

Map 1879 The General Land Office of the State of Texas

John McNeel, one of Stephen F. Austin's Old Three Hundred colonists, moved to Texas from Arkansas in ~1822 with his wife, five sons, and two daughters settling in the Nacogdoches area. He and four of his sons received title to several leagues of land in the lower part of Brazoria in August 1824. The family initially settled on John McNeel's league located on the east side of the San Bernard River below the town of Brazoria. There the family built a log cabin and started to cultivate the land planting cotton as their cash crop. After John McNeel died in 1833 the brothers branched out on their own but held their land in equal shares. Their plantations were concentrated in the William Cummings, John McNeel, and Sterling McNeel leagues. John Greenville McNeel married and built his home, Ellerslie, while Leander Harrison McNeel settled with his family on Pleasant Grove Plantation. Sterling McNeel and Pleasant Duke McNeel would build a sugar plantation together before Sterling moved to the Darrington Plantation in the northern part of Brazoria County in 1850. After the deaths of Leander H. McNeel and Sterling

McNeel in the early 1850's J. Greenville McNeel consolidated his hold on most the McNeel lands by buying out his brother Pleasant D. McNeel and by being the administrator of Leander H. McNeel's estate. He would control Ellerslie until after the Civil War. After J. Greenville McNeel's death in 1876, James Marion Huntington bought the Ellerslie homestead in 1881 from Greenville's third wife, Laura V. McNeel. The Huntington family would own the Ellerslie homestead until 1974 when it was purchased by Phillips Petroleum. N. Russell Scott is now the current owner of Ellerslie. John H. Brower of New York had been the major creditor of J. Greenville McNeel and bought the majority of the lands associated with the McNeel brothers' plantations after heavy mortgages forced the sales in 1879. A large portion of these lands, which included the major part of the Pleasant Grove Plantation and the sugar plantation of Pleasant D. McNeel, were acquired by the Texas Penitentiary System in 1898 and were later combined with Robert & David G. Mills' Low Wood Plantation to form the Clemens Prison Farm which is still in operation today.

John and Elizabeth Nancy Mitchell McNeel with their family moved to Texas from Arkansas in ~1822 settling in the Nacogdoches area. John and "Betsy" McNeel had started their family in Warren County, Kentucky. John McNeel was a private in the U. S. Army, 7th Regiment, Captain Joseph I. Clinch's Company, Fort Gadsden, Franklin County, Florida during the War of 1812. John McNeel received a military bounty of 160 acres in Faulkner County Arkansas. The family had lived in Ruddell Township, Independence County, Arkansas from 1819-1821. John McNeel received a league of land from the Mexican government on the east bank of the San Bernard River below the town of Brazoria August 3, 1824. John had four sons that were of age at this time, Pleasant Duke, Sterling, John Greenville, and George Washington McNeel, and they also received land grants in same general area in the lower part of Stephen F. Austin's colony.

By 1825 the McNeel family was in Brazoria County. The census for 1826 lists John McNeel as a farmer and stockraiser, aged over fifty. With him were his wife, Elizabeth, four sons, one daughter, two servants, and twenty-five slaves. Their oldest daughter Nancy D. McNeel had married David Randon in 1823 and would soon follow the rest of the family to Brazoria County, making their home just north of her father's plantation. George Washington McNeel, who had married Elizabeth [?], may not have been listed with the family either. Elizabeth Gains McNeel, their only daughter at home, would soon be gone from the family to continue her education. Pleasant Duke, Sterling, John Greenville, and Leander Harrison McNeel would have been living with the family at this time.

In October 1826 John McNeel wrote Stephen F. Austin that he did not have cash on hand to pay the balance on his land: "...I regret exceedingly that money is not at my command at this moment as it has taken whole of my last year's Crop to procure the articles indispensibly necessary in making my establishment here, procuring provisions etc. I have money Owing me to a considerable amount which I hope to be able to collect shortly, Or I have property which shall be at your service if it will answer you any valuable service..."¹

¹ Barker, Eugene C. ed., *The Austin Papers*, Vol. II Part 2, Letter John McNeel to Stephen F. Austin, Oct. 9, 1826, American Historical Association, United States Government Printing Office, Washington D. C., 1928, p. 1473

In the later part of 1827 nineteen year old Noah Smithwick from Tennessee journeyed to Texas. Struggling to ward off illness and without a penny to his name while at Columbia he learned that “Johnney McNeal” out on Gulf Prairie was in need of a blacksmith:

They were quite a family of the McNeals. They had raised a crop of cotton and were building a gin. They had a shop and tools, and so I went out and in the intervals between relapses of the fever I made the gin irons. Iron was a scarce article, but we found an ample supply in the wreck of an old vessel that lay high and dry in a belt of timber at least five miles back from the gulf. The timbers were all rotted away; the knotted hearts of two pine trees that had once been masts alone remaining. The irons though deeply encrusted with rust, were in a fair state of preservation. There was nothing to give a clue to its age or nationality. It had evidently been there many a long year, probably driven ashore by a tidal wave...

Sterling McNeal was something of a doctor and he treated me so successfully that I that I soon began to mend. The members of the family were the embodiment of kindness...²

Noah Smithwick also related an incident that Pleasant D. McNeal had with one the slaves on the plantation:

The negroes soon became aware of the legal status of slavery in Mexican territory, and it was probably owing to their ignorance of the language and country that more of them did not leave. Jim, one of McNeal’s slaves, openly announced his determination to leave, and, acting on the impulse, threw down his hoe and started away. Pleasant McNeal, to whom he communicated his intention, ordered him to return to work, but Jim went on, whereupon Pleasant raised his rifle.

“Jim,” said he “if you don’t come back I’ll shoot you!” Jim, however, kept on and true to his threat McNeal shot him dead.³

In November 1827 Sterling McNeal agreed to purchase ~640 acres out of the SE corner of the William Cummings League for \$.75/acre.⁴ This acreage was just north of the John McNeal League. This was the first of several tracts bought by the McNeels out of the William

² Smithwick, Noah, *The Evolution of a State*, Steck-Vaughn Company, Austin, Texas, 1968, pp.28-29.

