census – Precinct No. 2, June 4-5 – shows two descendants of Claiborne and Maria Champion, named John Champion and James Champion. Census records show that their father (Claiborne) was born in South Carolina and mother (Maria) was born in Alabama. James Champion had a son named Clebourne – labeled as a black male born in 1879 in Texas. Clebourne Champion (the younger) was listed as a farm laborer at 20 years old in 1900 Hidalgo County census (Figure 9.2).

Note: there are several family descendants who have researched the genealogy of the families who traveled with the Jackson caravan to Texas in 1857. The purpose of this section of the report is to list what was found in the Alabama courthouse records and how the information relates to what is listed in Hidalgo County records to help provide certain details that perhaps were not previously known. Much thanks and gratitude go out to those family descendants who have assisted with this research. Note that there are some who wish to remain anonymous.

<sup>70</sup> Morgans of Wilcox and Clarke Counties Alabama and Allied Families, Researched and Authored by Helen Morgan Akens and Sheldon LeGrande Morgan, Hunstville, Alabama: Communication Plus Publishing. 1994, p. 155.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, p. 173.

# FIGURES

Page No. 6      Inquiries numbered 7, 16, and 17 are not to be asked in respect to infants. Inquiries numbered 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, and 20 are to be answered (if at all) merely by an affirmative mark, as /.

SCHEDULE 1. Inhabitants in Precinct Number One, in the County of Hidalgo, State of Texas, enumerated by me on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of August, 1870.

Post Office: Odinburg      Galton Taylor Ass't Marshal.

1	2	3	4			7	8		10	11		13	14	15		18	19	20
			4	5	6		8	9		11	12			15	16			
Description		The name of every person whose place of abode on the first day of June, 1870, was in this family.			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male or female.	Place of Birth, naming State or Territory of U. S.; or the Country, if of foreign birth.	Color of hair.	Color of eyes.	Place of Birth, naming State or Territory of U. S.; or the Country, if of foreign birth.	Color of hair.	Color of eyes.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.	Marital status.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.
41	70	Philas. A. Marshall	6	1	7	At home			Texas	/	/							
		— Florence	4	1	5	"			"	/	/							
		— Narcissa	5	1	6	"			"	/	/							
		— Virginia	8	1	7	"			"	/	/							
42	41	Gonzales, Maria	30	1	7	Washinghouse			Mexico	/	/							
		— Lela Susan	28	1	7	Washinghouse			"	/	/							
		— Pans. Adeline	8	1	7	"			Texas	/	/							
43	42	Epineas, John	44	1	7	Washinghouse			Mexico	/	/							
		— Diana	40	1	7	Washinghouse			"	/	/							
		— Sarason	13	1	7	At home			"	/	/							
		— Juliana	4	1	7	"			"	/	/							
44	43	Ray, Susan	30	1	7	Washinghouse			"	/	/							
		— Ernestine	4	1	7	"			"	/	/							
		— Celeste	2	1	7	"			"	/	/							
		— Virginia	25	1	7	Washinghouse			"	/	/							
45	44	Walter, A. C.	29	1	7	Washinghouse			Ohio	/	/							
		— Catherine Mary	29	1	7	Cook			Texas	/	/							
		— Salina Polly	26	1	7	Washinghouse			Mexico	/	/							
		— Etta Ada Virginia	7	1	7	Washinghouse			"	/	/							
46	45	Champion, William	30	1	7	Farmer			S. Carolina	/	/							
		— Maria	25	1	7	Washinghouse			Alabama	/	/							
		— James	16	1	7	At home			"	/	/							
		— John	13	1	7	"			Texas	/	/							
47	46	Wichy, Nancy	30	1	7	Washinghouse			Alabama	/	/							
		— Albert	11	1	7	At home			Texas	/	/							
		— Madison	9	1	7	"			"	/	/							
		— Martha	2	1	7	"			"	/	/							
		— Mary Anne	25	1	7	Farmer			Alabama	/	/							
48	47	Wichy, Abraham	55	1	7	"			"	/	/							
		— Nancy	48	1	7	Washinghouse			"	/	/							
		— James	14	1	7	At home			"	/	/							
		— Lewis	14	1	7	"			"	/	/							
		— Robert	10	1	7	"			Texas	/	/							
49	48	Malta, Eugene	50	1	7	Washinghouse			Mexico	/	/							
50	49	Wichy, Andrew	20	1	7	Farmer			Texas	/	/							
		— Maria	29	1	7	Washinghouse			Alabama	/	/							
		— Roland James	10	1	7	At home			Texas	/	/							

9 No. of dwellings, 57    No. of white females, 86    No. of males, foreign born, 84  
 " " families, 44    " " colored males, 4    " " females, " 45  
 " " white males, 123    " " females, 110    " " blind, —

Figure 9.1 – 1870 Hidalgo County Census, Precinct No. 1, August 14, 1870, sheet 2. Claiborne and Maria (Jackson) Champion family members and their origins.



## CONCLUSION

The purpose of the research trip to Georgia and Alabama in the summer of 2022 was to search for the origins of Matilda Hicks, to determine at what point in time she became part of Nathaniel Jackson's life, and to chronicle the family journey from Georgia to Alabama. The quest for other peripheral information included a search for information regarding the surnames of the families that traveled with the Jacksons from Alabama to Texas. This research is part of a larger project to map the entire route of the family journey from Georgia to Alabama to the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. As research continues and new paths emerge, we are learning that the borderland pioneer settlers that were the Jackson family were quite resilient and resourceful. It is apparent that coming to the Rio Grande Valley was not by accident. It is likely that through certain forms of communication, such as correspondence with family or friends who traveled to Texas and Mexico before them, as well as newspaper articles that described distant political climates, that the Jackson family was inspired to head toward Mexico, ultimately settling on the US side of the US-Mexico border. As we debate whether or not Nathaniel freed Matilda and their children, research into the often-changing laws dictated by the Alabama Legislature in the 1830s and 1840s as they pertained to the emancipation of slaves or the monitoring of the behavior of freed people of color could help explain possible motivation. Certain laws included financial implications to ensure a painful monetary penalty be enforced if an emancipated slave were to commit a crime, behave in ways what was judged unbecoming, or ran away.<sup>72</sup> New questions that emerged from this research will have to be addressed in a future publication. For now, it is a pleasure to provide the family with the information that was uncovered to help answer some questions for descendants. Although no ground-breaking details were revealed

<sup>72</sup> Reid, Robert D., Free Negroes in Alabama During the Ante-Bellum Period, *Negro History Bulletin*, March 1945, Vol. 8, No 6, p. 135-136.

regarding the related genealogical research pertaining to members of the Singleterry, Rutledge, Champion, and McHaney families that accompanied the Jacksons south Texas, it is clear that families existed in Wilcox and Clarke County Alabama with those surnames.

We do not know the exact state of the power dynamics between Nathaniel and Matilda, but we do know that the stories passed down through the generations tell of their life together as a family that interacted with other bi-racial families. New anti-miscegenation laws were passed the year after their arrival in Texas in 1858, which greatly deterred consideration of interracial marriage.<sup>73</sup> However, it would have been easy to simply cross the Rio Grande and marry where it was permissible in Mexico. Since the time that the first wave of interest in this history emerged several decades ago, the existing oral history excerpts have, at times, been questioned as dubious. Although we did not uncover a marriage certificate between Nathaniel and Matilda, nor did we uncover emancipation papers for Matilda, her children, and grandchildren, we did find that the Jackson family followed a pathway toward a life less burdened by the stigma that hovered over their bi-racial Alabama homestead. We consider that they lived together for many years as a family in Alabama. Fearlessly they forged ahead on an adventure to the newly formed international border, established a settlement based on strong religious principles, maintained those values, and were welcoming to all travelers who passed through their community. The memory of Nathaniel and Matilda Jackson as passed down through their own children is their testimony. The focus on the white-male aspect of the story fits within the tradition of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century values. We now live in an era where not only women, but women of color are more prominently placed and considered just as valuable a part of history as were the men. Finding Matilda is just one step in thrusting this important aspect of the overall story into the forefront.

<sup>73</sup> Robinson, Charles F., "Legislated Love in the Lone Star State: Texas and Miscegenation." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Nov. 108, No. 1, 2004, p. 66.

## Part II

### **Technological GIS Mapping and Sensing of Jackson Ranch Church**

By Sarah Fearnley Hardage and Yessenia Santillan

This survey was conducted to provide GIS Mapping coordinates to the Jackson Ranch church and cemetery property boundaries, to mark the location of the church within the property, and to mark all headstones and monuments within the cemetery. This report will be included as part of the application to the National Register of Historic Places.

Sarah Fearnley Hardage is a GIS Mapping Specialist and is a Lecturer II of Geology at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. She works within the College of Science's School of Earth, Environmental and Marine Sciences (SEEMS).

Ms. Fearnley Hardage approached this project as an opportunity to mentor a student throughout the summer of 2022 so that her student could gain the technical experience that pertains to the GIS Mapping process. Ms. Yessenia Santillan gained valuable hands-on experience under the direction of Ms. Fearnley Hardage and was instrumental in creating the statistical data in the following pages. We visited the property several times throughout the summer and gathered the data necessary to create this report.

Photographs were taken by the author of this report of each headstone and monument along with other grave markers that were present but unidentifiable. Alicia Longoria and Sylvia Ramirez, great granddaughters of the cemetery's founder Martin Jackson, compiled brief commentary for each person buried at the church cemetery.

See the following pages for the satellite image of the property, current and historic photos of the church, and all headstones and monuments identifying all buried within the church cemetery property.



Aerial view of the Jackson Ranch Church property 900 Doffing Road, San Juan, Texas. Pink dots represent the corners of the property, blue dots represent the corners of the church building, and the green dots represent each headstone and monument.



Jackson Ranch Church image from late 1970s (left) courtesy of Brenda King and image from 2019 (right) photo taken by the author. This property is located on Doffing Road, south of the levy in San Juan, Texas.

FID	X	Y	Names	Born_Month	Born_Day	Born_Year	Death_Mont	Death_Day	Death_Year
0	581538	2885475			0	0		0	0
1	581559	2885475			0	0		0	0
2	581559	2885426			0	0		0	0
3	581523	2885430			0	0		0	0
4	581535	2885463			0	0		0	0
5	581544	2885447			0	0		0	0
6	581553	2885443			0	0		0	0
7	581536	2885443			0	0		0	0
8	581543	2885424			0	0		0	0
9	581521	2885431	Thomas Alvey Handlon	March	11	1925	August	1	2007
10	581523	2885431	Hortensia L. Tamez		0	0	January	23	1942
11	581526	2885435	Joseph Lugo	March	22	1960	March	25	1960
12	581522	2885433	V"" Aviles Hunter		0	0	July	1	1961
13	581525	2885437	Keith Hunter		0	1915		0	1970
14	581514	2885439	Ophelia De Leon	June	17	1921	July	26	1997
15	581522	2885439	Julia Cuellar	June	19	1918	June	6	2006
16	581519	2885441	Raymond Cary	January	21	1950		0	0
17	581519	2885441	Aquila Eric	May	25	1970	March	26	2007
18	581519	2885441	Mary Ellen	October	1	1950		0	0
19	581519	2885441	Gabriel	August	0	1970	August	0	1970
20	581520	2885443	Martha J. McDonald	March	22	1900	November	16	1986
21	581523	2885446	Lucinda K. Ruiz	September	1	1891	october	12	1976
22	581525	2885448	Mauricio Ruiz	February	7	1872	December	6	1974
23	581526	2885448	Ramiro and Rodolfo Ruiz		0	0		0	0
24	581519	2885450	Guillermo J. Cuellar	November	17	1925	November	30	1971
25	581523	2885450	Sra. Anita Jackson	January	31	1896	January	29	1965
26	581534	2885453	Rita J. Hernandez		0	1889		0	1947
27	581527	2885453	Martin Jackson	January	5	1837	April	18	1913
28	581525	2885453			0	0		0	0
29	581525	2885455	Espiridiona C.	January	12	1865	January	10	1960
30	581526	2885456	Frances N. Clark	August	5	1912	March	23	1913
31	581526	2885457	Matilde L. Jackson	January	8	1894	September	9	1955
32	581527	2885457	Ben Jackson	February	2	1905	March	20	1967
33	581549	2885458	Adela G. Jackson	March	20	1916	November	28	2004
34	581528	2885460	Ramiro Jackson	March	25	1951	December	31	1970
35	581529	2885465	Mary Jackson	December	20	1887	January	29	1972
36	581528	2885464	Maynor Jackson	January	8	1902	April	11	1980
37	581525	2885466	Jose R. Lopez	December	31	1899	September	25	1984
38	581525	2885465	Roberto R. Gonzalez	February	3	1948	october	17	1980
39	581524	2885469			0	0		0	0
40	581528	2885471	Martha Sanchez	February	8	1957	December	20	1988
41	581527	2885472	Abraham Rutledge		0	1819		0	1897
42	581525	2885439	Hilda O. Ramirez	September	5	1950		0	0
43	581525	2885439	Sylvia Z. Ramirez	November	17	1951		0	0
44	581527	2885438	Juan Venacio	April	1	1911	January	14	1981
45	581527	2885438	Abel Josue	August	22	1955		0	0
46	581527	2885438	Alicia Gonzalez	June	29	1915	December	23	1977
47	581525	2885442	Ramiro Roberto	August	27	1948		0	0
48	581525	2885442	Melinda Walker	February	1	1951		0	0
49	581530	2885444	Erasmo J. Ruiz	January	29	1929	September	6	1988
50	581529	2885445	Benito Ruiz	November	8	1912	April	13	1987
51	581527	2885450	Lisandro Ruiz Lee	July	27	1955	November	18	2006
52	581529	2885450	Roberta S. Cuellar	June	6	1934	September	29	1992
53	581527	2885449	Patricia Cuellar	July	27	1959	october	21	2016
54	581531	2885452	Ezequiel D. Ramirez	January	3	1915	May	11	1978
55	581531	2885454	Nancy C. Jackson	January	1	1890	January	25	1962

Table 4 – GIS mapping locations for all headstones at the Jackson Ranch Church graveyard.

