



# TARRANT COUNTY

## TXGENWEB

Barbara Knox and Rob Yoder, County Coordinators

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## Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

### Martin Francis Brown

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Martin Francis Brown was born in Benton County, Arkansas on October 23, 1847. He served in a Confederate Arkansas cavalry unit commanded by his father. After his father's death in the service, he came to Texas with his widowed mother and siblings in the 1870's. He spent many years in Tarrant County and Young County before finally moving to Denton County about 1910, where he died and lies buried.

Luckily for researchers, one of Martin's sons, Judge Jesse M. Brown, became very prominent in the legal community in Tarrant County and in 1976, when in his nineties, wrote a story of his life: [A Judge Looks at Life](#). It contains some interesting insights into Martin's Brown's life here in Texas before 1900.

Martin F. Brown was a son of William Martin "Buck" Brown (1822-1865) and his wife, Elizabeth Ann Burgess. Martin's grandfathers were Hezekiah Brown and Richard Burgess (1782-1861), both of whom lived for several years in Bedford County, Tennessee before finally settling in the northwest corner of Arkansas. William Martin Brown lies buried with a readable headstone in Thornsberry Cemetery near Springdale in Washington County, Arkansas. William Martin Brown and his brother, Thomas, were both Arkansas cavalymen during the War. William died while in the Confederate service.

When the 1850 census was taken, Martin F. Brown was a four-year-old boy living with his parents and siblings in Mars Hill Township of Washington County, Arkansas. Martin's father, William M. Brown, did not own any slaves in 1850.

Ten years later, in 1860, the family is found in the census of Elm Spring Township, Washington County, Arkansas. Martin was fourteen years old and one of seven children in his father's family. Their next-door neighbors were Mr. and Mrs. Hezekiah Brown, Martin's grandparents. Hezekiah

Brown worked as a miller, while William M. Martin was a farmer who owned no slaves. Martin's father died in 1865 while in the Confederate service.

We have not been able to locate Mrs. Brown and her children in the census of 1870. It may be that they were in the process of moving from Arkansas to Texas and missed the census enumerators at both ends of the trip. Left without a husband, Mrs. Brown and the children decided to move to Texas. In addition to the family, two black women, named Maria and Martha, came with them. Jesse M. Brown described the family's immigration to Texas, along with the two: ***"...Maria and Martha, who did not want to be free if it meant separation from Grandmother's family, [when] she came to Texas. She stopped one year in Lamar County near Paris, and another year near Marlin in Falls County, and then came to Tarrant County in the year 1873. She purchased 160 acres immediately north and across the highway from Bell Aircraft Company at Hurst, from Wiley Callaway for \$10.00 per acre. Almost all of it is now covered with houses. Grandmother built a house for Maria and Martha, the two Negro women who came to Texas with her, and they lived with her until their death. They helped all the families in case of illness. Two sons of Grandmother's lived on the farm with her. Her daughter and my father settled near her...My father and mother married shortly before leaving Arkansas. Her [my mother's] name was Mary Brooks Covey..."*** Mrs. Elizabeth Brown died there February 4, 1907. Her headstone in Bedford Cemetery shows her date of birth as March 8, 1824.

Martin F. Brown's son wrote that his parents were married shortly before they left Arkansas. Mr. Brown's wife was Mary Brooks Covey, who was born December 31, 1841. She died in Young County, Texas on April 15, 1895, and was buried in Farmer Cemetery in Farmer, Young County, Texas. She has a readable headstone there. Family sources at Ancestry.com say she was born in Benton County, Arkansas, and was a daughter of Welcome Boy Covey (1813-1880) and his wife, Martha J. Proby (1818-1855), both of whom died in Benton County. Mr. Covey was Benton County Coroner in 1848-1850. He was also a preacher in the Christian church.

At the time the 1880 census was taken, Martin Brown was living in the Bedford-Hurst area of Tarrant County. With him were his wife, Mary B. Brown, and six of their children: Alice (13), James H. (10), Charles W. (9), William F. (6), Oliver H. (4), and Mattie M. (2). Martin's mother and some of his siblings appear in other households on the same page of the census. The census clearly says Alice was born in Texas, James H. Brown was born in Arkansas, and the rest of the children were born in Texas.

An insight into Martin's life here may be found in the information recorded in the 1880 agricultural census. Martin had twenty-five acres under cultivation, and five acres in post oak woods. His farm buildings were worth six hundred dollars, his farming implements were worth thirty dollars, and his livestock was valued at two hundred eighty dollars.