³Ibid., p.37 It should be noted that Noah Smithwick wrote late in his life. The McNeal family had another version of the shooting of Jim: My Grandfather (John McNeal) owned Nearly 100 slaves, among them was a young and very bad Negro man, known as Big Jim. He had learned to speak the Spanish language, and was of a vindictive and brutal Nature. Some 10 days before the Battle of Velasco Big Jim ran away, and went to the Mexicans at Velasco. He agreed with them to return and to incite the slaves to Rebellion. He left the Mexican Fort, and reached the settlements of Gulf Prairie the day before the Battle, and at once commenced, his fiendish work. About 2 o’clock AM of the morning of the Battle He reached Grandfather’s Place and as soon as Willis Starke and Jerry Smith two trusted slaves on the McNeal Plantation found out that He was on the Plantation, they informed P. D. McNeal. They went to the Cabin occupied by Jim’s wife and called him out. He made a dash for Liberty, but after a dreadful struggle was captured, securely bound and Guarded. The Next day about Noon P. D. McNeal was called to the Door for a moment to speak to Some one. In an instant, Jim’s wife who was a house servant slipped up and cut him loose. He was discovered by Willis Starke as He leaped from the window and the Alarm was given. P. D. McNeal seized his Rifle and ordered Him to halt, but he was at that time over 100 yards away and on the edge of the woods. He defiantly turned and said “Shoot God Damn you.” In a Moment the gun was raised and a clear report rang out on the still air and Jim fell to the ground mortally wounded. When he knew he was to die he gave the details of a Hellish plot to Massacre the old woman and children, and to burn every dwelling. The younger women were to be taken as captives to the Mexican camp...Boddie, Mary Delaney, *Thunder on the Brazos*, Taylor Publishing Company, 1978, p. 12. This was written by John G. McNeal Jr. many years after the event also.

⁴ BCDR: C 507/08 C 505/06

Cummings League over the next twenty years. Part of this tract was later sold to R. & D. G. Mills and it became the home of their Low Wood Plantation.

In 1828 Joseph C. Clopper visited the McNeel family: “Go down to Mr. McNeal’s within 7 miles of the Sea—this is the most intelligent industrious and hospitable family met with in Texas—hold a considerable number of Slaves and cultivate cotton to a pretty large extent—having valuable gin of their own. Family consists of the Father and Mother—five sons, all grown but one, and a lovely daughter of 16—the beauty of the Colony...”⁵

In March, 1831, M. Fiske arrived in Texas to examine a large tract of land he had purchased from the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company. One of his first visits was to John McNeel, whose plantation lay on the San Bernard River in Brazoria County:

The fine estate which we were to visit presented a beautiful appearance as we approached it. Before us spread an almost boundless plain, or natural meadow, a large part of which, owned by Mr. McNeil...It contains the garden, with a noble cotton field, which, the year before, had yielded a crop that sold for five thousand dollars...We directed our course towards his dwelling, which is a good log house, just on the verge of a fine grove, partly shaded by China trees, newly planted...we were soon cheered with the sight of an excellent and plentiful meal: for our hosts, without making a single allusion to the subject, had immediately given directions, on our first arrival, that our wants should be provided for, and we soon sat down to a well timed repast. It consisted of venison and a fine turkey, and was accompanied with excellent coffee.⁶ The daughter of our host was a very intelligent and well educated young lady, and had recently returned from the Northern States, where she had just completed her education.⁷



John McNeel Cabin 1831 as Illustrated by M. Fiske

⁵ “J. C. Clopper’s Journal and Book of Memoranda for 1828. Province of Texas”, Volume 013, Number 1, Southwestern Historical Quarterly Online, pages 44-80.

⁶ John McNeel kept an Indian at the plantation that provided game for the family table.

⁷ Fiske, M., attributed, *Visit to Texas Being the Journal of a Traveler*, Goodrich & Wiley, New York, 1834, pp.38-40. This would have been Elizabeth Gains McNeel, aged 16 at the time, who would later wed Robert Mills.

As hostilities with the Mexican troops at Velasco began in June 1832 the women and children in the Gulf Prairie area were moved to the John McNeel home for safety. Pleasant D. McNeel was selected by his father to protect them.⁸ Sterling McNeel joined the militia at Brazoria and fought at Velasco with William H. Wharton's Division 5. J. Greenville McNeel also joined the militia at Brazoria and participated in the Battle of Velasco with Henry S. Brown's Division 1.⁹ Neither brother was wounded during the battle and after the defeat of the Mexican garrison at Fort Velasco they returned to Gulf Prairie.

By a bond of \$10,000, May 25, 1833, J. Greenville McNeel wed Ann Augusta Westall, daughter of Thomas G. and Sarah Westall. The Westall Plantation was in the same neighborhood and the new couple settled at Ellerslie Plantation, which was east of his father's plantation in the John McNeel league and within a short distance of the Westall home (See Westall Plantation Report). They would have seven children, Elizabeth E., George W., Robert M., John G., Pleasant D., Ann Olivia, and Morgan L. S (See Appendix A).