FID	X	Y	Names	Inscription	Notes	Check		
0	581538	2885475			NW Corner - yard			
1	581559	2885475			NE Corner - yard			
2	581559	2885426			SE Corner - yard			
3	581523	2885430			SW Corner - yard			
4	581535	2885463			NW Corner - church	Recheck - position questionable		
5	581544	2885447			NE Corner - church	Recheck - position questionable		
6	581553	2885443			SE Corner - church	Recheck - position questionable		
7	581536	2885443			SW Corner - church	Recheck - position questionable		
8	581543	2885424		GEO-Dedec marker	Geodetic Marker	Recheck - position questionable		
9	581521	2885431	Thomas Alvey Handlon	PCI US Navy, WWI, Korea, Vi				
10	581523	2885431	Hortensia L. Tamez					
11	581526	2885435	Joseph Lugo					
12	581522	2885433	V"" Aviles Hunter					
13	581525	2885437	Keith Hunter					
14	581514	2885439	Ophelia De Leon					
15	581522	2885439	Julia Cuellar					
16	581519	2885441	Raymond Cary	Veteran U.S Navy				
17	581519	2885441	Aquila Eric	Veteran U.S Navy				
18	581519	2885441	Mary Ellen					
19	581519	2885441	Gabriel					
20	581520	2885443	Martha J. McDonald					
21	581523	2885446	Lucinda K. Ruiz					
22	581525	2885448	Mauricio Ruiz					
23	581526	2885448	Ramiro and Rodolfo Ruiz					
24	581519	2885450	Guillermo J. Cuellar	SSMI3, US Navy, WWII				
25	581523	2885450	Sra. Anita Jackson					
26	581534	2885453	Rita J. Hernandez					
27	581527	2885453	Martin Jackson	PVT.CO.A 29 USCI, Civil War	Old monument			
28	581525	2885453			New monument			
29	581525	2885455	Espiridiona C.		M. Jackson widow			
30	581526	2885456	Frances N. Clark					
31	581526	2885457	Matilde L. Jackson					
32	581527	2885457	Ben Jackson					
33	581549	2885458	Adela G. Jackson			Recheck - position questionable		
34	581528	2885460	Ramiro Jackson					
35	581529	2885465	Mary Jackson					
36	581528	2885464	Maynor Jackson					
37	581525	2885466	Jose R. Lopez					
38	581525	2885465	Roberto R. Gonzalez					
39	581524	2885469			No name			
40	581528	2885471	Martha Sanchez					
41	581527	2885472	Abraham Rutledge	Texas Partisan Rangers CSA				
42	581525	2885439	Hilda O. Ramirez					
43	581525	2885439	Sylvia Z. Ramirez					
44	581527	2885438	Juan Venacio					
45	581527	2885438	Abel Josue		Name carved; not buried			
46	581527	2885438	Alicia Gonzalez		Name carved; not buried			
47	581525	2885442	Ramiro Roberto					
48	581525	2885442	Melinda Walker					
49	581530	2885444	Erasmus J. Ruiz					
50	581529	2885445	Benito Ruiz	PVT. WWII				
51	581527	2885450	Lisandro Ruiz Lee					
52	581529	2885450	Roberta S. Cuellar					
53	581527	2885449	Patricia Cuellar					
54	581531	2885452	Ezequiel D. Ramirez	Sgt. US Army, WWII				
55	581531	2885454	Nancy C. Jackson					

Table 4 – GIS mapping locations for all headstones at the Jackson Ranch Church graveyard.

## Jackson Ranch Church – Headstones and Grave Markers



**Martin Jackson**



**Image of Martin Jackson and son Ben c. 1913  
courtesy of Linda McDonald Witt**

**Martin Jackson b. 1837 and Becky (Vicey) b. 1840  
Joseph b. 1859  
Andrew b. not known**

**Martin Jackson and Albina Cano b. 1864 d. 1881  
Married 17 May 1880  
Mari Alice b. 1881 d. 1881**

**Martin Jackson and Espiridiona Carillo  
Ben (died as an infant)  
Maria Mary b. 1887 d. 1972  
Nancy Clara b. 1890 d. 1963  
Lucinda b. 1891 d. 1976  
Matilde L. b. June 8, 1894 d. 1955  
Martha b. March 22, 1900 d. 1986**

**Son of Nathaniel and Matilda Jackson from Alabama. Settled along the Rio Grande in 1857. The founder of the Jackson Ranch Church and cemetery. He built the first Methodist Church in the RGV in 1884 which still exists.**

**Anita b. 1896 d. 1965  
Margarita “Rita” b. 1898 d. 1947  
Maynor b. 1902 d. 1980  
Benito “Ben” b. 1905 d. 1967  
Nathaniel “Nat” b. 1907 d. 1976**

**Please Note: Document(s)  
Repeated Intentionally**

Texas State Board of Health **11047**

**STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF DEATH**

Registered No. 125

1 PLACE OF DEATH  
County  Hidalgo   
City  Jackson Ranch   
(No. \_\_\_\_\_ St.; \_\_\_\_\_ Ward)  
(If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number.)

8772

2 FULL NAME  Martin Jackson

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS			MEDICAL PARTICULARS		
3 SEX <u> Male </u>	4 COLOR OR RACE <u> Negro </u>	5 SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED <u> Married </u> (Write the word).	6 DATE OF BIRTH <u> 76 </u> yrs. <u> 3 </u> mos. <u> 12 </u> ds.	7 DATE OF DEATH <u> Apr. </u> 18, 191 <u> 3 </u>	17 I HEREBY CERTIFY, that I attended deceased from _____, 191____, to _____, 191____ that I last saw h_____ alive on _____, 191____ and that death occurred on the date stated above, at _____ m. The CAUSE OF DEATH* was as follows: _____
8 OCCUPATION (a) Trade, profession, or particular kind of work. <u> Farmer </u> (b) General nature of industry, business or establishment in which employed (or employer).			CONTRIBUTORY (Secondary) _____ (Duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds.		
9 BIRTHPLACE (State or country)			(Signed) _____, M. D. _____, 191____ (Address) _____		
10 NAME OF FATHER			*State the DISEASE CAUSING DEATH, or, in deaths from VIOLENT CAUSES, state (1) MEANS OF INJURY, and (2) whether ACCIDENTAL, SUICIDAL, or HOMICIDAL.		
11 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or country)			14 LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (For HOSPITALS, INSTITUTIONS, TRANSIENTS, OR RECENT RESIDENTS). At place of death _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds. In the _____ State _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds. Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death. _____ Former or usual residence. _____		
12 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER			15 PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL _____ DATE OF BURIAL _____, 191____		
13 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or country)			16 UNDERTAKER _____ ADDRESS _____		
14 THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE (Informant) _____ (Address) _____			18 REGISTRAR _____		
15 Filed _____, 191____			19 _____		

MARGIN RESERVED FOR BINDING

WRITE PLAINLY, WITH UNFADING INK—THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD  
N. B.—Every item of information should be carefully supplied. AGE should be stated EXACTLY. PHYSICIANS should state CAUSE OF DEATH in plain terms, so that it may be properly classified. Exact statement of OCCUPATION is very important.

VON BOECKMANN-JONES COMPANY, PRINTERS, AUSTIN 1584-410-50m.

Martin Jackson death certificate. "Texas Deaths, 1890-1976." Database with images. FamilySearch. <http://FamilySearch.org>; 9 August 2022. Citing Bureau of Vital Statistics. State Registrar Office, Austin.



**Espiridiona C. Vda., De Jackson**



**Espiridiona Carillo Jackson and daughter  
Lucinda Jackson**

Espiridiona Carillo was from Reynosa, Mexico. She and her husband, Martin had eleven children.



Lucinda Jackson Ruiz was the daughter of Martin & Espiridiona Jackson and was a wife and mother of 9 children.

**Lucinda J. Ruiz**



**Nancy C. Jackson**



**Nancy Clara Jackson courtesy Ramirez family**

Nancy Clara Jackson was the daughter of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson and was one of the founders of the First United Methodist Church in Elsa, TX. She raised three sons. She taught citizenship classes in her home and also worked for the Democratic Party.



**Maynor Jackson**



**Left to right: Mary, Maynor & Rita Jackson  
Courtesy Tamez Family**

Maynor Jackson De Leon Lopez was the daughter of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. She was blessed with one daughter. Like her father Martin, she was deeply religious and for many years was the caretaker of the Jackson Ranch Church.



Mary Jackson was a precious soul. Although she never married, she shared her love with all who knew her.



Left to right: Mary, Maynor & Rita Jackson

**Mary Jackson**

Courtesy of Tamez Family



**Ben Jackson**

**Image of Martin Jackson and son Ben c. 1913 courtesy of Linda McDonald Witt**



**Ben Jackson was the son of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. He was a farmer most of his life in the La Blanca, Texas area.**

**Ben Jackson, Martha Jackson on the horse, Nancy Jackson, and Espiridiona Jackson, courtesy of Linda McDonald Witt.**



**Martha J. McDonald**



Photo courtesy of Linda McDonald Witt

Martha Jackson McDonald is the daughter of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. She was a beautiful woman, a wife and mother of four. She was the only of her siblings that left home to live in California.



**Sra. Anita Jackson**

Anita Jackson Cuellar was the daughter of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. She had two children and lived in Donna, TX.



## Rita J. Hernandez

Rita Jackson Hernandez was the daughter of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. She has two markers in the cemetery. She had three children.



## Rita Jackson



Left to right: Mary, Maynor & Rita Jackson  
Courtesy Tamez Family



**Matilde L. Jackson**



**Image of Matilda L. Jackson courtesy of Linda McDonald Witt (Bobby Jean Lowry)**

**Matilda Jackson Flores was the daughter of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. She had one daughter.**



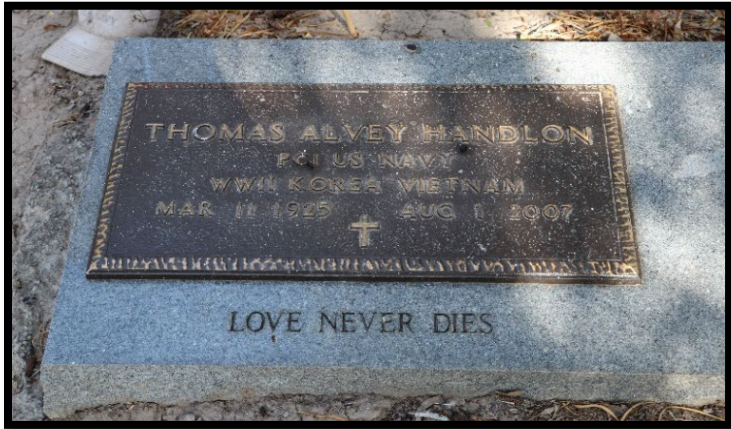
**Frances N. Clark**

**Francis Clark was the granddaughter of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. She was Matilda Jackson's (Flores) daughter who lived to be 7 months old.**



Ophelia De Leon is the granddaughter of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. She is Maynor's daughter and was married to Claudia Tamez and has six children.

**Ophelia De Leon**



Great-grandson in-law of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. He was Ophelia de Leon Tamez's grandson in-law. He was Hortencia Tamez Handlon's son.

**Thomas Alvey Handlon**



Hortencia Tamez Hunter Handlon was the great-granddaughter of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. She was Maynor Jackson's granddaughter and mother of four children. She is buried between her husbands, Keith Hunter and Thomas Handlon.

**Hortensia L. Tamez**



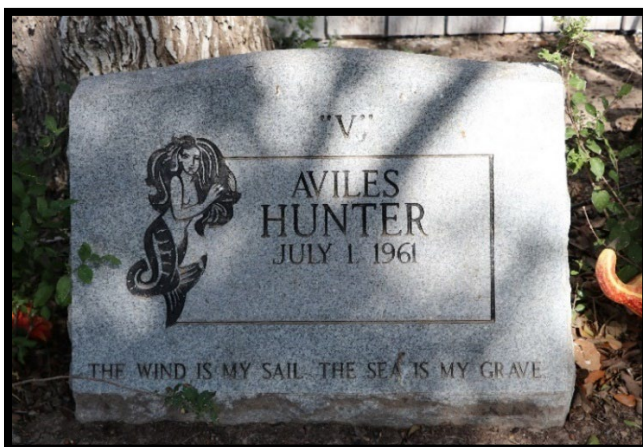
Keith Hunter was the great-grandson in-law of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. He was Hortencia's husband and father to Aviles Hunter. He was a long-time portrait artist in Long Beach, California.

## Keith Hunter



Joseph Lugo was the great-great grandson of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. He was Hortencia's son and died at 3 days old.

## Joseph Lugo



Aviles Hunter was the great-great grandson of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. He is Hortencia's son.

## "V" Aviles Hunter



## Raymond Gary and Mary Ellen Aquila Eric & Gabriel Duckworth

Mary Ellen Tamez Duckworth and Raymond Gary Duckworth are the great granddaughter and great grandson in-law of Martin and Espirdiona Jackson. Mary Ellen is Maynor's granddaughter. She is married to Raymond and has two sons. She is an entrepreneur and businesswoman and he served in the US Navy and is a Vietnam Veteran. He is also an entrepreneur and businessman. Aquila Eric Duckworth and Gabriel Duckworth are their sons.



Ramiro and Rodolfo Ruiz were Martin and Espiridiona Jackson's grandsons. Sons of Lucinda Jackson Ruiz.

## Ramiro and Rodolfo Ruiz



Julia Cuellar is the granddaughter of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson, daughter of Anita Jackson Cuellar. She had two children and lived in Donna, TX.

**Julia Cuellar**



Guillermo J. Cuellar was the grandson of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson. He was Anita's son.

**Guillermo J. Cuellar**



Adela Gonzalez Jackson was the daughter-in-law to Martin and Espiridiona Jackson and was married to Ben Jackson. They had eight children.

**Adela G. Jackson**



Ramiro Jackson was the grandson of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson and the son of Ben Jackson.

**Ramiro Jackson**



**José R Lopez was Martin and Espiridiona Jackson’s son-in-law. He was Maynor Jackson’s loving husband and stepfather to Ophelia. He was an accomplished horseman, ranch hand and carpenter.**

**Jose R. Lopez**



**Martha Sanchez was the great granddaughter of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson, granddaughter of Anita Jackson Cuellar, daughter of Guillermo Cuellar.**

**Martha Sanchez**



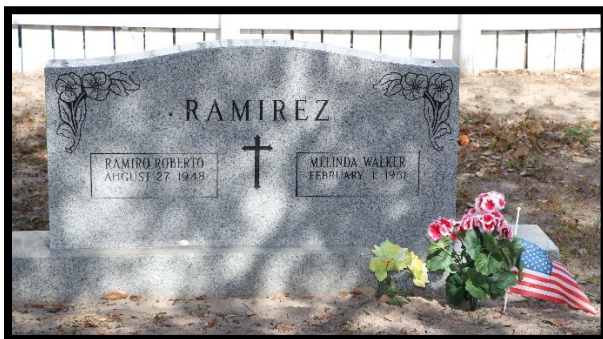
Hilda O. Ramirez and Sylvia Zelfa Ramirez are Martin and Espiridiona Jackson's great granddaughters, Nancy Clara Jackson's granddaughters, and Juan Venancio Ramirez's daughters.