He estimated all his farm productions in the past year were worth four hundred twenty-five dollars. He owned two horses, eight milk cows, and eighteen other cattle of various classes. Four calves had been born on his place in the past year, and he had purchased an additional six. He estimated the family had produced one hundred pounds of butter in 1879. He owned ten hogs and fifty-three barnyard fowl. He guessed that his chickens had produced three hundred dozen eggs in the past year.

Judge Brown continued: *“...My father’s and mother’s home where I was born [sat] on a tract of land fronting south on what is now known as “Pipe Line Road” running east and west, and it is now bisected by what is known as “Browns Trail,” so named I am sure because so many of our family lived on it or near it. Our first house, in which I was born, was a two-story affair. The ground, or first story, was of log structure; the second story was of lumber. The upstairs was not ceiled. The rafters and shingles were above us. When it rained it made sleeping all the more enjoyable with the patter of rain drops immediately overhead on the shingle roof. This house faced north on the road running east and west in front of the house. Later, we had a new, much larger house across the road. It fronted south on the road...”*

*“...In the summer of 1889, my mother and father and my sister and I went to Young County to visit my father’s sister, my aunt Mollie Brazelton and family. We were poor, and so were they, but their kids were just as healthy and rosy-cheeked as I ever saw any one. They were never sick except for a cold now and then. My mother never let up or ceased trying to persuade my father to move to Young County, and in June, 1890, we did move there; a whole new life was opening up for me...”*

*“...When we moved to Young County we rented an old farm place known locally as the Manderville place, but that family either lost it or abandoned it, and it had lain idle for a year or so. The fences were down, the house was a wreck and there was no water on the place. About a mile away there was a dirt tank, covering about two acres. It was built by the men of the community by building a dam across a creek, and the land was a section of Public School Lands, belonging to the state of Texas, and the tank was known as the ‘Public Tank.’ On our way out to Young County my father stopped at Weatherford and bought an empty whiskey barrel, only as it turned out, it was not quite empty. The idea was to char the inside of the barrel by dropping lighted matches through a slot or opening made in the side of the barrel, so as to eliminate the whiskey taste of the water. My father and a neighbor, Mr. Daily, who wore a full long beard, were doing the burning of the inside of the barrel. They would drop a lighted match through the opening, and the wood soaked with whiskey would burn about a minute and go out. They repeated this several times and then Mr. Daily stuck his face down over the opening to see how much of the barrel had been charred. Immediately after he had taken his look see, my father lighted a match and put his face about one foot above the opening and dropped in his lighted match. Evidently gas had been forming by burning the whiskey, because there was an immediate explosion, the force of which literally picked up father and stood him head down at the bottom of the rear wheel of the wagon standing near the barrel, with his legs astride the hub of the wheel, and seemed to be suspended momentarily in that position. I was concerned, of course, about whether he was seriously injured, at the same time I thought it was the funniest thing I had ever seen, my father standing on his head with his legs and his feet sticking straight up. He wore a mustache which was burned off, as well as his eyebrows, and his face was blistered. I suppose Mr. Daily, who had, just prior to the explosion, stuck his face right down over the opening, thought of what would have happened to him with all that brush on his face had it exploded then. His only remark was, ‘I just did ‘scape.’”*

*“...None of the land in that community was under fence except the cultivated lands. It was open range and when dry spells came, cattle would walk four or five miles to the “Public Tank” for water and would wade out in the water and seemed to try to drink enough to last them a day or*

*two. When we would go to the tank in a farm wagon we would drive the wagon and team out in the water, driving cattle out of our way sometimes, until the water came to the floor of the wagon bed, then we would dip the water with a bucket and fill the barrel full. As might be expected the water was muddy and not like what we had been accustomed to drinking. I am sure doctors now would tell us it would kill us to drink that kind of water, but we drank it and thrived on it.”*