Later in 1833 the patriarch of the family, John McNeel, died during the cholera epidemic and was buried in the McNeel family cemetery on his league. James F. Perry wrote from Peach Point reporting on the condition of the colony to Stephen F. Austin, who was in Mexico, October 26, 1833:

There has been recently a good deal of sickness at San felepe and above and a good many deaths in our neighborhood. We have lost old Mr. McNeel (fever), Mr. Westall, James and Emeline (cholera), and Mr. Munson (fever) which leaves a very considerable vackancy here in Brazoria our friend John Austin, both his children, Mrs. Wm. Austin, Anthony the printer, Bradley and a large number of negros all died at Westall with cholara. There were six or seven corps there at any one time before they could be buried as neighbors were afraid to approach them a great many more of your acquaintances you will find gon among them Doctr Cox and counsel. Counsels wife and child. Jno Cox on the Bernard and a number others not recollected it is said there was 80 people died out at Brazoria in the course of the summer and Velasco was nearly depopulated by the cholera.¹⁰

George W. McNeel died in June 1834 leaving Elizabeth McNeel as his widow (It is not documented where he was living at the time of his death or if he was buried in the family cemetery.) She received one-half league from the Republic of Texas in 1838.¹¹

By a bond of \$10,000, April 23, 1835, Leander H. McNeel wed Jane LaMothe only 15 years of age, from Louisiana. It is possible they lived at the original John McNeel homestead early in their marriage.

Pleasant D. McNeel would never marry. Nor would his brother Sterling McNeel who was a passenger aboard the *Sabine* from New Orleans to Velasco in May 1832 when he met Ann Raney, who was traveling with her mother and sister. She wrote: "One evening, on being called to supper, I saw opposite a gentleman who was extremely sober looking, who kept his eyes fixed upon myself

⁸ Boddie, Mary Delaney, *Thunder on the Brazos*, Taylor Publishing Company, 1978, p.12.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 44-45.

¹⁰ Barker, Eugene C., ed., *The Austin Papers*, 3 vols. in 4. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1924-1928, Vol. II, Supplemental, p. 1009-1010.

¹¹ "George Washington McNeel" *Handbook of Texas Online*

continually, I took him for a Methodist preacher and asked the captain if he was not one. He laughed heartily and said, "No, that is Mr. McN[eel], one of our wealthiest planters. If you were acquainted with him, you would find him quite communicative and intelligent." I asked the captain if he would not introduce me to him, which he did half an hour afterwards. I was agreeably disappointed in Mr. McN[eel]. I found him a man well informed, polite, and witty. He seldom laughed, and when talking, as serious as a judge. As I became better acquainted I liked him much more. I became interested in him."¹² Ann Raney later described Sterling McNeel as "far from being good looking, but very interesting, his eyes keen and penetrating."¹³ She also related, "He was a great favourite in the family, and they called him Doctor as he generally doctored all the negroes on the plantation."¹⁴

Though professing only to be friends, Ann Raney had hopes of snaring Sterling McNeel but related: "Mr. S[terling] McN[eel] was much distressed at his father's injunction if he married he would disinherit him. Mrs. R[andon](Sterling's sister) had to run away and get married, also Mr. G[reenville] McN[eel], another one of his sons, so that he was not willing for any of his sons to marry..." Nancy Randon¹⁵ said: "My brother S[terling] loves money and does not wish my father to disinherit him, as he has always been a great favorite with him." Ann Raney wrote, "He does not love, I thought, or he would not mind his father's injunction. He loves his father's money better than me."¹⁶

This did not stop the young ladies, however. Emeline Westall¹⁷ was another of Sterling McNeel's admirers, who often visited the Henry Munson family at Oakland Plantation (See Oakland Plantation Report) on Gulf Prairie:

I [Ann Raney] went to spend the day with Mrs. Munson, a neighbour of Mrs. R[andon] and an excellent woman. I met with Miss Emeline W [Westall] at her house, a young lady who was very good looking and vain in her charms. She was a good girl fond of a romp. Her sister married Mr. G[reenville]. McN[eel]. Emeline was about eighteen years old, quite a pleasant girl. I had met her at the town of Brazoria often before and at many balls and parties. She had been the Belle of the country before our arrival, and, it was said, quite a favorite of Mr. S[terling]. McN[eel]. She got into a play with me, and as I was still weak in the lack of strength, I begged her to desist. She replied, "I intend to whip you, Miss R, for taking my beau from me, and I wished you stayed in Brazoria and not come into our neighbourhood." I was nearly exhausted when at last I succeeded in throwing her down, and I sat on her person and paid her up in her own coin by tickling her. She

¹² King, C. Richard, ed., *Victorian Lady on the Texas Frontier*, W. Foulsham & Co. Ltd., London, England, p. 63.

¹³ Ibid., p. 68.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 76. Another vignette by Abner Strobel: "In an early day Sterling McNeel was traveling in his carriage through Fort Bend County and applied to a settler there for accommodations for the night. It was pouring down rain and he had a lady with him in his carriage. He told his driver to tell the man of the house the situation and asked him for his hospitality for the night. He was refused. The following winter the same gentleman of Fort Bend County came down to Brazoria County on some business, and it was bitter cold, and he applied to Sterling McNeel for the privilege of staying all night and gave his name. McNeel met him cordially, had the best of meals prepared, a good warm fire, the best of liquor to drink; his horse well fed and groomed. He had the servant shine his guest's boots, and in fact spread himself as a generous host. The guest on leaving next morning wanted to know what the charges were for his accommodations. McNeel told him, "Nothing, Sir, except this—the next time a gentleman, especially with a lady, asks accommodations for the night on such a night as he made application, never turn them off." The roads were in such a condition when McNeel made the trip in Fort Bend County that it took him until midnight to travel the distance of five miles to the next house, where he was taken in and cared for, as was the custom in those days." Strobel, Abner J., *The Old Plantations and Their Owners of Brazoria County Texas*, Revised Edition, The Union National Bank, Houston, Texas, 1930, p.41.

¹⁵ Before 1840 Nancy Randon and her husband David moved with their daughter to his league of land in Fort Bend County on the Brazos River.