### Hilda O. Ramirez and Sylvia Z. Ramirez



Juan Venancio Ramirez is the grandson of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson, son of Nancy Clara Jackson and was married to Alicia Gonzalez. He was a devoted Christian husband and father of seven children. He was a farmer most of his life and was later employed by the US Department of Agriculture. Abel Josue Ramirez was the son of Juan and Alicia Gonzalez (memorial only) and is buried at Highland Memorial Park in Weslaco, TX.

### Juan Venancio Ramirez, Abel Josue & Alicia Gonzalez



Ramiro Roberto Ramirez is the great grandson of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson, grandson of Nancy Clara Jackson, and son of Juan Venancio Ramirez. He was married to Melinda Walker Ramirez who was a godly woman and mother of three daughters. Ramiro has been a caretaker of the Jackson Ranch Church cemetery for many years.

### Ramiro Roberto Ramirez and Melinda Walker Ramirez



**Ezequiel Daniel Ramirez was the grandson of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson, son of Nancy Clara Jackson, and father of two children. He served in the US Armed Forces during World War II.**

**Ezequiel D. Ramirez**



**Erasmo Ruiz was the grandson of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson and son of Lucinda Jackson Ruiz. He was a twin brother to Eliodoro Ruiz.**

**Erasmo J. Ruiz**



**Mauricio Ruiz was son-in-law to Martin and Espiridiona Jackson, married to Lucinda Jackson Ruiz.**

**Mauricio Ruiz**



**Benito Ruiz was the grandson of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson and son of Lucinda Jackson Ruiz. He was a private in the US Army and served in World War II. He was the father of six children.**

**Benito Ruiz**



Benito Ruiz, Jr. was the great grandson of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson, grandson of Lucinda Jackson Ruiz and son of Benito Ruiz.

**Unmarked Grave of Benito Ruiz, Jr.**



**Triple Plot Ruiz Family**



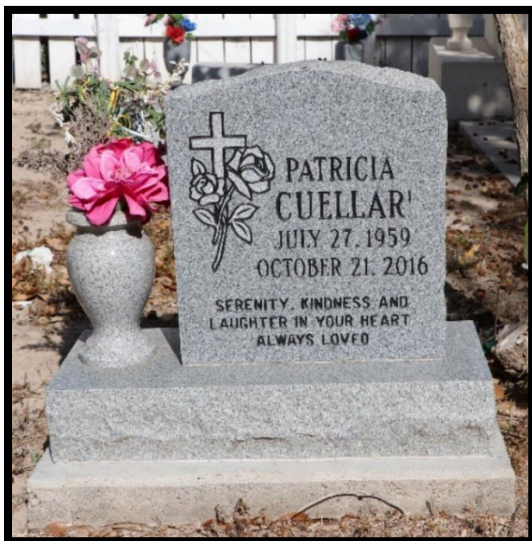
Lisandro Ruiz was the great grandson of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson, grandson of Lucinda Jackson Ruiz, and son of Benito Ruiz.

**Lisandro Ruiz Lee**



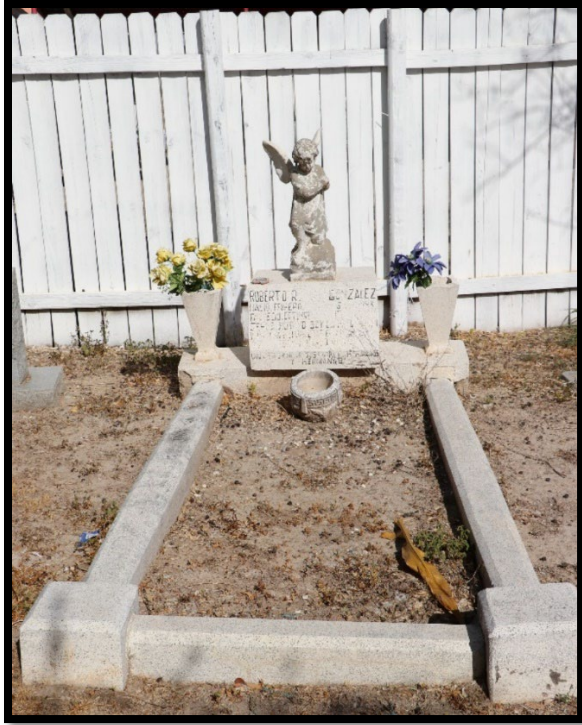
Roberta Sanchez Cuellar was the granddaughter-in-law to Martin and Espiridiona Jackson and married to Guillermo Cuellar, Anita Jackson Cuellar's son.

**Roberta S. Cuellar**



Patricia Cuellar was the great granddaughter of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson, granddaughter of Anita Jackson Cuellar, and daughter of Guillermo Cuellar.

**Patricia Cuellar**



**Roberto Gonzalez was the great grandson of Martin and Espiridiona Jackson, grandson of Lucinda Jackson, and son of Irene (Lucinda's daughter).**

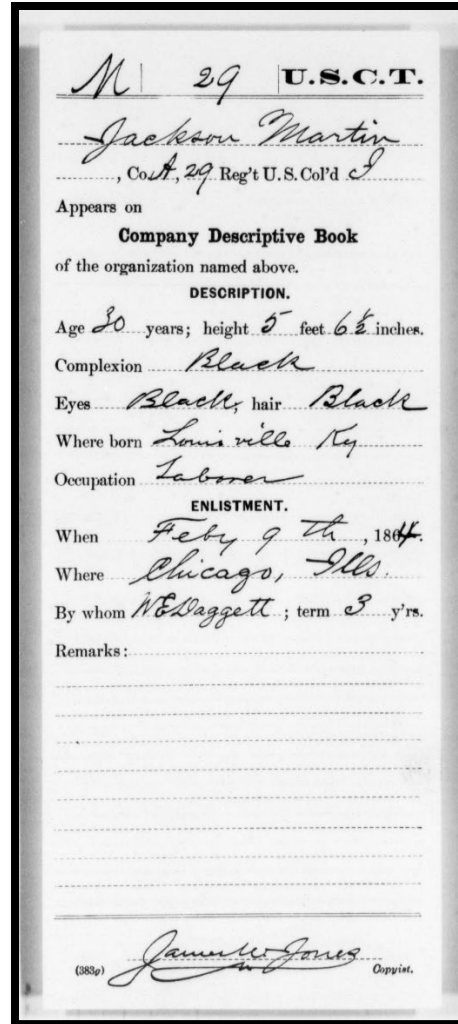
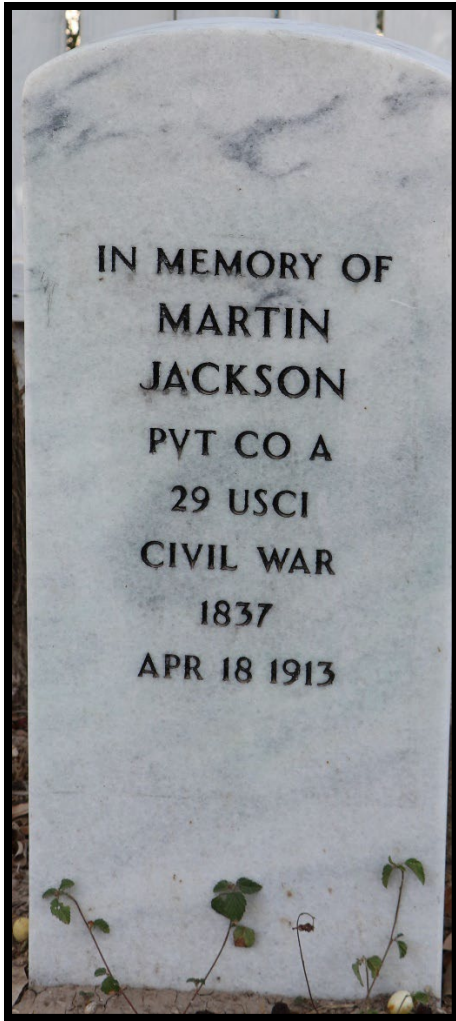
## **Roberto R. Gonzalez**

## **Unmarked Grave of Columbus Jackson**

Per the report written by Frances Isbell in 1982, it is reported that the first burial at the Jackson Ranch Church was that of Martin Jackson's oldest brother Columbus Jackson (born 1830 - died 1896). The grave site was originally marked by an ebony wood post on which Columbus Jackson had carved his initials CJ.<sup>1</sup> Another report states that Columbus Jackson's burial plot was placed "along the north fence directly back of the church building" with "a broken stone to mark the plot."<sup>2</sup> The Jackson Ranch Church cemetery was established upon his death in 1896. The canine forensic survey included in this report noted that there could be 3 unmarked graves at the rear of the Jackson Ranch Church property. Two locations were marked along the rear fence and one at the northwest corner of the property in front of a tree stump (between the backside of Abraham Rutledge's military headstone and the rear/west corner fencepost).

<sup>1</sup> Francis W. Isbell, "Jackson Ranch Church" (typescript, December 1982), Hidalgo County Historical Commission, Edinburg, TX, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Hidalgo County Historical Commission, Jackson Ranch, undated, Container: 79, Box: 7, Folder: 27, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Special Collections and Archives, Edinburg Campus, p. 2



## Martin Jackson – Military Headstone – US Colored Troops

This headstone is a recent addition to the Jackson Ranch Church cemetery in December 2021. It was installed by a local military veteran who noted through preliminary research that there was a Union soldier named Martin Jackson who mustered out of the USCI 29<sup>th</sup> regiment in Brownsville in November of 1865. Since the birth year is the same as Jackson Ranch’s Martin Jackson is the same, he felt that it was a match, ordered a headstone from the VA, and installed it. This headstone was in question because the National Park Service lists the soldier in this unit as “Jackson Martin” (not Martin Jackson) who mustered in into the US Colored Infantry in Illinois in 1864.<sup>3</sup> Further research has found that this soldier was born in Louisville, KY. Martin Jackson was born in Alabama.

<sup>3</sup> US National Archives and Records Administration, Martin, Jackson, Age 30, year 1864 US Colored Infantry, National Archives Identifier 57089979, Microform Publication: M1824, Roll 82, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/57089979>



## Abraham Rutledge

Wife Nancy Jackson Rutledge Born 1819, Died 1915 (Matilda Hicks Jackson's daughter)

### Children:

Harriet Born 1841

Mannuel (Manlas) Born 1843

Sarah Born 1848 Died 1937

Nancy Ann Born 1846

Isaac Born 1851 (1853)

Martha Jane Born 1854

Lewis Born 1857

Robert Born 1860

Half-brother-in-law to Martin Jackson. Married to Martin's half-sister Nancy Jackson Rutledge. There is not a body buried at this memorial. It has been suggested that he is most likely buried at the Eli Jackson Cemetery with other Rutledge family members.

Note that Abraham Rutledge, his son Manlas Rutledge as well as Eli, Bryant, and John Jackson and Samuel Singleterry had mustered into this Confederate Partisan Ranger unit in

December of 1862.<sup>4</sup> It is known that although these men were either mixed race or partners with an African American person, their conscious enlistment into this Confederate regiment was done in order to keep apprised of Confederate activities in the region, such as the patrolling of slave catchers, so as to protect themselves, their loved ones, their land, and possessions.

<sup>4</sup> Abraham Rutledge and his son Manlas (Manuel?) mustered into Captain Thomas' Company of Partisan Rangers, a Confederate patrol unit, in December of 1862. "Civil War Service Records, Confederate – Texas," database with images, Fold3, Rutledge, Abraham, Private, and Rutledge, Manlas, Captain Thomas' Company Partisan Rangers (4 months, 1862-3).

# **International Canine Forensic Institute – Human Remains Detection at the Jackson Ranch Church**

Lynne Engelbert and Adela Morris

Human Remains detection dogs from the International Canine Forensic Institute visited the Rio Grande Valley in November 2022. The purpose of the visit was to see if the dogs could detect human remains and identify where the location(s) of possible unmarked graves are. The dogs, Jasper and Piper, identified three locations at the rear of the church against the fence. One was in the northwest corner of the lot in front of a tree stump. Columbus Jackson, son of Nathaniel and Matilda Jackson, is said to be the first person to be buried in the church graveyard. The Jackson Ranch Church cemetery was established upon his death in 1896. The grave site was originally marked by an ebony wood post on which Columbus Jackson had carved his initials CJ.<sup>5</sup> Another report states that Columbus Jackson's burial plot was placed "along the north fence directly back of the church building" with "a broken stone to mark the plot."<sup>6</sup> The dogs identified the possible locations of two unmarked graves in the vicinity as described in the reports at the rear of the church property along the north fence. Family stories also tell of friends and neighbors who buried their loved ones in these riverside ranch cemeteries because they could not afford a burial. The forensic team did note, however, that there definitely is not a body buried under the Abraham Rutledge military headstone.

<sup>5</sup> Francis W. Isbell, "Jackson Ranch Church" (typescript, December 1982), Hidalgo County Historical Commission, Edinburg, TX, p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Hidalgo County Historical Commission, Jackson Ranch, undated, Container: 79, Box: 7, Folder: 27, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Special Collections and Archives, Edinburg Campus, p. 2

# Institute for Canine Forensics

*Human Remains Detection Dog Services*

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Canine Field Survey  
**Jackson Ranch Church and Cemetery**  
Hidalgo County, Texas

Prepared for:

**Roseann Bach-Garza**

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
CHAPS Program  
1201 West University Dr.  
Edinburg, Texas 78539-2999

Contact: Rosanne Bach-Garza

Prepared by:

**Institute for Canine Forensics**

P.O. Box 62069  
Woodside, CA 94062  
650-508-4473

ICF Contact: Adela Morris

Field Work Conducted on: 11/20/2022



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This report contains confidential archaeological information about the possible location of human remains. Do not provide any information to third parties without the permission of Univ. of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

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## Summary of Findings

Two teams worked the Jackson Ranch Church and Cemetery, alerting at several unmarked areas. The alerts were flagged and waypoint coordinates recorded.

## General Information

### Understanding This Report

The following information is key to understanding the report:

- The percentage of terrain accessible to the dogs affects their Probability of Detection (PoD.)
- Hot weather conditions, especially ground temperatures 85°F and higher, very low humidity, and / or near 100% humidity at ground level may dramatically decrease the dogs' PoD.
- The GPS tracks reported are those of the dogs; in some cases, we use the handler's tracks. The dogs range away from the handlers and cover more area than indicated by the handler's tracks.
- Our dogs are specifically trained to give an "alert" when they detect the scent of human remains. The alert is at the strongest source of the scent they have located.
- It is important to note that the dogs do not necessarily alert directly over a burial.