*“...One of the most exciting things that occurred while we lived there was a get rich scheme my father and my uncle, Frank Brazelton, evolved. They were going to get rich out of the hog business. The packinghouses opened up about 1892 at Fort Worth. The woods where we lived had many razor-backed hogs running at large living on weeds, acorns and whatever else wild hogs liked. They were wild as a deer. Some people branded them just as they branded cattle. They were cheap and could be bought for \$2.50 to \$3.50 each, and they bought about 250 head and drove them on foot to Fort Worth. The neighbors from whom the hogs were bought helped to gather them and went a ways on the road until the hogs became trail-broke, and I was allowed to follow along driving a wagon loaded with ears of corn to feed the hogs at night so they would bed down. I was allowed to accompany the drive only to such distance, a little this side of Jacksboro, as I could drive back home in a day’s time. My uncle had a big black dog called “Nig” and he carried a long “black snake whip” to which he fastened a bailing wire as a “popper.” When a hog would try to break away uncle would sic Nig after him. Nig was big enough that he could catch the runaway hog by an ear and hold it until help arrived. After one experience with Nig the hog was only too happy to stay in the bunch. But Nig was called on so frequently that he decided he had caught his share of hogs, and when uncle would call on him to round up a hog he would just stand and look at uncle and do nothing. Then uncle would make a run at the hog and I could hear him say ‘If I get that, I’ll be worse than Nig,’ and if he got within striking distance with his whip and wire attachment, from the way the hog squealed I am sure the hog thought he was worse than Nig. They had many stories to tell about the hog drive. They did not boast about the money they made, and they did not try it again.”*

*“Uncle Frank and Aunt Mollie had one daughter, Florence, who was one month older than I. About three months after the hog drivers returned she came to visit us on a weekend. She was practically devoid of a sense of humor. Uncle Frank and Aunt Mollie were very devout church members and each night he would read a part of the Bible and then have family prayer. On this occasion when she came to spend the night with my mother, knowing Florence had been accustomed to family prayer, was apologizing to her because we did not also have family prayer. She said we should, but that we just did not do so. Without cracking a smile Florence said, ‘We have not had family prayer at our house since Pa got back from driving them hogs to Fort Worth.’ I do not know if their purses shrank as much as their religious devotion, but the hog drive was not often mentioned thereafter.”*

*“...After two years of renting, my father bought a farm located about the middle of a pasture of the Loving Cattle Company. It was called prairie country, but was covered with mesquite bushes. The big pasture in which our home was located was known as ‘Monument Pasture.’” The ranch was divided into four big pastures, the one furthest east was the ‘Bumble Bee’ pasture, then going west, the ‘Monument Pasture,’ then ‘Flat Top’ pasture, then ‘Stone Ranch’ pasture. Monument Pasture got its name because several years before we located in it, some freighters hauling freight from Fort Richardson at Jacksboro to Fort Belknap on the Brazos river, camped in this pasture*

*and were massacred by Indians and their teams stolen and wagons and freight stolen or burned. The ranchers attempted to and did build a monument to commemorate the location and scene of the tragedy. The monument erected consisted of green oak logs with lumber nailed to the logs. It was located less than one-half mile of our home. When I first saw the place most of the structure had been destroyed by prairie fires. There were some parts of the logs and pieces of lumber remaining on the ground at that time. The first year we lived there my brother and I grubbed out 65 acres of mesquite bushes. The land was put in cultivation. We began in September and finished the following May. The land was immediately plowed and planted in cotton and made the best crop of cotton that we ever after grew on this land..."*

*"...My sister married in March 1895, and my mother became ill and died on April 15, 1895. That left my father, one brother, and his wife and myself in the home. Then my brother and his wife moved away. My father and I batched about a year, and then father made a deal with a widow with two grown daughters and one son about twelve years of age, to move in and do the housekeeping and cooking. While this situation existed and the summer in which I was 15-1/2 years of age, I made up my mind that if I ever expected to get back in school I would have to do it on my own. I told my father of my decision and why I intended to leave home. I told him I had to go to school, and that I did not blame him for not helping me—I knew he had no money to spend helping me—that he was in debt and that each year he would get more in debt, that he couldn't do any worse without me than he was doing with my being there. He made it easy for me by saying that if I thought I could do better on my own than with him just to go it, and added that if I left and got broke, not to write to him for money to come home on because he wouldn't send it. I assured him I would never ask anything of him. With this mutual understanding, I rode away with all my wardrobe rolled up in a raincoat or "slicker," and tied up on the back of my saddle. I had cash in the amount of a little over \$2.00...."*

When the 1900 census was taken, Martin Brown was a widower living in Precinct 4 of Young County, Texas. With him were a widowed daughter-in-law, Susan C. Brown, who was born in July 1870 in Missouri to two Alabamian parents. Also with them were Susan's two children, Joseph W. Brown (who was born in October 1896) and Eugene Brown (born in November 1897). Martin Brown was farming.