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 74-75

¹⁷ Emeline Westall was the sister of Ann Augusta Westall, wife of John Greenville McNeel.

cried, "Let me up, Old England, and I will never trouble you any more," I said, "Will you acknowledge you are whipped?" "Yes, yes," she cried, "I am whipped by old England." At this moment, whilst we still lay on the floor, and I still sitting on the top of her body, in came Mr. Munson and Mr. S. McN from behind a door in another room, laughing heartily at us both and having overheard all that passed between us and had seen us fighting. I felt ashamed and left the room to recover my breath which was nearly exhausted. Emeline now ran out of the room also.¹⁸

Robert Mills married Elizabeth G. McNeel on January 26, 1836 in a bond ceremony, the bond at \$50,000. The contract stipulated that Robert McNeel would "live with, maintain, protect and kindly treat and consider the Elizabeth G. McNeel as his true and lawful wedded wife from the date of this instrument now henceforth forever until death shall separate them...the parties severally bind themselves each to the other, that they will have solemnized as soon as practicable by a Priest of the Church according to law..." Elizabeth died in childbirth along with their infant in 1837, being buried in the McNeel family cemetery. Robert Mills never remarried (See Low Wood & Bynum Plantation Reports).

In October 1835 Pleasant Duke McNeel was with Stephen F. Austin and the volunteer army at the Battle of Gonzales. At the Battle of San Jacinto he was a private in Robert J. Calder's company.

The rest of the McNeel family was part of the "Runaway Scrape". William Fairfax Gray ran across the family traveling with their slaves east of the Trinity River on the 19th April, 1836: "Towards noon approached timber, and striking the road, fell in with numerous fugitives, among them the McNiels, with their African negroes..."¹⁹ The family made it as far as the Neches River as Clarke Beach reported to David G. Burnet: "...18th April I took charge of two ferry flats...I permitted the McNeils to cross a gang of African's by their promising to return the boat into the River which promis they have not complied with and which they refused to pay for; for this purpose I have wrote to you leaving it to your disposition to act as you please as the damage is coniderable,, owing to the number of poor families who are waiting to cross will be detained for the want of the Boat..."²⁰ Earlier in February 1836 Sterling McNeel had landed a cargo of African slaves near Velasco . William S. Fisher, customs collector at Velasco, wrote to the Provisional Governor Henry Smith: "...Sterling McNeel landed a cargo of negroes (Africans) on the coast. I endeavored to seize the vessel, but was unsuccessful..."²¹

William Kennedy the British Consulate at Galveston, Texas wrote to the Earl of Aberdeen identifying the schooner *Harriet* as having landed 40 slaves on the San Bernard River in 1835, an unknown schooner landed 40 slaves at Velasco and later on Caney Creek in 1836, and in 1837 and 1838 41 slaves, in two shipments landed near the Brazos River and were distributed over the plantations.²²

¹⁸ King, C. Richard, ed., *Victorian Lady on the Texas Frontier*, W. Foulsham & Co. Ltd., London, England, p. 75. Neither young lady was successful in catching Sterling McNeel. Emeline Westall died in the cholera epidemic in 1833. Ann Raney regretfully married John Thomas February 14, 1833.

¹⁹ Gray, William Fairfax, *Diary Of Col. Wm. F. Gray*, The Fletcher Young Publishing Co., Houston, Texas, 1965, p.166.

²⁰ Letter Clarke Beach to Mr. David G. Burnet, May 9, 1836, Document 2998, *The Papers of the Texas Revolution 1835-1836*, Jenkins, John H. ed., Presidial Press, Austin, Texas, 1973.

²¹ Barker, Eugene C., "The African Slave Trade in Texas," *The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association*, 1903, p. 153.

²² Adams, Ephraim Douglas ed., "Correspondence From the British Archives Concerning Texas, 1837-1846", Letter William Kennedy British Consulate to Earl of Aberdeen, September 5, 1843, *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Volume XVII No. 2, 1913: 199-201.

The shipment of slaves landed in 1836 on Caney Creek was reported to be for Sterling McNeel and his brothers. The slaves landed in 1837 and 1838 were also in all probability brought in by Sterling McNeel. Down the San Bernard River from the Joseph Mims plantation was African Landing, a location for unloading freshly arrived slaves. Here they were clothed for the first time and fed. The landing only consisted of a large live oak log, lying parallel with the river making a natural wharf.²³

This group of African slaves had several individuals that ran away from the McNeel plantations:

Runaway from me 3mos. ago, an African Negro man named ARCH, about 25, tall slender fellow, very black, some scars on forehead, neck and both sides of his face. He escaped from me 5 or 6 times, twice breaking off the irons. He is a very bad rascal, speaks little English. My brother P. D. McNeel has an African Negro named IONA that ran off with ARCH. He is about 28 years old, has scars on face and both cheeks, yellow complexion, and stout build. He ran off last year and was taken up in Robertson's Colony. I will pay a liberal reward for ARCH, and my brother for IONA. They should be delivered to my place 8 miles below Brazoria, Gulf Prairie, July 24.

Leander H. McNeel²⁴

Runaway Negroes.

Ranaway from plantation of P. D. McNeel & R. Mills, in Brazoria County, early in January, 3 African Negro men: SANCO, about 30, 5'8" or 9", small eyes, fine marks running down both cheeks and a high bold forehead; DOO, black, about 30, stout built & not much inclined to talk; LUTHER or LUFFA, black, about 28, large and stout built, very thick lips. These Negroes can speak little English. They were taken near Victoria & delivered to the sheriff & made their escape from him on March 14. A liberal reward will be offered. R MILLS, Brazoria, April 3.²⁵

After the Battle of San Jacinto the family returned home and early in 1838 Mary Austin Holley visited the Peach Point Plantation, owned by James F. Perry and his wife Emily. While there she often visited several neighbors on Gulf Prairie. Making her way to J. Greenville McNeel's home, which had yet to be finished in the interior, February 6, 1838 Mary Austin Holley entered in her diary:

Mild & misty—notwithstanding went to dinner McNeals—2 miles. The table was spread with a profusion of meats of the country—excellent coffee all in country style. 2 other families were there. House well built of brick. 2 stories—with a wing—floors laid below—only—no plastering—you see the bricks, inside as without—when finished will be about the best in Texas. The whole affair was rather grotesque, but amusing withal.²⁶

²³ Platter, Andrew Allen, *Educational, Social, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County*, Doctoral Dissertation Education, University of Houston, Texas, p. 150-51. A story was related to Andrew A. Platter by Stephen Perry and Harold Graves that a slave smuggler had landed a cargo of slaves at African Landing. The local planters had gathered, made purchases, and afterward visited and played cards until late at night. When getting ready to leave for home one of the planters could not find his Newfoundland dog. After returning and searching the next day he found a pile of clean dog bones beside a campfire where the slaves had been.