- **Alert Interpretation Key**

Each alert is given an interpretation number, 1-3, and is described below. This is based on the handler's experience in observing trained dogs identify burials in a variety of known locations and the dog's behavior while working. It also takes into consideration the knowledge of the site, age of burial, burial customs, and past ground disturbances. **This information is offered as a guide to understanding what might be expected.**

**1. Possible Intact Burial:** To our knowledge the ground has been undisturbed. The dog is strongly committed to a single location. Based on this, we believe the burial is most likely intact and may be historic or shallow.

**2. Compromised Burial:** Some ground disturbance may have occurred to the area, either naturally or man-made. The dog is committed to the location, but it may not be as strong of an alert as an intact burial. Based on this and other research, we believe the remains may be an older burial, cremains, reinterred or partial burial, deep, and/or in dense soil.

**3. Scattered or Dissipated Remains:** This category contains several possible conditions.

- The ground has been greatly disturbed, either naturally or man-made. Most common reasons for disturbed burials are construction or farming, especially plowing. Older burials can become so degraded that the remaining bones are small fragments or only grave soil remains. When a body has decomposed in the ground the "grave soil" contains the scent that the dogs recognize as human remains.
- Included in this category is the *conduit effect* where scent travels along underground conduits. Items like pipes, cables, tree roots, utility boxes and poles and/or rodent holes passing through remains can act as a channel for scent, bringing it to the surface. An alert on this sort of item does not necessarily mean there are human remains at that location.

- In some cases, the dog cannot access the exact location of the source. Or the level of scent available to the dog may be below their *target threshold* (scent strong enough to elicit an alert.) The handler observes the dog is clearly working an area of the target odor and is searching for stronger scent.

The dog indicates there is scent, but their reaction to this category varies from having a hard time pinpointing an exact location, to giving several alerts in close proximity, or not alerting. Based on this and other research, we believe the remains may be severely fragmented, grave soil, and/or located in different area than the accessible scent. This may mean that finding visible identifiable remains may not be possible.

For more detailed information please refer to *Appendix C: Using Historic Human Remains Dogs*.

### Map and Flag Information

We use consumer level GPS devices with their inherent inaccuracies. Occasionally, an alert waypoint is adjusted to be more correct using the visual reference of satellite imagery. We also change the coordinate information, accordingly. Any waypoint that has been adjusted will be noted.

We use different colored flags for each dog and mark each flag with the team's identification, waypoint number and other important information. The color coding for pin flags, waypoints, and tracks for each handler/dog team in this report are identified in the table below. Note that our Intern and Novice Teams' tracks and waypoints are not reported.

ID	Handler Name	Dog Name	Flag Color	Waypoint Color	Track Color
J	Adela Morris	Jasper	Blue	Blue	Blue
PE	Lynne Engelbert	Piper	Florescent green	Florescent green	Florescent green

### Project Information

**Date of Survey:** November 20, 2022

**Project Name:** Jackson Ranch Church and Cemetery

**Client:** University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

**Client Contact(s):**

Roseann Bacha-Garza

956-665-8161

[roseann.bachagarza@utrgv.edu](mailto:roseann.bachagarza@utrgv.edu)

**Other Interested Parties:**

Russell Skowronek

956-665-8085

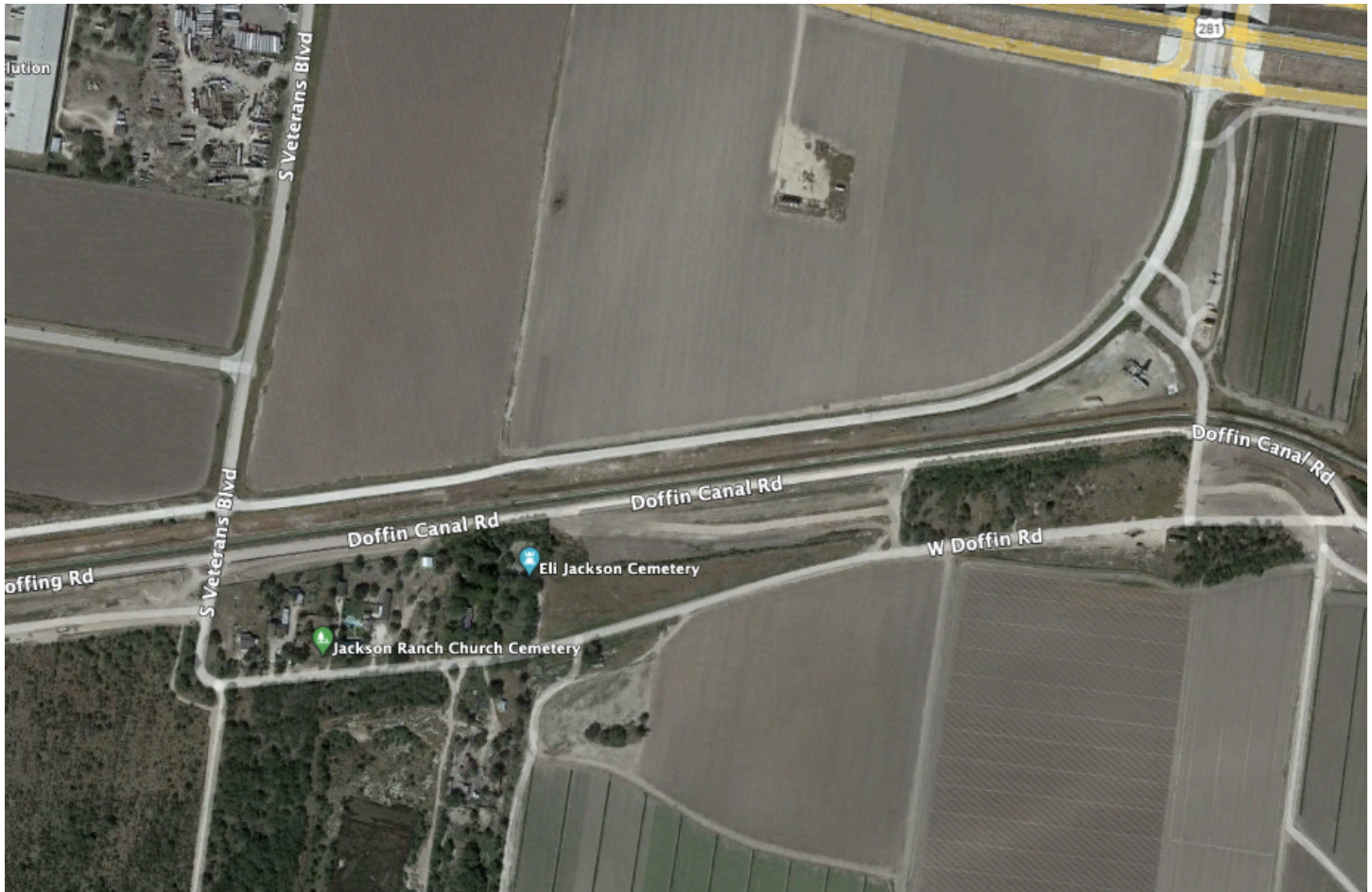
[russell.skowronek@utrgv.edu](mailto:russell.skowronek@utrgv.edu)

**ICF Personnel Responding:**

Name	Assignment
Adela Morris	Dog handler, Project Manager
Lynne Engelbert	Dog handler

Prepared By: Lynne Engelbert

**Project Location**



**Pertinent History**

This area is part of the Jackson Ranch - settled in 1857. The family patriarch, Nathaniel Jackson died in 1865. There are likely 3 unmarked graves at the Jackson Ranch Church and Cemetery. They have conducted GIS mapping survey and Ground Penetrating Radar of sections of these properties. They also have historical research regarding lists of those buried at both cemeteries.

**Project goals**

Conduct a survey to locate unmarked burials at the Jackson Ranch Church and Cemetery.

**Methods**

The two dogs worked the cemetery, assuring that there was double coverage of the area. The teams worked using a free, and medium grid searches.

The client can request an electronic GPS file of the tracks and waypoints of alerts.

**Survey Details****Search Area: Jackson Ranch Church and Cemetery**Area Description

Small cemetery with church in the center, burials w/markers on the left and mostly open, grassy area on the back. There were a few burials with markers in the back. The search area included around the foundation of the church but not inside.

We estimate this search area was between 90% and 95% accessible to the dogs.

Alert Details

Handler / dog: Lynne & Piper			
Search Strategy: Free search and medium grid			
Date and Time Searched: Nov. 20, 2022: 10:40 - 11:30 a.m.			
General Comments: We were asked to focus on the back of the churchyard, approx. 47°, 15 mph wind from the NW, Dew Point 42%, Ground Temp. 47°			
GPS Used: Garmin Alpha 200i			
Waypoint #	GPS Coordinates, UTM	Alert Key	Handler Comments
PE1	14 R 581532 2885474	2	Piper alerted just west of the A. Rutledge marker
PE2	14 R 581540 2885473	2	Alert at bare patch of ground
PE3	14 R 581540 2885474	3	Alert near small concrete pad
PE4	14 R 581543 2885467	3	Alert at large prairie dog burrow
PE5	14 R 581542 2885435	2	At NE corner of cross (possible cremains?)
PE6	14 R 581542 2885433	3	At SE corner of cross (possible cremains?)
Handler / dog: Adela & Jasper			
Search Strategy: Free search			
Date and Time Searched: 11/20/22 10:40am - 11:37am			
General Comments: Focus on the area behind the church, used Piper's waypoints			
GPS Used (waypoints): Garmin Alpha 200i Handheld			
GPS Used (dog tracks): Garmin Alpha TT 15x Dog Collar			
Waypoint #	GPS Coordinates, UTM	Alert Key	Handler Comments
J1	14 R 581532 2885474	2	Close to Piper's alert, corroborated PE1
J2	14 R 581540 2885473	2	Bare patch of dirt, corroborated PE2
J5	14 R 581542 2885435	3	Alerted in 3 locations around the large cross, see PE5 alert

Photographs

Piper's PE1 alert just west of Rutledge marker.



PE2 Alert at bare patch  
of land



Map of Alerts



Map of Tracks



## Appendix A: Project Weather Conditions

Weather conditions during this project were less than optimal with overcast skies, Approximately 47°, 15 mph winds from the NW, Dew Point 42% and a ground temperature of 47°.

## Appendix B: Handler Biographies

<p><b>Adela Morris</b></p>	<p><b>Historic Human Remains Detection Specialist</b>  <b>Member of the ICF Board of Directors</b>  <b>Evaluator and Instructor: Human Remains Detection</b></p> <p>Adela has been involved in human remains detection with her dogs since 1986 and has deployed her dogs on hundreds of searches specializing on cold cases, crime scenes and historic burials. She has certified seven dogs for human remains detection. Since 2017, she has also worked with the Alta Heritage Foundation’s Cremated Remains Recovery Team, helping locate previously cremated remains for victims of wildfires whose homes have been destroyed.</p> <p>She is the founder of the Institute for Canine Forensics, a nonprofit organization for the advancement of research and education for the use of canines. Adela is also the founder of the Canine Specialized Search Team, a volunteer resource for Santa Clara County Sheriff’s Office.</p> <p>Adela is an evaluator and instructor for Human Remains Detection with ICF and for the state of CA. She has served as an expert witness.</p> <p><b>Historic Human Remains Detection Publications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Locating the Grave of John Snyder”, Overland Journal, Vol. 30, No. 3, Fall 2012.</li> <li>• “Assessing Canine Forensic Results with Archaeological Excavations at Protohistoric Síi Túupentak (CA-ALA-565/H) in the San Francisco Bay Area”, Society for California Archaeology Annual Meeting, March 2019.</li> <li>• “Applying Canine Detection in Support of Collaborative Archaeology”, 2021, Advances in Archaeological Practice, 9(3), 226-237, doi:10.1017/aap.2021.12</li> </ul> <p><b>Canine: Jasper</b>  <b>Historic Human Remains Detection, Certified</b>  <b>DOB: January 1, 2011</b>  <b>Breed: Border Collie, Tri-Blue Merle</b>  <b>Certification: Historic Human Remains Detection; re-certified every year since initial certification in 2012</b></p> <p><b>Canine: Zia</b>  <b>Historic Human Remains Detection, Novice</b>  <b>DOB: April 26, 2021</b>  <b>Breed: Border Collie, Red &amp; White</b></p>
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<p><b>Lynne Engelbert</b></p>	<p><b>Historic Human Remains Detection Specialist Evaluator and Instructor: Human Remains Detection, Disaster Search</b></p> <p>Lynne has 30+ years of detection dog training and handling experience and is an associate with the Institute for Canine Forensics. Lynne and Piper, her border collie, are certified in Historic Human Remains Detection, and FEMA Human Remains Detection (disaster). They were formerly certified to California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) Human Remains Detection (Type 1). Since 2017, Lynne and Piper have worked with the Alta Heritage Foundation's Cremated Remains Recovery Team, helping locate previously cremated remains for victims of wildfires whose homes have been destroyed.</p> <p>Lynne serves as an evaluator for Human Remains, Historic Human Remains Detection and FEMA disaster search dogs (live-find and HRD). Lynne and her former search partner Lucy (1991-2006) were a FEMA-certified live-find Canine Search Specialist team and became a CalOES certified Cadaver team in January 1999 with several major finds in their career. They deployed to the Oklahoma City Bombing (Lucy with a former handler) and the World Trade Center after 9/11. She was also a certified Canine Search Specialist with the FEMA and CalOES with her live-find disaster search dog, Sweep (2003-2017).</p> <p>Lynne is an instructor for Human Remains Detection, disaster search and canine decontamination. She has also worked with local and federal law enforcement agencies in doing maintenance training for narcotics, explosives and arson detection dogs.</p> <p><b>Canine: Piper</b>  <b>Historic Human Remains Detection, Certified</b>  <b>DOB: April 15, 2010</b>  <b>Breed: Border Collie, Black &amp; White</b>  <b>Certifications:</b>  Historic Human Remains Detection; certified 2012-2019 and recertified 2020-present  FEMA Human Remains Detection, FEMA Urban Search and Rescue standard; initial certification, 2015, re-certified in 2018 (current)</p> <p><b>Canine: Jazz</b>  <b>Historic Human Remains Detection, Novice</b>  <b>DOB: April 11, 2019</b>  <b>Breed: Border Collie, Black &amp; White</b></p>
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## Appendix C: Using Historic Human Remains Detection Dogs

### General Information

#### The Organization

The Institute for Canine Forensics (ICF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation established in 1997. ICF is singularly dedicated to training, certifying, and providing Historic Human Remains Detection (HHRD) dog teams. HHRD dogs have unique and specialized training in locating historic and prehistoric human remains. We work closely with archaeologists and anthropologists to ensure our training and methods are consistent with current standards of practice. Over the last 10 years ICF has worked 20 - 40 projects a year with about 70% of that being Native burials.