On November 27, 1910 in Denton County, Martin F. Brown was remarried to Laura Lee (Mooney) Brown. She was born in Texas May 16, 1869, and was a daughter of Eli Mooney and Rachel Mulaney.

At the time the 1920 census was taken, Mr. and Mrs. Brown were living alone at Argyle in Denton County. Oddly, his age is shown in the record as fifty-eight years when he was actually nearer to seventy-three. His wife, Laura L. Brown, is shown being fifty-six years old, when in fact she was about fifty at the time. This may be an instance of the census taker getting information from a neighbor when for some reason he was unable to talk to the Browns personally.

Mr. Brown applied for a Confederate veteran's pension in 1929. He said he had been living in Texas for fifty-six years, and in Denton County for nineteen years. He said he was living at Osage Mills, Arkansas when he entered the service. Today, Osage Mills is an unincorporated village in Benton County, Arkansas.

Martin said he served the Confederacy in Co. A, Brown's Battalion, Cobble's Brigade, in General Price's army. The file contains an affidavit by James M Smith of the Confederate Home in Austin. He said he remembered seeing Martin Brown in action at the Battles of Prairie Grove and Cane Hill, Arkansas. It also contains an affidavit by J. E. Maxfield in which he said he had served with Martin Brown, knew that Martin was Buck Brown's son, and that Martin had served at Prairie Grove and Fayetteville, Arkansas.

At the time he applied for a pension, Martin Brown's son, Jesse M. Brown, was an attorney in Fort Worth. He wrote a letter to the pension board in which he said, in part, ***"...My grandfather was Captain Buck Brown of Company A, Arkansas Cavalry, and my father served in my grandfather's company up until the time my grandfather was killed in the early part of 1865..."***

Martin F. Brown and his wife appear in the 1930 census of Precinct 7 in Denton County, Texas. His wife, Laura L. Brown, said she was born about 1870 in Texas to a Virginian mother and a South Carolinian father. They had no one else living with them. Mr. Brown told the census taker he was a veteran of the Civil War.

Mr. Brown died at his home near Argyle, Denton County, Texas at 2 a.m. on July 22, 1930. The cause of death listed on his death certificate was general debility. He was buried in Old Shiloh Cemetery in Denton County, Texas.

Martin Brown's widow, Laura Lee (Mooney) Brown, applied for a widow's pension soon after her husband's death in 1930. She was remarried to Arthur Charles Hoyle at Decatur, Texas on June 5, 1940 and her pension was suspended. Mr. Hoyle died on June 9, 1946 and her pension was reinstated on the following October 26. She died in Fort Worth on June 27, 1954 and was buried in Old Shiloh Cemetery in Denton County.

Alice Brown was born about 1867. Her brother's obituary indicates that she married a Mr. Daily and was living in Archer City, Texas in 1948.

James Brown was born about 1870. He was still with the family in 1880. He does not appear as a survivor in his brother Charles's 1948 obituary. He may have been the husband and father of the Brown lady and children in the household of Martin F. Brown in Young County in 1900.

Charles Watson Brown was born March 15, 1871. He worked for many years as a postal clerk. His last permanent address was 2655 Vickery Street in Fort Worth. He died in All Saints Hospital in Fort Worth on September 23, 1948. He was buried in Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Fort Worth beside his wife, Henrietta (Thompson) Brown (1884-1962).

William Franklin Brown was born September 15, 1873. He died at Loving in Young County on December 18, 1934 and was buried in Farmer Cemetery, Farmer, Young County, Texas. He was divorced at the time of his death.

Oliver Hobson Brown was born April 7, 1875. When the 1910 census was taken, he lived with his wife Matilda (Higgins), his children, and his wife's parents in Precinct 3 of Young County. In his

later years, he served as a deputy sheriff in Fort Worth and Tarrant County. His last permanent residence was 8816 Guadalupe Road in Fort Worth. He died at Autumn Leaf Lodge in Fort Worth on December 15, 1968. He was buried in Lubbock Cemetery in Lubbock, Texas.

Mattie M. Brown was born in June 1878. She married Albert G. Blakey in February 1895. By 1900, they had settled in King County, Texas. In 1930 she and her husband were dry farming in Roosevelt County, New Mexico. She was still living in New Mexico in 1948.

Jesse M. Brown was born February 25, 1883. He was a well-known attorney and judge in Tarrant County for decades. He died in Fort Worth on July 9, 1978 and was buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Fort Worth. His wife, Ethel Frances Brown, survived him.