²⁴ *The Telegraph and Texas Register*, August 5, 1837, Houston, Texas. Arch was returned for he is listed in a mortgage in 1847.

²⁵ *The Telegraph and Texas Register*, April 3, 1839, Houston, Texas

²⁶ Holley, Mary Austin, *The Texas Diary, 1835-1838*, University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas, 1965, p. 56.

According to Abner Strobel when J. Greenville McNeel “selected the spot to erect his home, he found the mast of a large ocean vessel firmly planted in his yard. I have often tried to shake it, but it was too firmly planted.”²⁷ When finished the mansion at Ellerslie was perhaps the finest ante bellum home in Brazoria County. The two storey brick home contained twenty-one rooms. It faced south to receive the prevailing winds and had galleries on the south and on the north—on opposite sides of the house. Stairs and banisters were of mahogany, as were many pieces of furniture. Other furniture was of heavy walnut. The plastered ceilings contained ornamentation in the form of intricate medallions and the parlor floor was carpeted. Fireplaces were enriched with marble hearths and mantels. From the cupola on the roof it was possible to look beyond long stretches of the San Bernard River to the Gulf of Mexico itself.²⁸



Ellerslie Unknown (1893?) Date Courtesy of the Brazoria County Historical Museum²⁹

On the 10th February, 1838, Mary Austin Holley once again dined at the home of J. Greenville McNeel and then on the 11th rode to Leander H. McNeel's home:

...We took an afternoon ride across the prairie to Leander McNeels—treated with coffee, cakes, champagnes, a liqueur & *kindness*. Live in a cabin in a splendid situation.³⁰

²⁷ Strobel, Abner J., *The Old Plantations and Their Owners of Brazoria County, Texas*, Lake Jackson Historical Association, 2006, p. 21.

²⁸ Platter, A. A., *Educational, Social, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County, Texas*, Doctoral Dissertation, University of Houston, Houston, Texas, 1961

²⁹ This photo appears to have been altered from the original. See subsequent photo on page 28.

³⁰ Holley, Mary Austin, *The Texas Diary, 1835-1838*, University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas, 1965, p.58. This cabin may be John McNeel's original home as Sterling and Pleasant Duke McNeel were working on their own home and plantation together.

While J. Greenville McNeel was improving Ellerslie Plantation, during the 1840's Pleasant D. and Sterling McNeel started to build a home and sugar mill together on equal shares. This covered acreage in the John McNeel, Sterling McNeel, and William Cummings Leagues.

In the 1842 Tax Record Leander H. McNeel has listed 1135 acres in his plantation with 21 slaves. John G. McNeel has listed 28 slaves. The four brothers are listed with several large acreages in the county, 41 slaves, and 1200 head of cattle together. This indicates they were still holding their father's estate and their various leagues of land together in equal shares.

In 1842 J. Greenville McNeel took part in the campaign against Rafael Vasquez. After Texas became a state he was elected senator in the First Legislature (1846-1847) from the Twelfth District.³¹

February 1844 Elizabeth N. McNeel died and was laid to rest next to her husband in the family cemetery, which now also held the remains of two of the infant children of J. Greenville and Ann A. McNeel.

David and Nancy Randon had moved to his league of land in Fort Bend County before 1840. Nancy Randon released all her rights in her mother and father's estates and that of her deceased brother, George W. McNeel and sister Elizabeth McNeel Mills to her brothers in 1846.³²

As the family of Leander H. and Jane McNeel grew to four children, Leander H. Jr., Sterling Jr., Elizabeth A., and John McNeel (See Appendix A), their relationship as husband and wife soured. In 1847 they were granted a divorce. Leander H. McNeel retained sole ownership of his plantation, but was in debt \$27,437, which was above the value of his assets. Early in the year Leander H. McNeel had taken out a mortgage on the plantation and 15 slaves (over half were African) for \$5353.01 from Morgan L. Smith.³³ Additional notes to his brothers may have inflated his amount of debt. Jane McNeel, who released all claim to the plantation and all improvements, received title to only three slaves, Ellen aged 23 years, Sylvia aged 23 years, and Frances aged 16.³⁴ Jane McNeel remained in Brazoria County and resided with her sister, Adeline LaMothe Bryan, at the Reterio Plantation for a while with their youngest son, John McNeel who had been born that year.

While visiting the Peach Point Plantation, Rutherford B. Hayes, future President of the United States visited Sterling McNeel and noted in his diary January 30, 1849: "A shrewd, intelligent, cynical old bachelor "full of wise saws and modern incidents"; very fond of his own experience and talking of his own affairs. Living alone, he has come to think he is "the be-all and end-all here." The haughty and imperious part of a man develops rapidly on one of these lonely sugar plantations, where the owner rarely meets with any except his slaves and minions."³⁵

³¹ "John Greenville McNeel" *Handbook of Texas Online*

³² BCDR: D 324/25

³³ Brazoria County Deed Record: D 359/61

³⁴ BCDR: D 483/87

³⁵ Williams, Charles R., ed., *The Diary and Letters of Rutherford B. Hayes, Nineteenth President of the United States, Vol. I*, Ohio State Archeological and Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio, 1922, p. 254.