#### The Dogs

The use of Historic Human Remains Detection dogs is one of several techniques that may be used to locate historic and prehistoric burials. They are the *only* remote sensing tool that can detect and recognize the scent of human remains. This makes them uniquely qualified to aid archaeologists. HHRD dogs may also be used in combination with other more traditional techniques. For example: GPR can detect anomalies in the ground. HHRD dogs can identify the scent of human remains. Overlapping this information can indicate unmarked burials. Using scientific methodologies, archaeologists can build predictive models to help determine the possibilities for unknown burials in a given location.

Each handler is an independent contractor, owns their own dog and is responsible for their dog's training, health and wellbeing. Along with scent training, the dogs are taught obedience, agility and socialized to other animals and humans. Most of our dogs have flown in-cabin with us all over the country and, in some cases, internationally. We use a variety of dog breeds, mostly from working lines.

### Developing a Customized Search Plan

#### Important Information for Setting up the Project for Success

An initial customized search strategy is based on information given to us by the client during the information gathering phase. The more detailed and complete this information is, the more suitable our initial plan can be. The search plan is re-evaluated on-site and may be modified as needed.

#### Project Goals and Priorities

Each project is unique, as is each search area. ICF has several techniques that can be deployed to accommodate different needs. For example:

- *Time constraints* - For some projects, the need to complete the field survey quickly is paramount. In this case, we might apply more teams for a faster survey.
- *Boundaries* - Other projects only require identifying the boundaries of a cemetery so the area can be avoided. We might do a free search outside the assumed boundaries, to help identify any unknown burials.

- *Specific Locations* - Other clients may be seeking the location of each burial for removal / preservation. We might work a tighter grid search, overlapping with multiple teams to make sure as many burials as possible are found.
- *Research* - Clients conducting a study may need to exclude bias. In this case, teams can work double blind.

### History of the Site

Understanding the history of the site can help us understand what might be found and in what condition remains may currently be in. This information goes toward developing our search plan.

For example, it is helpful to know any:

- Prehistoric history including Native culture and their burial practices
- Land grading, especially if any fill soil was added
- Known land use including buildings, agriculture / tilling, etc.
- Any known burials in the area
- Oral history of burials
- Cultural features that have been identified
- Registered archeological site(s) within the search area, if so please provide number(s)

### Search Boundaries, Maps, Photos, Terrain, Vegetation and Hazards

It is important that we have explicit search boundaries to ensure we cover all the requested areas.

Boundaries can be provided by:

- GPS coordinates / tracks
- Aerial photo with drawn boundaries (e.g., Google Maps / Earth)
- Physical features (e.g., roads, fences, streams)

Knowledge of the terrain, vegetation and any known hazards are very important to the development of a customized plan. For example:

- Height of ground cover, including impenetrable brush
- Fences, especially electric or barbed
- Animals (livestock, rattlesnakes, etc.)
- See more details below in the *Dog Working Conditions* and *Accessible Terrain* sections

Current photos of the area are important to see the present-day state of the site, including things that might not have been obvious to the client. (We use Google Maps / Earth so we can visually review the area, but the current conditions are often different.)

### **How We Work**

The search location is broken down into multiple, manageable areas. Our standard practice is for two dog teams to search each area. At times more coverage will be added, for example: difficult terrain, areas with many potential burials or areas where burials will need to be excavated for preservation. Normally we search a short distance outside of the defined boundary, as the scent

from a burial can sometime only be detected a short distance from it. Occasionally this results in the dogs alerting on areas outside the scope of the project.

The dogs work at different times during the day with different weather conditions and for varying lengths of time. The best search strategy is determined based on the need of the client, weather conditions, terrain and the dog searching. Typical search patterns include searching boundaries followed by gridding in two directions. Grid spacing depends on the client's needs, what we are looking for, terrain, soil conditions, etc. Using multiple dogs to cover an area increases the Probability of Detection (PoD.) Typical grid spacings include:

- **Free:** This style of search lets the dog choose the area it wants to search and is not as controlled as a grid search. It can be useful when speed is needed but it can be more difficult to keep track of the areas the dog has searched. The benefit of this search mode is if the dog has scent they will gravitate to that location and work it first.
- **Wide Grid:** The size of the grid spacing ranges from 10 to 30 meters, depending on terrain. This style of search covers areas faster and is used when we have limited time or large areas to search. This usually means less coverage of a search area. To increase the probability of detection, the area is often searched with a cross-grid.
- **Medium Grid:** A medium grid search is commonly used when we are looking for, or believe we have located, a cemetery. It typically uses grid spacing from 3 to 5 meters and often is searched with a cross-grid to get better coverage and Probability of Detection. Having more than one dog search the area also increases the Probability of Detection.
- **Fine Grid:** A fine grid search is used to search for single bones and teeth. It typically uses a grid of about 1 to 2 meters and often is searched with a cross-grid to get better coverage and Probability of Detection. We do not use it very often in the field because we are usually not asked to search for individual bones and teeth. A Fine Grid Search covers about  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre per hour. It is tiring on the dog and they usually need a rest break after covering their  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre.

### Dog Working Conditions

Our dogs are living creatures and subject to weather conditions, especially heat. Cool, moist conditions are best. The best conditions are not always possible due to the season or location of the project. We have adopted some standard working practices to help ensure the dogs are safe and we get the best possible results. Our dogs are athletes, and our training program builds their endurance to extend the duration of time they can work.

Below is a list of our basic guidelines:

- The dogs' workday varies from 4 to 6 hours per day, depending on weather and other conditions. A workday is not the same as "nose time". Nose time is the amount of time the dog is actively working.
- The dogs can cover anywhere from 2 to 10 acres per workday depending on what they are looking for, the weather, the terrain and the search strategy used.

- For multiple-day projects our dogs typically work 3 days on and 1 day off.
- Weather, especially ground temperatures and humidity, play a critical role in the dogs' ability to locate scent. We monitor ground temperatures as this directly affects the availability of scent. Hot weather conditions, especially ground temperatures 85°F and higher appear to decrease the scent available to the dog. The ground temperature can be significantly higher than the air temperature.
- In general, ground temperatures below 85°F work best for locating burials. The higher the ground temperature, the lower the Probability of Detection. Ideal ground temperatures are between 40°F and 85°F.
- We stop working dogs when the ground temperature approaches 100°F, or the dogs internal body temperature reaches 104°F.
- We do not work in rain heavier than a slight drizzle, or on ground with standing water, due to degradation of scent conditions. Very high humidity *at ground level* may also severely impact the dogs' PoD.
- Project working time may be changed / delayed to increase the dogs' PoD.
- The safety of our dogs always comes first. For example, we do not work deserts at night in the summer due to the presence of rattlesnakes. We prefer that any electric fences in the area be turned off. Livestock and other animals, like loose dogs, can cause undue safety issues. At some locations we work the dogs on a long line for their safety.
- Each handler has their own personal protective equipment (PPE) including a hard hat, high visibility vest for themselves and a high visibility vest for their dog.

In addition to the ideal cool, moist conditions, our dogs have successfully worked projects in the following conditions:

- Hot, dry desert conditions (Southern California deserts)
- Cold, wet conditions (Alaska)
- Hot, humid tropical conditions (South Pacific, Republic of Kiribati)

Our dogs are trained to perform an alert when they detect the scent of human remains. The alert is either a sit or down at the strongest source of the scent they have located. At times it is not physically possible to alert near the source due to vegetation or other obstacles, or the scent can be channeled through disturbances in the ground (insect or rodent activity) and the scent can be more available a short distance away from the grave. (See *How Scent Travels* below.)

### Accessible Terrain

The terrain impacts the PoD. The percent of accessible terrain is estimated by how much of the search area the dogs' noses have access to the surface of the ground. Brush, thick grasses, downed trees, etc. can make it very difficult for the dogs to cover some areas. Dry grasses like foxtails, needle grass, rip gut, and wild rye can be very dangerous to the dogs as they propagate by seed pods that have one-way barbs. These seeds can attach to the animals' fur and can lodge in the

dog's nose, eyes, ears or skin, sometimes requiring surgical removal. In areas where these grasses grow, the work needs to be done in times of the year before the grasses dry or they have been removed.

Dense grass above four inches in height can degrade the PoD. for the dogs. Grass above one foot in height has a significant degradation in PoD. Tall grasses and other groundcover trap scent in a localized area and the dog must pass directly above that area, with their nose at ground level to catch the scent. It is recommended that tall grass be cut a week before a search. If that isn't possible, a shorter time interval than a week is preferable over searching in tall grass. Ideally it is recommended that the cut grass be removed if it leaves large, thick clumps, which can result in trapping the scent between the clumps and the ground and not allowing it to rise.

Paved areas create scent barriers. Asphalt can be worked if it is old, cracked, and/or has holes, although it has a very low PoD. An alert on pavement may occur where there is a crack or hole and not necessary on top of the burial.

## How Scent Travels

Human remains scent (vapor) travels away from the decomposing body or skeleton by way of diffusion, or vapor transport. Scent will follow the path of least resistance and can flow by means of water movement, animal or insect activity, and plant or root activity. Burrowing animals, such as rodents, as well as some insects like ants, create channels in the soil that can allow the release of scent to the surface.

Dogs can only detect what is available in the air. Water molecules compete with vapor molecules for binding sites. Water physically displaces odor molecules thus causing human remains scent to appear to be stronger, or pool, at vegetation or moist soil. Humidity is higher in and around photosynthesizing vegetation because it is transpiring. As vegetation transpires, it releases water into the atmosphere and bumps the odor molecules off of whatever they are bound to, making odor in the air more available to a dog's nose. Scent can also travel and then be trapped in depressions or obstacles in its path creating a scent pool.

## Underground Utilities

It is common to see alerts on or near underground utility access points. Features such as pipes, cables, utility boxes, power and light poles can act as a channel for scent, bringing it to the surface. Scent can move both horizontally and vertically along utility equipment. We believe alerts in these areas are due to scent traveling along utilities that pass close to burials or fragments of human remains. An alert on utilities does not necessarily mean there are human remains in that location.

**It is important to note that the dogs do not necessarily alert directly over a burial.** Land disturbance, be it man-made, rodent and/or insect activity or the natural movement of the earth, including floods or landslides, can spread the scent over the area. The soil in which the body has decomposed retains the human scent signature that the dogs are trained to recognize and alert on. Disturbed burials will often create larger scent pools, making pinpointing by the dogs more difficult. However, even after years of disturbance and movement, the dogs can still detect, and alert, in reasonably close proximity to a burial.

Bones that have been on the surface for extended periods of time will deteriorate, losing most of their scent, especially in areas with direct sunlight and hot conditions. Environmental conditions that break down scent include sunlight, heat, and wind. Intact, undisturbed graves have more scent available than do disturbed graves or bones.

## **Qualifications**

### **Training and Certification**

Our training regimen and time training exceeds the best practices for the industry standard. We train in all types of weather conditions and terrains, including buildings, urban and wilderness. We log our training sessions including nose time, location of trainings and whether problems were worked blind or known.

Our certification process consists of pre-certification signoffs that include obedience, compatibility with humans, different environments and scent work. The team is required to pass our skills test observed by an outside evaluator and then the team is required to complete field experience before they are considered certified. Once a team is certified, they must complete an ongoing annual certification that ensures skills and evaluations are done throughout the year and maintain a 75% or higher efficacy.

Additionally, our dogs are:

- not cross-trained for other scent disciplines
- socialized to many different situations, people and places
- trained to alert as close as possible to the strongest scent available
- taught to preserve scent sources and are not allowed to dig or mouth potential remains
- routinely trained with flags present so they learn that flags in their search area are insignificant and do not necessarily relate to an alert by another dog

### **Working with Native Monitors**

We have a good working relationship with many tribes, as well as archaeologists. Because of that we have learned to work areas that Native monitors deem significant due to their knowledge of topography, presence of artifacts or features that were used in historic or prehistoric burial

practices. These areas can be more closely searched for potential burials. The handler/dogs are given a narrowed down area to search but are not told exactly where these features are. This eliminates the potential to cue or guide the dogs to a specific object or location.

### Selecting a HHRD Dog Search Team

ICF recommends the following guidelines when considering using a dog team to locate historic or ancient burials. Since there are no national standards, the following criteria should be considered to make sure the team fits well with your needs.

- **How long has the organization existed?**
  - ICF was established in 1998. We have over two decades of specialized experience training, certifying, and providing Historic Human Remains Detection (HHRD) dog teams.
- **Request a list of clients and projects that the team has worked.**
  - ICF has a wide range of clients including:
    - Multiple Native Tribes
    - Government agencies at the federal, state and local level
    - International organizations
    - Cultural Resource Management (CRM) agencies
    - Churches / cemetery preservation organizations and universitiesPlease refer to our web page at [www.ICFK9.org](http://www.ICFK9.org) for more information, including published papers, past projects, clients, and testimonials.
- **How many historic human remains projects do they work per year?**
  - ICF works 20-40 projects annually
- **Request a sample report.**
  - ICF customizes each report. The template we use as starting point was developed over decades of collaboration with archeologists, Native Tribes / CRMs, and land developers. Please request a sample report from ICF.
- **Do they have any published papers or articles relating to their work?**
  - ICF has participated in several published studies and projects. Please refer to our web page at [www.ICFK9.org](http://www.ICFK9.org) for more information, including published papers, past projects, clients, and testimonials.
- **Are they covered by both general and professional liability insurance?**
  - ICF has both general and professional liability insurance.
- **Will they travel to your location? Do they have the experience and knowledge to successfully work projects in unfamiliar environments?**
  - ICF has a proven track record of working successfully throughout the United States and internationally. Our dogs are trained to travel and work in a variety of environments. We have proven expertise in travel logistics for handlers and dogs.
- **How many certified teams do they have available to work projects?**

- ICF has 7 certified teams, 1 intern team (that have passed all their testing and are currently completing their field experience requirements) and 6 novice teams in training.
- **Request resumes of available resources. What experience and relevant education / training do they have?**
  - ICF has almost *200 years of accumulated detection dog experience* and have *participated in thousands of projects / searches*. We have wide ranging skills set / training on the team including almost 50 years of professional project management. Please request a copy of our teams' bios.
- **How are the dogs certified? Request information on testing and skills required.**
  - ICF was the 1<sup>st</sup> organization to write a certification process for HHRD dogs and remains the world leader in these practices. Please request a copy of our certification process.
- **Are their dogs *specialized in old burials* or are they trained for multiple scents (e.g., live human, explosives, drugs)?**
  - ICF dogs *specialize* in historic human remains detection; they are *not* cross trained to detect any other scents.

## Report

We produce a final report on each project for the client. ICF's report is only given to the paying or requesting client unless a written request is given by the client to include additional people/agencies. All alerts will be included in the report (even alerts encountered outside of requested search areas) unless otherwise requested.