Sterling McNeel would buy the Darrington Plantation in the northern part of the county in June 1849.³⁶ September 1850 the four brothers partitioned all the lands that they had been holding into ¼ shares.³⁷ Sterling then sold his brothers his ¼ share. John G. McNeel and Pleasant D. McNeel paid \$5000 each for their lands. Leander H. McNeel paid \$10,000 but received a ½ interest in the home and sugar mill which Sterling and Pleasant McNeel had built together.³⁸

The 1850 Agricultural Census lists Sterling McNeel with 500 acres improved with \$15,000 value of the plantation with only \$1375 worth of farm machinery. Livestock listed were 20 horses, 25 mules, 80 milk cows, 24 oxen, 300 head of cattle, and 300 hogs. The 1849 crop is listed as 5000 bushels of corn, 300 of Irish potatoes, 2000 of sweet potatoes, 624 pounds of butter, 5 tons of hay, and 296 bales of cotton. Sterling McNeel aged 50 and Sterling McNeel Jr. aged 7 are listed in his household on the Darrington Plantation in the 1850 Federal Census. McNeel would build Darrington into a sugar plantation during the early 1850's until his death in 1854(See Darrington Plantation Report).

Sterling McNeel had an affair with a married woman in the early 1840's. Sally Ann and Thomas Blackwell lived in Brazoria. Their son was named Sterling Blackwell. Sally Ann and Thomas Blackwell divorced with Blackwell later declaring that Sterling was not his child.³⁹ At Sally Ann Blackwell's request, Sterling McNeel became the child's guardian and made him his heir.⁴⁰

In the 1850 Agricultural Census J. Greenville McNeel had 350 improved acres on his plantation and farm equipment worth \$21,680 indicating his steam powered sugar mill was built by this time. He owned 40 horses, 40 mules, 50 milch cows, 40 work oxen, 600 head of cattle, and 100 hogs. In 1849 he produced 2500 bushels of corn, 150 of Irish potatoes, 3000 of sweet potatoes, 900 lbs. of butter, 511 hogsheads of sugar and 36,000 gallons of molasses. According to the slave census he had 82 slaves on Ellerslie.

The J. Greenville McNeel family is listed in the 1850 Federal Census. Ann Augusta McNeel had died in March 1848. She was also laid to rest in the family cemetery with her young children that had preceded her.

John G. McNeel	Planter	48M	Kentucky
George W. McNeel		13M	Texas
John G. McNeel Jr.		8M	Texas
Pleasant D. McNeel Jr.		6M	Texas

³⁶ BCDR: E 254/58

³⁷ BCDR: E 535/37

³⁸ BCDR: 530/32

³⁹ "I declare...hereby that Sterling Blackwell is not my child, and I hereby disinherit him. This written by my own hand this 1st May 1850." Last Will and Testament of Thomas Blackwell, Record of Wills, Vol. A. p. 629, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas.

⁴⁰ Freeman, Martha Doty, *An Overview of the Development of an Historic Landscape on the San Bernard River, Brazoria County, Texas, and a History of the Levi Jordan Plantation*, TBG Partners, Inc. Austin, Texas, p.101. "...appoint Mr. Sterling McNeel executor of my estate and guardian of my son until he arrives at the age of twenty one" June 19, 1849, Last Will and Testament of Sally A. Blackwell, Record of Wills, Vol. A. p. 625, Brazoria County Courthouse, Angleton, Texas.

Morgan L. McNeel		4M	Texas
H. Cash	Overseer	25M	Alabama
T. Eaddy	Cooper	35M	Louisiana

The Ellerslie mansion was completely furnished by this time and as described by Kate Huntington⁴¹ on the ground floor were the library, dining room, parlor, three bedrooms, kitchen, and two pantries, one for inside serving and one for the outside. Double doors led to the west and south porches, or galleries. These galleries both up and down were supported by brick columns. A curving driveway led up to the main entrance of the house.⁴²

In addition to the residence and kitchen were the sugar mill, cotton gin, hospital, blacksmith shop, overseer's house, and slave cabins. The latter, as well as the overseer's house, contained two rooms separated by a wall containing a double fireplace. Each house in the quarters provided housing for two families of slaves. All buildings were of brick, which was manufactured on the grounds.

According to Pinkie Kelly, a former Ellerslie slave, "old Aunt Becky" was the doctor for the hospital: "she puts us in there and give us calomel or turpentine, dependin' on what ailed us. They allus kep' the babies there and let de mammies come in and suckle..." "Most I 'members 'bout them times is work, 'cause we's put out in de fields befo' day and come back after night. Then we has to shell a bushel of corn befo' we goes to bed and we was so tired we didn't have time for nothin'. Old man Jerry Driver watches us in the fields and iffen we didn't work hard he whip us and whip us hard. Then he die and 'nother man called Archer came..." Marse Greenville treated us pretty good but he never give us nothin'. Sometime we'd run away and hide in the woods for a spell, but when they cotch us Marse Greenville tie us down and whip us so we don't do it no more..."⁴³

The large sugar house contained a double set of kettles. Where timber was required in the construction, immense timbers of live oak heartwood were employed. Tall chimneys towered above the two and a half storied building to dominate all other structures at Ellerslie.



Ruins of Sugar Mill Courtesy of the Brazoria County Historical Museum
1984.025p.0005



1984.025p.0002

⁴¹ Kate Huntington was one of the last children born in the home.

⁴² Creighton, James A., *Narrative History of Brazoria County*, Texian Press, Waco, Texas, 1975, pp. 221-224.

⁴³ Aunt Pinkie Kelly born on Ellerslie Plantation, *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938*, Vol. 16 Part 2, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, pp. 253-254.

A road passed several hundred feet south of the mansion and another passed a similar distance to the east. At each road was a gate flanked by large, square, hand hewn live oak posts. The tops of the posts were graced with carved symbols reflecting a favorite McNeel recreation...One was capped with a club, one with a diamond, one with a heart, and one with a spade.⁴⁴

Ellerslie continued to produce sugar throughout the 1850's:

1852	408 hogsheads
1853	250
1854	325
1855	312
1858	250
1859	20 ⁴⁵

The exact location of the Pleasant D. McNeel home is not completely understood. He was residing at the home he and Sterling McNeel had built which could have been at the original homestead of David and Nancy Randon which was on his property. The Pleasant D. McNeel household is listed in the 1850 Federal Census:

Pleasant D. McNeel	Planter	54M	Kentucky
Alexander Tonston		28M	New Jersey
Alexander McFail		23M	Scotland

Pleasant D. McNeel owned 68 slaves and had 560 improved acres but no farm machinery listed on his plantation in the 1850 Agricultural Census indicating his sugar cane was being processed at the sugar mill on the Pleasant Grove Plantation, in which he was half owner. He owned 6 horses, 40 mules, 100 milch cows, 30 work oxen, 1000 head of cattle, and 200 hogs. The plantation produced 3000 bushels of corn, 37 bales of cotton, 2000 bushels of sweet potatoes, 100 lbs. of butter, 420 hogsheads of sugar, and 29,400 gallons of molasses in 1849. Pleasant seemed to do well and in 1853 he donated a handsome organ to the Catholic Church in Brazoria, having cost \$600 in New York City.⁴⁶

Leander H. McNeel had continued to develop his Pleasant Grove Plantation. In the 1850 Agricultural Census the plantation is listed as 400 acres improved with \$25,000 worth of farm machinery indicating that his sugar mill is operational. There were 100 horses, 34 mules, 50 milch cows, 16 work oxen, 1000 head of cattle, and 200 hogs on the property. In 1849 the plantation produced 5000 bushels of corn, 100 of Irish potatoes, 1000 of sweet potatoes, 1000

⁴⁴ Platter, A. A., *Educational, Social, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County, Texas*, Doctorial Dissertation, University of Houston, Houston, Texas, 1961, pp. 106-107.

⁴⁵ Champomier, P. A., *Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1852-53, With An Appendix*, New Orleans, 1854. Champomier, P. A., *Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1853-54, With An Appendix*, New Orleans, 1854. Champomier, P. A., *Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1854-55, With An Appendix*, New Orleans, 1855 & *Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1855-56, With An Appendix*, New Orleans, 1856. Champomier, P. A., *Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1858-59, With An Appendix*, New Orleans, 1859. Champomier, P. A., *Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1860-61, With An Appendix*, New Orleans, 1861

⁴⁶ *Galveston Weekly News*, November 21, 1853, Galveston, Texas

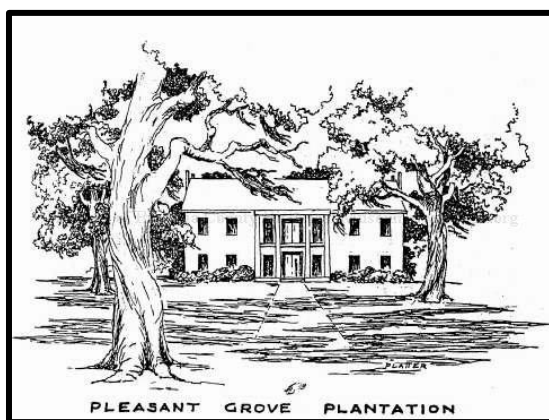
lbs. of butter, 10 tons of hay, 232 hogsheads of sugar and 20,000 gallons of molasses. There were 30 slaves listed on the property.

The Leander H. McNeel household is listed in the 1850 Federal Census:

Leander H. McNeel	Planter	30 M	Kentucky
Leander H. McNeel Jr.		10M	Texas
Sterling McNeel		8M	Texas
Elizabeth N. McNeel		5F	Texas
John McNeel ⁴⁷		3M	Texas
Wiley Pollard	Blacksmith	30M	Georgia

According to Abner Strobel, Pleasant Grove had “a beautiful home, similar to J. Greenville McNeel, only on not so large a scale. It, too had marble mantels and hearths, and was two-story. His sugar house and negro cabins were also of brick. The dwelling was elegantly furnished...The public road from Velasco and Quintana through Brazoria and Columbia on to Richmond, passed near this plantation, and in early days Leander McNeel would keep a slave on the road side to hail any belated traveler, and invite him in to spend the night, without charge...”⁴⁸

According to John Perry McNeel,⁴⁹ because of the Civil War, the two and a half storey brick home was never completed. Windows were without shutters, the cupola was never built on the roof, and the upper gallery had no railing. The interior of the home, however, was enriched with marble hearths and mantles, and medallions of plaster decorated the high ceilings. The dining room was finished in mahogany. The many rooms contained beautiful furniture. A winding staircase connected the different floors. Slave cabins, sugar mill, and other improvements were of brick.⁵⁰



⁴⁷ John McNeel is also listed with his mother, Jane LeMothe McNeel, in the Moses Austin Bryan household at Reterio Plantation.

⁴⁸ Strobel, Abner J., *The Old Plantations and Their Owners of Brazoria County, Texas*, Lake Jackson Historical Association, 2006, p.24.

⁴⁹ John Perry McNeel was a grandson of Leander H. McNeel Sr. It is uncertain as to why the home would not have been finished.

⁵⁰ Platter, A. A., *Educational, Social, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County, Texas*, Doctorial Dissertation, University of Houston, Houston, Texas, 1961, p. 116. This causes one to consider if the mansion was built by Leander H. McNeel Sr. or Jr.