The report generally contains the following information:

- Summary of our findings
- Coordinates of all dog alerts
- A map of the search area(s), dog tracks, and any recorded alerts
- Description of the terrain
- Alert interpretation, comments and observations
- Sample pictures of terrain and dog alerts, as available
- Weather
- Handlers' biographies

### Alert Interpretation Key:

Each alert is given an interpretation number, 1-3, and is described below. This is based on the handler's experience in observing trained dogs identify burials in a variety of known locations and the dog's behavior while working. It also takes into consideration the knowledge of the site, age of burial, burial customs, and past ground disturbances. This information is offered as a guide to understanding what might be expected.

1. **Possible Intact burial:** The location where the body was originally interred. To our knowledge the ground has been undisturbed and the burial, is possibly intact. Most likely a historic, or shallow burial. The dog is strongly committed to a single location.
2. **Compromised Burial:** The handler has knowledge of the site, which may include any of the following: older burial, some disturbance has occurred to the location (either natural or man-made), deep burial or dense soil, burial customs include cremation, only bones buried or not all the remains are present at the burial. The dog is committed to the location, but it may not be as strong of an alert as an intact burial.
3. **Scattered or Dissipated Remains:** The site is a known disturbed area, either natural or man-made. The most common reasons for disturbed burials are construction or farming, especially plowing. Older burials can become so degraded that the remaining bones are small fragments or only grave soil remains. When a body has decomposed in the ground the “grave soil” contains the scent that the dogs recognize as human remains. This may also mean that finding visual, identifiable remains may not be possible as only scent is left.

Included in this category is the *conduit effect* where scent travels along in underground utilities. Things such as: pipes, cables, tree roots, utility boxes and poles and/or rodent holes can act as a channel for scent, bringing it to the surface. An alert on utilities does not necessarily mean there are human remains at that location.

The dog’s reaction to this category varies from having a hard time pinpointing an exact location to giving several alerts in close proximity or not alerting. The handler observes the dog is clearly working the target odor (sometimes called a scent pool) and is searching for stronger scent, or they cannot access the exact location of the source. Also, the level of scent available to the dog may be below their *target threshold* (scent strong enough to elicit an alert).

All reported alerts are valued. Single-flagged alerts may have the same creditability as multiple-flagged alerts. Alerts may not be reproducible by other dogs, depending on condition (e.g., ground temperature and wind.)

Multiple flags in close proximity do not necessarily mean more than one grave but most likely are because each dog chooses a different location to alert on at a single grave. Each burial may be anywhere between 3ft to over 5ft in length. Multiple flags in close proximity can also mean the burial has been scattered by ground dwelling rodents, roots, or earth moving equipment.

When a body has decomposed in the ground the “grave soil” contains the scent that the dogs recognize as human remains. Alerts on disturbed, “scattered” burials can be grave soil, or actual remains (bones/teeth).

## Team Status

All dog teams on a project and their status are listed in the report. A dog teams' status determined if their tracks / waypoints are included. Dog Teams status can be:

- **Novice** - has not passed a Basic Skills Test. Tracks and waypoints are not included in the report.
- **Intern** - has passed a Basic Skills Test, their Annual Skills Checklists are up of date, but handler and / or dog have not completed Field Experience. Tracks and waypoints are included in the report.
- **Certified** - has passed a Basic Skills Test, their Annual Skills Checklists are up of date and both handler and dog have completed Field Experience. Tracks and waypoints are included in the report.

## GPS

### Accuracy

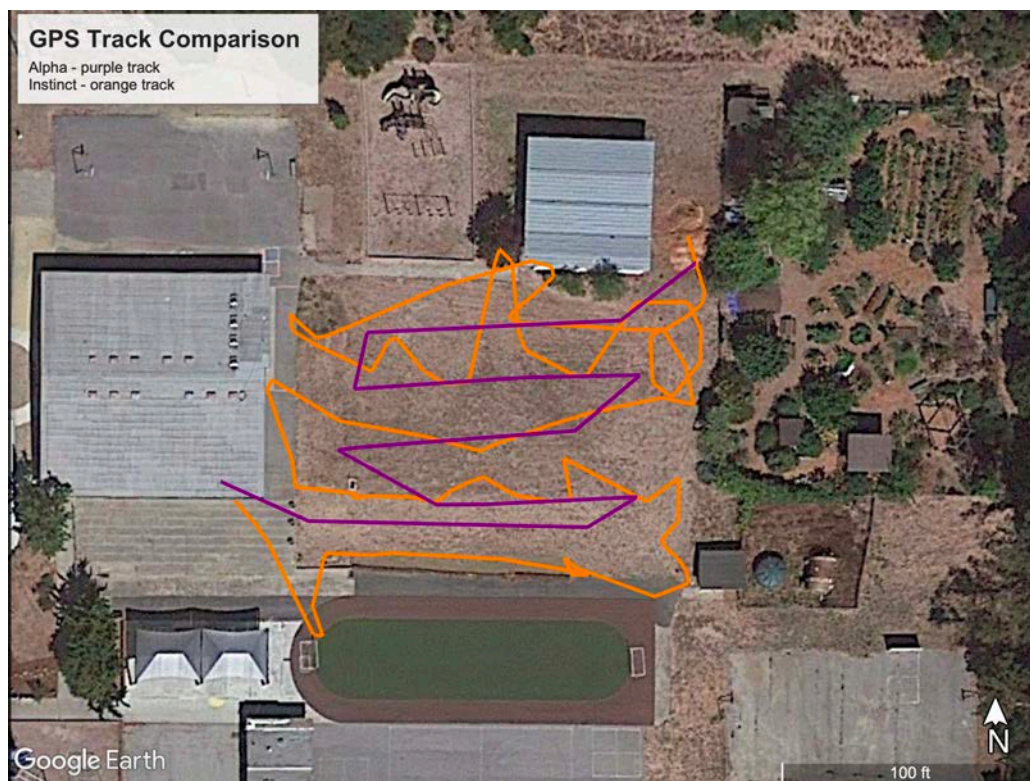
ICF uses consumer grade GPS devices to record dog tracks, as well as waypoint / alerts. In the table below, you will find some of the GPSs ICF uses and examples of their respective accuracy measured in specific conditions. The Precision Open Field is measured to 95% certainty over a 24-hour period with sky unobstructed / no overhead vegetation. Precision will be worse with overhead vegetation. This data is provided for illustrative purposes and will vary depending on field conditions.

Clients that need higher accuracy for waypoints should measure the location of dog alerts (pin flags) themselves. Please contact us if higher accuracy dog tracks are required.

GPS	Sample Waypoint Precision, Open Field	Sample Dog Track Precision, Open Field
UBlox ZED-F9P (RTK Surveyor)	0.9m	
Garmin Instinct Solar Watch	1.5m	1.5m
Garmin Alpha 200i (handheld)	3.5m	
Garmin Alpha & TT 15 collar		6.1m

### Quantization Error

Some GPS's only allow / record certain positions, and so those tracks only *approximate* where a dog has been (i.e. snap-to-grid.) In the case of the Garmin 200i + TT 15, this introduces a 2.4-meter quantization error in the two-dimensional position. The figure below compares the tracks of the same dog wearing both an Instinct Solar's (orange track) and the Alpha 200i + TT 15 collar (purple track).



## Assessing Canine Detection Effectiveness and Limitations

The ICF canine accuracy at finding graves has been measured in only a few unmarked historic cemeteries. In these measurements, the position of the canine alerts is compared to the position of the center of the grave. Results show that the standard deviation of the canine alert position is generally less than 4 meters as compared to geophysical positions taken at the grave. No excavation was done at any of these graves, but location was determined by geophysical means such as GPR. These same tests also showed that the dogs cannot accurately discriminate between burials immediately adjacent to each other. Lack of alert indicates that the scent is below the dog's threshold of detection; it does not, however, mean that an ancient burial is not present, only that it cannot be detected. In all remote sensing techniques, the data is subject to interpretation and there is a potential for false positives or negatives. As such, all remote sensing techniques require ground truthing and controlled studies to be carried out that assess what variables effect efficacy. Most of our work involves Native burials that are usually avoided or reburied. (see *References* for more details)

## References

For more information on the Institute for Canine Forensics, including published papers, past projects, clients, and testimonials go to our web page at [www.ICFK9.org](http://www.ICFK9.org)

# **Ground Penetrating Radar Survey**

Jackson Ranch Church Property located at 904 W Doffing Road, San Juan, Texas 78589

Surveyed on July 18, 2022 and October 27, 2022

by Roland Silva

Geophysical prospecting is a form of remote sensing that gathers information without physical contact. It is non-invasive, making it perfect for sites where preservation is a priority. In archaeological contexts, this refers to ground-based subsurface surveying (Espino, Van Dam and Brown 2013:108). Human activities from the past affected the magnetic and electrical properties of the soils. By measuring the magnetic fields or the electrical resistivity of the soils, this information can be documented as specific “anomalies” in maps, giving us an idea of what life used to be like. The technique used in this report, ground-penetrating radar (GPR), builds site information in specific forms of data referred to as “slices.” If these “slices” are stacked on top of each other, we can turn this information into a cross-section of the subsurface. The results are difficult to interpret unless combined with terrestrial maps, the historic record, or a geographic information system (GIS) for depth and contrast (Weymouth 1986:388-389).

## **Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR)**

Success with GPR surveys varies depending on soil and sediment mineralogy, clay content, ground moisture, depth of targets, and surficial features. Discontinuities occur where there are changes in the electrical and magnetic properties within the ground. Specific features in the ground generate “point reflections” as hyperbolas in two-dimensional cross-sections, or “radargram” profiles. The strength of the radar waves is determined by the frequency of the antenna used. The standard bandwidth runs from around 10 megahertz (MHz) to 2 gigahertz (GHz).

Ground-penetrating radar utilizes the emission of electromagnetic radar pulses into the ground, measuring the time elapsed between the transmission, reflection, and refraction of the radar waves back to the antenna (Conyers and Goodman 1997:23 cited in Espino, Van Dam and Brown 2013:118). There are three types of profile displays of GPR data: 1) a one-dimensional trace, 2) a two-dimensional cross section, or “radargram” built of stacked “slices” and 3) a three-dimensional display. This report uses the GSSI model SIR-3000 unit with a 400mHz antenna. For our report we have selected the two-dimensional cross-section, or “radargram” and 3-dimensional to record our reflection data for observation and analysis.

### Site Analysis

For our site inspections we divided the areas into Four total squares using metal pins and tape measures. Four squares (A1, A2, A3, A4) were placed at the Jackson Church location (Figure 1).

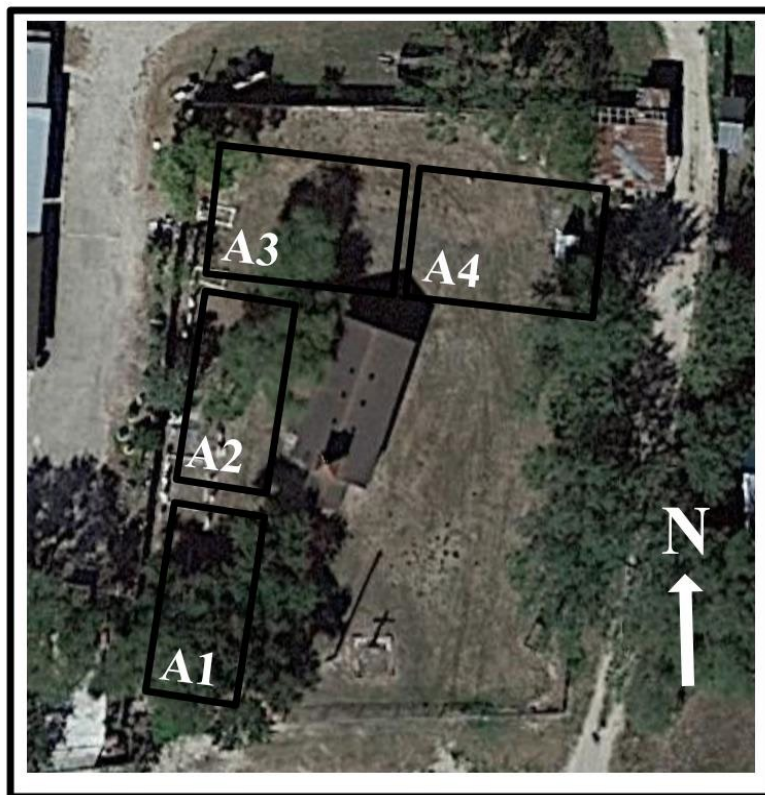


Figure 1. Jackson Church

Due to the nature of the soils in the Rio Grande Valley, the GPR machine may at times have difficulty displaying data. This issue is due to the relatively poor conductivity of the soils. The scans have been filtered and highlighted to the best of our abilities to outline key features in the profiles. The following descriptions and figures represent our findings.

### Area 1

The first area we scanned for this survey was located at the southwestern corner of the property, abutting the chain-link fence and following northwards along the recorded burials located next to the western wooden fence line. The area was measured out at 3.7m X 12.5m approximately, totaling 11 scans spaced half a meter apart and beginning at the southeast corner of A1 – proceeding in a crisscross pattern traversing to the opposite side of the square. All radar reflections recorded in the A1 profiles were surmised to belong to established burials and tree root systems. Figure A1 displays three selected profiles for description. In the first seven meters of the profiles, many reflections are present and located at nearly the same distances within the profiles, providing supporting evidence in the subsurface for each respective confirmed burial within the row.

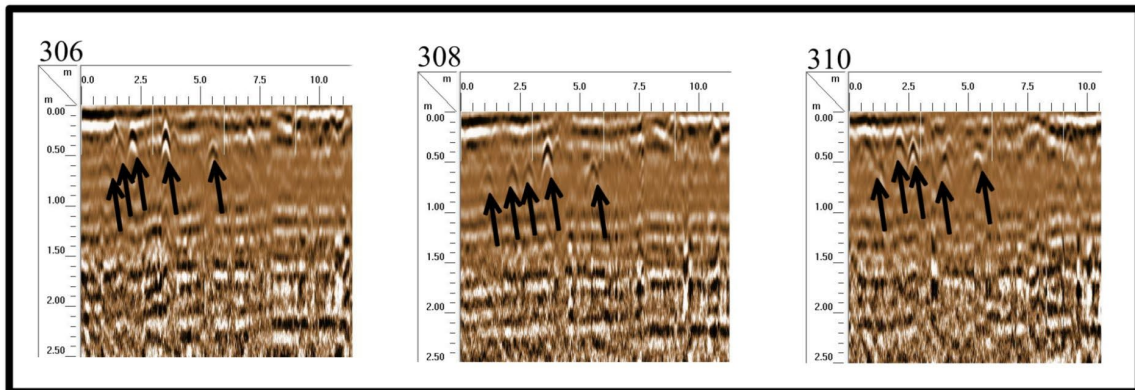


Figure A1. Selected GPR scan profiles from Area 1. Black arrows indicate anomalous reflections from established burials.

## Area 2

The second scan zone (A2) was directly north of A1, essentially an extension of the dimensions in A1, moving towards the “back” of the site. A2 was measured out to 4.5m X 17.07m, comprising 11 scans in total and spaced half a meter apart like A1. The scanning commenced in the southeast corner of the square grid and moved in crisscrossing transects to the other side of A2. In the latter half of the distance scale in the three profiles provided below (Figure A2), the black arrows indicate reflections from more established burials. Due to the faint reflection information in this area, only the reflections with a pattern through the profiles are outlined. As A2 is solidly ensconced within the family records, this area was scanned for the sake of having a complete set of site data and to test the functionality of our equipment at this locale.

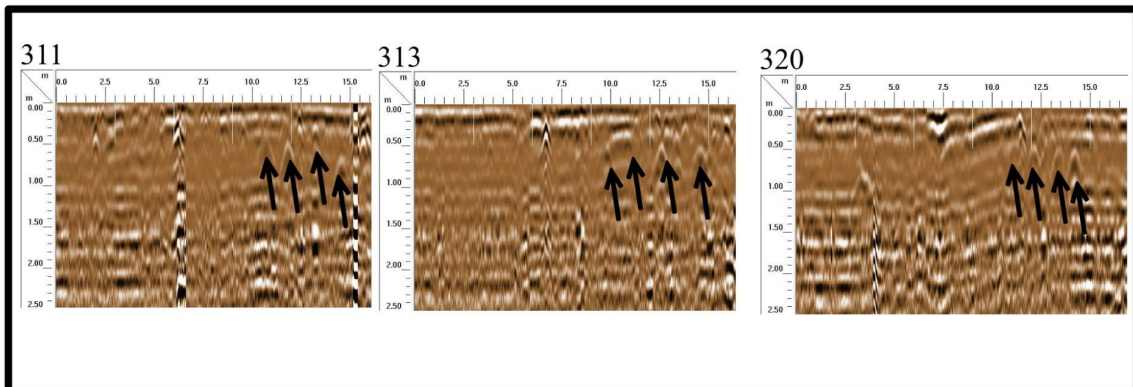


Figure A2. Selected GPR scan profiles from Area 2. Black arrows indicate anomalous reflections from established burials.

## Area 3

Our third scan zone is located north again of Area 2 and splits the empty field behind the church into two halves, with Area 3 filling the western half of the field. A3 begins north of the church in the middle of the field, with our radar work starting on the southeast corner of our grid and proceeding northwest to the other side of the yard for a total of 18 profiles. Area 3 was our first region where the anomalous reflections were from unaccounted-for features within the

subsurface (Figure A3). This area is bare of any burials save a veteran’s marker in the northwest corner of the square. It was surmised that these reflections could be due to a network of burrowed tunnels from small animals, or from the remains of a “stage” for gatherings that may have been constructed then later demolished. While there is a chance that it may be an unmarked burial, the location of the field relative to the cemetery “row” suggests that this area was not used to inter people, indicated further by cement blocks or plates that were observable from the surface, possibly left over from what was once a structure.

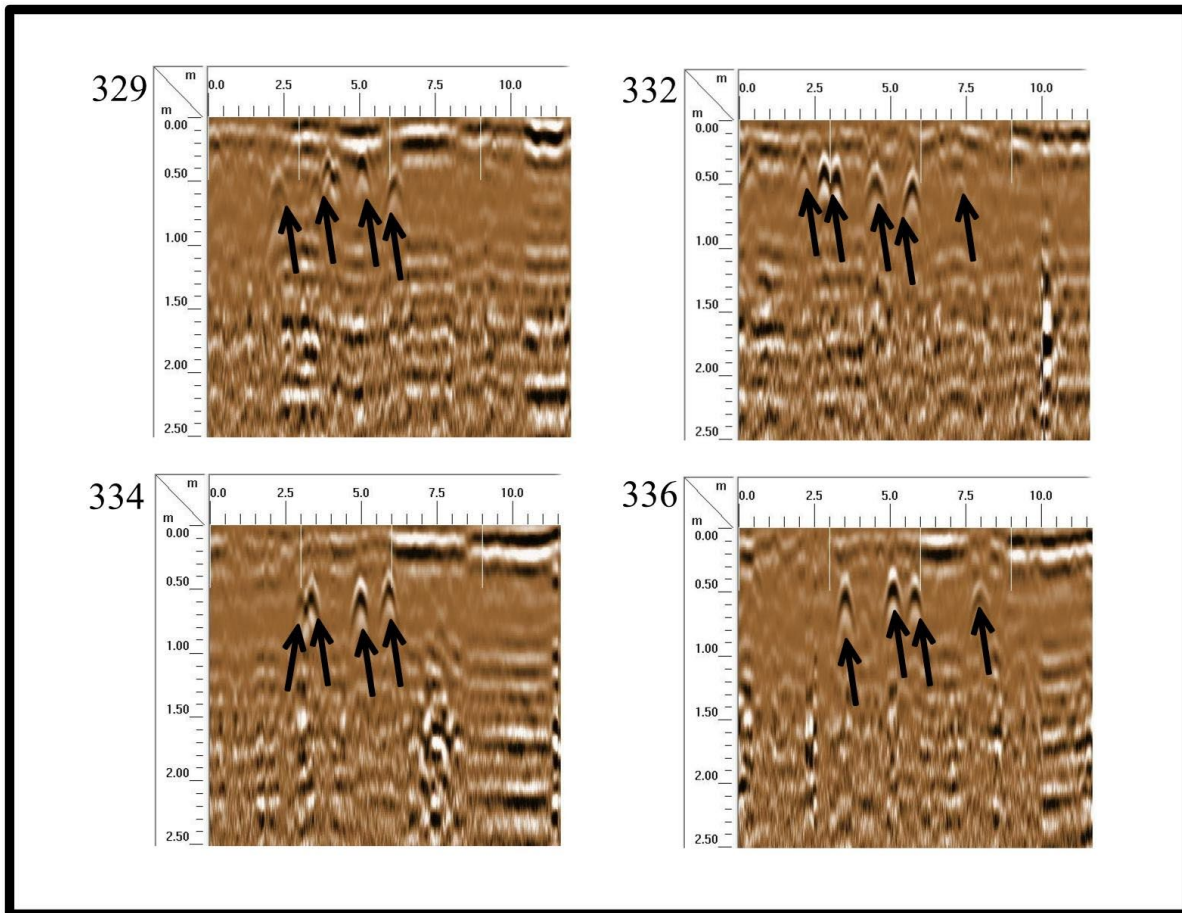


Figure A3. Selected GPR scan profiles from Area 3. Black arrows indicate anomalous reflections from unknown objects.

## Area 4

Our last grid square at the Church Site covers the eastern half of the empty field directly north of the church. This area measures 13.1m x 15.8m with a total of 18 radargrams recorded. There are several large features in this area that appear to have blocked or interfered with our signal (Figure A4). One is a large, cemented platform, possibly from a septic tank or the foundation of a shed at one point, located in the northeast corner of the property. Another feature is a short, squat, stone burial marker that sits alone in the area directly to the southwest of the cemented platform. The last two possible signs of interference on our profiles may come from buried utility lines or once again, “prairie holes” from small wild animals in the area.

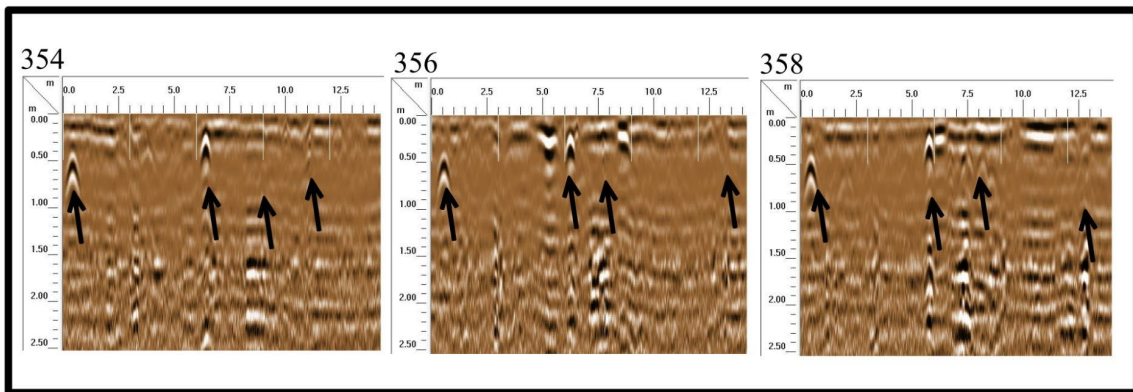


Figure A4. Selected GPR scan profiles from Area 4. Black arrows indicate anomalous reflections from unknown features.

## Concluding Statement

While we are unable to “ground truth” our radar scans, we have historic records and information provided by the caretakers of these properties to give a rough estimation of the presence of several possible unknown reflections. These may represent a number of features in the soils unrelated to human burials, however—it is also just as likely to contain exactly that due to the context of the locations. A primary novelty of ground-penetrating radar is its non-invasive nature. While we are able to affect a survey while preserving site integrity, without excavation

we must rely on other sources of information and even other methods of survey to corroborate our findings. As such, this method of survey works best in tandem with other techniques. Our initial results have shown promise for further studies in the future.

NOTE: The results yielded from the GPR survey did not show evidence of anomalous items underground that would indicate any human remains were buried through the sections scanned that were not already identified with a headstone or marker. The ground-penetrating radar survey was conducted in the summer of 2022, a few months prior to the arrival of the canine forensic team. The GPR was not run over the spots where the dogs later detected the scent of human remains as there were some metal posts at the rear of the church property that would have interfered with the radar function of the GPR machine. Based on the oral testimonies and the results yielded by the canine forensic team, perhaps we could revisit the site with the ground-penetrating radar equipment to perform another survey. Negative evidence is powerful. We scanned the sections of the property as indicated in this section of the report and are confident that there is nothing out of the ordinary in those locations.

### **Part III**

TEKS-aligned lesson plans for K-12 Education  
Juan Carmona – Donna ISD  
Roberto De La Rosa – Edinburg ISD

Hidalgo County high school teachers Juan Carmona and Roberto De La Rosa were asked to describe what inspired them as they developed the lesson plans for this project. Maintaining the methods of place- and community-based learning in mind, what outcomes do they expect when implementing these lesson plans in their classrooms? Here are the responses from these wonderful educators regarding this topic:

*My goal is to get students engaged in the history of the Rio Grande Valley and then recognize that their history is not just a local history but is a valuable part of our national history. I want my students to know that their community played a major role in a historical event. This will encourage the students to study history and learn more about their community. These plans will be used in Texas History and US History survey courses where the students learn about the Underground Railroad. As the students pay more attention to the local history, they will pay more attention in class and their test scores will improve. This will happen because lesson plans such as this one helps the students realize that this community has very rich traditions and this history inspires the students to want to learn more.*

*Juan Carmona*

*Mexican American Studies and US History, Donna High School, Donna, TX*

*Integrating a local consciousness in a global world recenters students' perspectives of themselves and the places they are from. The ability to see the past allows a reflection for learning and understanding that enhances a student's self-image and appreciation of where they are from. Histories such as the experience of the Jackson family remind us that borderlands have historically been a place of hope and refuge for freedom seekers. It is empowering, and inspiring a new narrative on racial diversity that builds a bridge directly over attitudes of intolerance and prejudice. Oftentimes we consider South Texas to be a location of racial singularity, however, it has been a site of aspiration for many different people from many different places across multitudes of historical eras. Place based learning coalesces a humanity connected to a space so that they are aware of how they will shape the realities of its future. This motivates and challenges students to construct possibilities from a deeper starting point than they were aware of - to heights that they may have never imagined before.*

*Roberto De La Rosa*

*World Geography and AP Human Geography, Robert Vela High School, Edinburg, TX*

### Jackson Family activity Instructions

The following activity is designed to be used as daily Bell Ringers with a final essay which can be completed in about 30 min. The essay should be followed with the class sharing their diary entry with a discussion to follow.

#### Possible Discussion Questions:

1. What role did Mexico play in the events around slavery in the United States?
2. What would you do if you were the Jacksons, why?

TEKS: 1A, 6B, 7BC, 8B, 10BC, 11A

### Introduction Part I

#### Background

#### Fugitive Slave Act

**\$150 REWARD**

**RANAWAY** from the subscriber, on the night of the 2d instant, a negro man, who calls himself *Henry May*, about 22 years old, 5 feet 6 or 8 inches high, ordinary color, rather chunky built, bushy head, and has it divided mostly on one side, and keeps it very nicely combed; has been raised in the house, and is a first rate dining-room servant, and was in a tavern in Louisville for 18 months. I expect he is now in Louisville trying to make his escape to a free state, (in all probability to Cincinnati, Ohio). Perhaps he may try to get employment on a steamboat. He is a good cook, and is handy in any capacity as a house servant. Had on when he left, a dark cassinet coat, and dark striped cassinet pantaloons, new--he had other clothing. I will give \$50 reward if taken in Louisville; 100 dollars if taken one hundred miles from Louisville in this State, and 150 dollars if taken out of this State, and delivered to me, or secured in any jail so that I can get him again.

WILLIAM BURKE.  
Bardstovn, Ky., September 3d, 1838.

**\$200 Reward!**

**Ranaway from the subscriber**, living in Saline county, on the 4th inst., two Negromen, named Jim and Jack--each aged about 25 years.

**Jim**  
is dish-faced; has sore eyes and bad teeth; is of a light black or brown color; speaks quick, is about 5 feet 7 inches high; had on when last seen, blue cotton pants, white shirt, white fullered coat and new custom-made boots.

**Jack**  
had on the same kind of clothing with shoes, has a very small foot, wears perhaps a No. 0 shoe, and has heavy tracks in the heels; is about the same height and color of Jim. They are doubtless aiming for K. T.

**A reward of \$100 each will be given** if taken outside of the State, or \$200 each if taken in the State, outside of Saline county.

C. D. WILLIAMS,  
Spring Garden, P. O., Pettis county, Missouri.  
Harrisonville, Mo., June 7th, 1860.

The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 allowed for Southerners to enter into Northern states and retrieve their slaves. This Act would lead to episodes of Southerners “kidnapping” free African Americans and selling them into slavery. As you can see in the advertisements above you could also make large sums of money by collecting rewards for returning slaves to their owners.

**Journal Entry:** Imagine you are a white man married to an African American woman (former slave) write your thoughts about the Fugitive Slaves Act and any actions you might feel you have to take.

## Introduction Part II

### Background

#### Mexico and Vicente Guerrero

- Population of Mexico in 1810
- Native American (3,676,281) 60%
- Creoles (1,092,397) 18% (full blood Spaniards born in Mexico)
- Mestizos (704,245) 11% (Mix of Spaniard and Native)
- Mulattoes (624,461) 10% (Mix of Spanish and African)
- Peninsulares (15,000) .3 (full blooded Spaniard born in Spain)
- Africans (10,000) .2%

Mexico gained its independence from Spain on August 24, 1821. The people of Mexico would be eternally grateful to many heroic figures who helped accomplish this feat, especially Vicente Guerrero. Guerrero was an Afro-Mexican soldier who served during the Mexican War for Independence and worked his way into becoming Mexico's second president. During his presidency, he greatly advocated and achieved the abolition of slavery in 1829. This came after his help on the making of the *Plan de Iguala* which granted freedom and citizenship to any individual living in Mexico, regardless of their ethnic background. This effectively granted freedom to any African who made onto Mexican Soil.

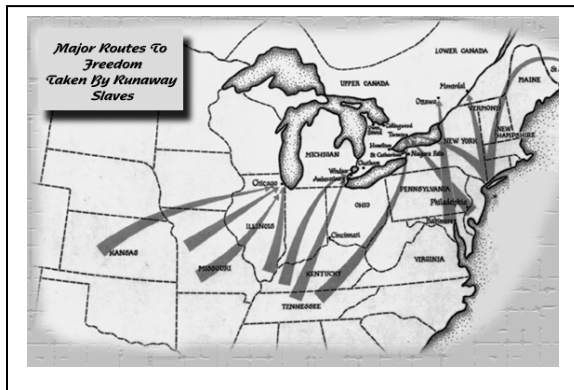
#### Questions:

1. What do you think drove Mexico and specifically Vicente Guerrero to abolish slavery?
2. What does the abolishment of slavery say about Mexico?

### Introduction Part III

### Background

## The Underground Railroad



The Underground Railroad was not an actual railroad was not an actual railroad but a series of routes which took you to safe houses as you made your way up the northern states. One of the most famous “Conductors” (guides) was Harriet Tubman.

Questions:

1. What impact would the Fugitive Slave Act have upon the Underground Railroad?
2. As an African American woman, would Harriet Tubman being at an advantage or disadvantage as conductor on the Underground Railroad?

## **Jackson Family**

Nathaniel Jackson was born in Wilkes County, Georgia in 1798 to Joseph and Mary (Burke) Jackson. On March 27, 1804, a four-year-old female named ‘Tilley’ (Matilda) was purchased as a slave by Joseph Jackson. Nathaniel and Matilda grew up together as children on Nathaniel’s father’s farm. Around the time of the War of 1812, many members of the Jackson Family moved west to Mississippi Territory that today is the US state of Alabama. By 1814, Nathaniel’s father had remarried and as the family grew, they lived in the counties known today as Clarke and Wilcox Counties. By 1829, Nathaniel and Matilda began to have children together. They lived on Nathaniel’s property in Wilcox County, Alabama but are only noted in the 1830 US Census records with a check mark under ‘slaves’ on his property. By 1840, Nathaniel and Matilda had seven children together. In 1850, the United States government reenacted the “Fugitive Slave Act” which called for citizens to assist in the apprehension of runaway slaves in an effort to return these people to their owners. Tensions grew even further when the Dred Scott Decision was decided by the US Supreme Court in 1857 which allowed slave owners to bring their slaves as property over state lines into ‘free’ states within the US union. As tensions were mounting in US southern states and laws were passed in surrounding states such as Louisiana prohibiting the emancipation of slaves, the Jackson family (and extended family members, children, and grandchildren) left Wilcox County, Alabama and headed for Mexico. They arrived at the US-Mexico international border along the banks of the Rio Grande in Hidalgo County in 1857 and decided to settle on the US side of the border. Nathaniel Jackson bought 5,535 acres of land in San Juan, Texas and started a community that included a Methodist church. Members of this family still live in the region today.

### **Questions:**

1. What about Nathaniel Jackson would help to explain why he would partner with an African American woman and former slave?
2. Why do you think Nathaniel Jackson would buy land along the border?
3. What does the Jackson family story tell you about other families in the region?

### **Final Essay**

In 1861 the United States entered the Civil War and Texas would join the Confederacy. Pretend you are Nathaniel Jackson, write a diary entry in which you describe your reaction to Texas joining the Confederacy and what steps you are going to take to protect your family.

## **World Geography Lesson Plan**

### **Materials:**

#### [The Legacy of the Underground Railroad in Texas:](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAByeTZto5U&t=48s>

#### [Stopping the Wall:](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOy1mJZCQcw>

#### [Uncovering the Underground Railroad:](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYlnf55pOqI>

#### [A Forgotten Part of History:](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CzcDGc2xf5o>

[Civil War Trail Historical Marker:](https://www.utrgv.edu/civilwar-trail/civil-war-trail/hidalgo-county/jackson-ranch/index.htm?fbclid=IwAR2WPWkPGm7vsuf5JE5CZdiyRkxzZoilhTA62M2I0AIpoSETNKAFQxdkjSo) <https://www.utrgv.edu/civilwar-trail/civil-war-trail/hidalgo-county/jackson-ranch/index.htm?fbclid=IwAR2WPWkPGm7vsuf5JE5CZdiyRkxzZoilhTA62M2I0AIpoSETNKAFQxdkjSo>

### **TEKS:**

WG.7(B) explain how physical geography and push and pull forces, including political, economic, social, and environmental conditions, affect the routes and flows of human migration

WG.2(A) describe the human and physical characteristics of the same regions at different periods of time to analyze relationships between past events and current conditions

WG.5(A) analyze how the character of a place is related to its political, economic, social, and cultural elements

WG.18(A) analyze cultural changes in specific regions caused by migration, war, trade, innovations, and diffusion

WG.16(A) describe distinctive cultural patterns and landscapes associated with different places in Texas, the United States, and other regions of the world and how these patterns influenced the processes of innovation and diffusion

WG.17(D) evaluate the experiences and contributions of diverse groups to multicultural societies

## **Lesson Objective(s):**

1. TLW consider the role of South Texas in the Underground Railroad for freed slaves.
2. TLW understand how ethnic diversity of South Texas has been influenced by migration of different ethnic groups throughout different historical eras.
3. TLW investigate how the historically significant land is being compromised by the construction of the border wall.

## **Differentiation Strategies:**

Technology Integration: Students will utilize technology to investigate the history of the Jackson family and their role in expanding the Underground railroad to South Texas.

Language Support: Students will participate in class or small group discussion about their knowledge of racial diversity in South Texas.

Higher Order Skills: Students will reflect on the impact of cultural convergence during the time of the civil war era in South Texas and its implications on contemporary diversity and multiculturalism.

## **Engagement:**

**Objective:** Students will discover the racial diversity that makes up South Texas as a culture region. Students will understand the historical significance of the region within the context of struggles of freedom, justice, and equality.

**Activity:** Place Collage - have students with words, numbers, or images create a collage of their perspective of South Texas. This could be done on a sheet of paper, Doc, or Slide.

## **Discussion Questions/Journal Entries:**

Describe racial and ethnic diversity in South Texas?

What are groups that have influenced the cultural identity of our region?

How has South Texas been a place that provides opportunities for freedom and equality in spite of oppression and prejudice that may exist outside of our region?

What makes South Texas unique as a location to be situated as a site of resistance against injustice and inequality?

## **Exploration:**

**Objective:** Students will watch YouTube clips to engage in a virtual field trip to the Jackson family property to visualize the site and locational features that enabled routes to freedom for African Americans in South Texas.

Students can physically visit the historical marker designated by the State of Texas, the first Protestant church built in the Rio Grande Valley, and the cemetery to experience the few remaining physical artifacts of African American settlements of South Texas.

**Activity:** Using the images shown throughout the videos, have students draw the path of the Jackson family from Alabama to South Texas. To enhance activity, have students include drawings of images they recall from the video.

## **Discussion Questions/Journal Entries:**

Who was Nathaniel Jackson?

How did his relationship with Matilda Hicks change his perspective on slavery?

What were the physical characteristics of South Texas that made this a desirable region for the Jackson's to settle?

What is the significance of the border to the African Americans seeking freedom and safety?

## **Explanation:**

**Objective:** Students will explain causes of migration and location features that pull the Jackson family from Alabama to South Texas. Students will also explain the legacy and impact of this biracial family to the contemporary racial and ethnic composition of South Texas.

**Activity:** Create a Vocabulary Chart of terms (terms, definitions, pictures, sentences) that have been introduced throughout the lesson. Including but not limited to: human rights, settlement patterns, migration, push factors, pull factors, physical borders, national boundaries, race, multiculturalism

### **Discussion Questions/Journal Entries:**

What are the push factors that caused the Jackson family to move from Alabama?

What pull factors encouraged the Jackson family to settle in the borderland of South Texas?

What is multiculturalism?

How has South Texas experienced diversity in different eras of history?

What influences diversity in South Texas today, are there any connections to the past?

What value does the narrative of the Jackson family have on understanding local history and the racial identity of South Texas?

Why is it necessary to preserve historical locations such as the Jackson church and cemetery?

### **Elaboration:**

**Objective:** Students will engage in an exploration of the history of South Texas in the context of racial struggles for freedom and make comparisons to contemporary fights for equality.

Students will research the current threats that seek to deny access to the historical and sacred land of the Jackson family by the construction of the border wall.

Students will compare the open border and pathways to freedom, and the purpose of the border wall and contemporary migration into the United States.

**Activity:** Create a comparison chart showing the cause for migration from Alabama to South Texas during the 1860s to the present flow of migration to South Texas from other countries. Write a reflection essay that explains the historical and contemporary significance of the borderlands of South Texas.

**Reflection:** Students can apply this knowledge to have a deeper understanding of the historical significance of the South Texas border region in the context of racial equality and justice. Students will also make connections to efforts of solidarity in racial equality between Mexican and African Americans. Students will recognize the political complexities of maintaining access to this historical and sacred land in the context of the border wall construction.

### **Evaluation:**

**Objective:** Students will participate in class and small group discussions based on comparing the struggle for equality and freedom during the Reconstruction Era and contemporary society in the United States. Students will share ideas and writings from their comparison charts or reflection essays.

**Activity:** Students will write letters to elected officials declaring the historical and cultural significance of the Jackson family property in the context of the construction of the border wall.

Students will design public awareness posters displaying the historical significance of cultural diversity in South Texas and connections to contemporary protests of racial equality in the United States.

Lesson 3 – Developed by Bobby De La Rosa

Edinburg Vela High School – AP Human Geography

## **AP Human Geography Lesson Plan**

### **Lesson Objective(s):**

The following lesson is designed to build geographic perspective about the concepts of place, migration, diffusion of culture, and territoriality. Students will be introduced to the story of the Jackson family’s migration from Alabama to Texas and the contemporary challenges that the land currently faces. Students will develop writing skills by answering Free Response Questions and enhance AP skills by completing extension activities.

### **Materials:**

The Legacy of the Underground Railroad in Texas:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAByeTZto5U&t=48s>

Stopping the Wall:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOy1mJZCQcw>

Uncovering the Underground Railroad:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYlnf55pOqI>

A Forgotten Part of History:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CzcDGc2xf5o>

Civil War Trail Historical Marker: <https://www.utrgv.edu/civilwar-trail/civil-war-trail/hidalgo-county/jackson-ranch/index.htm?fbclid=IwAR2WPWkPGm7vsuf5JE5CZdiyRkxzZoilhTA62M2I0AIpoSETNKAFQxdkjSo>

### **AP Human Geography Units and Topics:**

1.2 Geographic Data

1.4 Spatial Concepts

2.10 Causes of Migration

2.11 Forced and Voluntary Migration

2.12 Effects of Migration

4.3 Political Power and Territoriality

4.5 Function of Political Boundaries

5.2 Settlement Patterns and Survey Methods

## **AP Human Geography Essential Knowledge Vocabulary**

Unit 1: Place

Unit 1: Qualitative Data

Unit 1: Census

Unit 2: Forced Migration

Unit 2: Internal [Interregional] Migration

Unit 2: Push Factors

Unit 2: Pull Factors

Unit 3: Diffusion of Religion

Unit 3: Stimulus Diffusion

Unit 3: Language

Unit 3: Ethnicity

Unit 4: Political Borders

Unit 4: Centripetal Force

Unit 4: Territoriality

Unit 5: Long Lot Survey Method

Unit 5: Subsistence Farming

## **AP Human Geography Free Response Writing Topics**

The Legacy of the Underground Railroad in Texas:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAByeTZto5U&t=48s>

1. Describe the place characteristics of South Texas. Identify the physical and human characteristics.
2. After you have learned about the history of the Jackson family, how does your perception change of the human characteristics of South Texas?
3. Describe the function of the South Texas border, how did the Jackson family use the borderlands to escape racial oppression?

4. Use the concept of centripetal force to describe the secession of Texas and the concept of centrifugal force to explain the alignment of Texas to the confederacy.
5. Describe how the collection of data enabled the history of the Jackson family to become discovered by historians today? What type of quantitative and qualitative data was present in the videos?
6. Explain how the use of long lot survey methods allowed the Jackson family access to a pathway to Mexico.
7. Describe how the establishment of the first Spanish speaking Methodist Church is an example of stimulus diffusion.
8. How are ethnicity and language expressed in the story of the Jackson family migration from Alabama to South Texas?

### **Stopping the Wall:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOy1mJZCQcw>

9. Explain how the concept of territoriality is at the root of the contemporary conflict imposed by the construction of the border wall near the property of the Jackson family.
10. How does the border function in contemporary South Texas for people who are being pushed out of their countries of origin?

### **AP Human Geography Skill Strategies and Extension Activities**

Data Analysis:

Research Census Data from Hidalgo County across a variety of time periods to track racial and ethnic distribution. Display results in a data chart.

**Map Analysis:**

Create the route the Jackson family took from Alabama to Texas on a map. Consider their method of transportation and the length of their journey. How would a family migrate today? How does this help explain the concept of time space compression and relative distance?

**Visual Analysis:**

Research pictures of the Jackson family, Jackson family church, Long Long Surveys of South Texas, the planned construction of the Border Wall and create a photo collage to explain the significance of the South Texas region as being a site of political freedom.

**Source Analysis:**

Identify the sources of information presented in the videos. Where did the data come from? Make a list of sources of the data, maps, and pictures that were presented and explain the impact that these sources have on the historical accuracy and historical significance of the Jackson family's migration.

**Content Analysis:**

Make a list of 15-20 AP Human Geography vocabulary terms that are expressed through the videos and content. Write a sentence that explains the definition and uses the Jackson family history as an example of AP Human Geography concepts.