Lucy Lewis, a house slave who was born on Pleasant Grove Plantation, remembered in sharp contrast to Pinkie Kelly, the field hand: “My marster and his missy were mighty good to us, mighty good. We used to wear good clothes—real pretty clothes...when we-all real good, Marse John used to give us small money to buy with. I spent mos’ of mine on clothes...Missy sho’ good to me. Dey ‘bout 20 slaves but I stay in the house all de time. Out house have two big rooms and a kitchen and de boys and men have rooms apart like bitty houses on de outside...I gits up ‘bout sun-up to make coffee, but when we has to green up de house for company, I gits up earlier...”⁵¹

In October 1851 Leander H. McNeel Sr. passed away. His estate would be tied up in probate court for 43 years. In his last will and testament Leander appointed Sterling, John G., and Pleasant D. McNeel along with Robert and David G. Mills as executors to manage his estate for the benefit of his children until the youngest reached age 21. His entire estate was bequeathed to his four children, Leander Harrsion Jr., Sterling Jr., Elizabeth Nancy, and John McNeel. He also appointed his sister Nancy D. Randon, who lived in Fort Bend County, to be guardian of Elizabeth Nancy McNeel.⁵²

Leander H. McNeel’s entire estate was valued at \$80,207.80. This included his 1/3 interest in 8996 acres still jointly owned with John G. McNeel and Pleasant D. McNeel valued at \$14993.33. His home and improvements on the land were valued at \$13,500. He also owned ½ interest in the sugar mill, \$7500 and the home in which Pleasant D. McNeel lived, \$2000. There were also 51 slaves listed with estate (see Appendix).⁵³ Leander H. McNeel in his will stipulated that “my Negro slaves Harry and Fanny shall not be put to work in the field under an overseer but that my executor shall only require them to do such light jobs and work as I have lately requested them to do.”⁵⁴ He also owned various interests in several other tracts of land.

Pleasant Grove produced sugar throughout the 1850’s. In 1851 it was estimated that 33 hogsheads of sugar, 100 barrels of molasses, and 1500 bushels of corn would be produced on Pleasant Grove:

1852	208 hogsheads
1853	105
1854	305
1855	263
1858	70 ⁵⁵

⁵¹ Lucy Lewis born on Pleasant Grove Plantation, *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from Federal Writers’ Project, 1936-1938*, Vol. 16 Part 3, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, pp. 14-15.

⁵² Record of Wills: B 74/77

⁵³ ROW: B 77/80

⁵⁴ ROW: B 76

⁵⁵ Platter, A. A., *Educational, Social, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County, Texas*, Doctorial Dissertation, University of Houston, Houston, Texas, 1961, pp. 106-107.

⁵⁵ Champomier, P. A., *Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1852-53, With An Appendix*, New Orleans. Champomier, P.A., *Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1853-54, With An Appendix*, New Orleans, 1854. Champomier, P. A., *Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1854-55, With An Appendix*, New Orleans, 1855 & *Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1855-56, With An Appendix*, New Orleans, 1856. Champomier, P. A., *Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1858-59, With An Appendix*, New Orleans, 1859.

Through 1855 these totals include the amount produced by the Leander H. McNeel estate and Pleasant D. McNeel's plantation, sometimes called "Magnolia"⁵⁶, combined.

In November 1850 John G., Pleasant D., and Leander H. McNeel bought another 300 acres out of the William Cummings League which had been the home of their cousin John S. McNeel and his wife Laura.⁵⁷ John G. McNeel bought another 1416 acres out of the William Cummings League from Samuel A. and Ellen Cummings.⁵⁸

In the fall of 1854 a hurricane which hit Matagorda, Texas affected the southern half of Brazoria County:

...The Purgury of the Sugar House belonging to Jno.G. McNeel was blown down; a part of P. D. McNeel's Cane Shed was also blown down; the Purguries of the Sugar Houses of Mrs. Mims and J. P. Caldwell; a portion of the Sugar House of S. P. Winston; a portion of the Sugar Houses of R. & D. G. Mills, both on their upper and lower plantations; and all of A. Winston's Sugar House have been blown down. In addition to the above we hear of many negro cabins, corn cribs, fences & c., entirely leveled with the ground...In regard to the crops, from the best information we are able to get, we do not think the Sugar will be more than one-third or one-half a crop, and the Cotton will not greatly, if any, exceed one-fourth the crop that would otherwise have been made...⁵⁹

Sterling McNeel passed away late 1854-1855.⁶⁰ The total inventory for his estate was valued at \$128,244 with the Darrington Plantation acreage itself valued at \$35000. The sole heir to the Sterling McNeel Estate was Sterling McNeel Junior. David G. Mills⁶¹ became the administrator of his estate and continued to operate the plantation 1855-1857(See Darrington Plantation Report). The nucleus of his plantation would become part of the Darrington Prison Farm.

July 13, 1854 J. Greenville McNeel wed Alma Amelia Blydenburgh aged thirty three in Brooklyn, New York. The Reverend Rutgers Van Brunt of Smithtown performed the ceremony. Alma was the daughter of Richard Blydenburgh.⁶² The same day in July 1854 Pleasant D. McNeel negotiated a mortgage of \$4223.71 with the firm of J. H. Brower & Co.⁶³ of New York City with his plantation of 3690 acres as security.⁶⁴ Richard's brother Benjamin B. Blydenburgh was a partner in J. H. Brower & Co.

For whatever reason July 1856 Pleasant D. McNeel started to sell off his plantation holdings to his brother J. Greenville McNeel. For \$31,000 Pleasant sold him 43 slaves and his interest in another 8 slaves. His actual plantation acreage was considered to be 3690 acres.⁶⁵ His plantation lands and all his interest in the other tracts of lands held jointly were sold for \$20,000.⁶⁶ March 1857 J. Greenville McNeel

⁵⁶ The only use of the name "Magnolia" is by A. A. Platter in his thesis. None of the deed records use this name for the sugar plantation of Pleasant D. McNeel.

⁵⁷ BCDR: E 538/39

⁵⁸ BCDR: F 541

⁵⁹ *Texas Planter*, September 27, 1854, Brazoria, Texas

⁶⁰ It is not understood if he was buried on the Darrington Plantation or in the McNeel family cemetery.

⁶¹ Robert and David G. Mills operated R. & D. G. Mills of Galveston with David overseeing operations in Brazoria County while living on Low Wood Plantation in the southern part of the county.

⁶² *Texas State Gazette*, September 23, 1854, Austin, Texas

⁶³ Firm composed of J. H. Brower and Benjamin B. Blydenburgh, his son-in-law. J. H. Brower was the owner of the New York & Texas Packet Line and, at one time, owned fifteen vessels trading in all parts of the world.

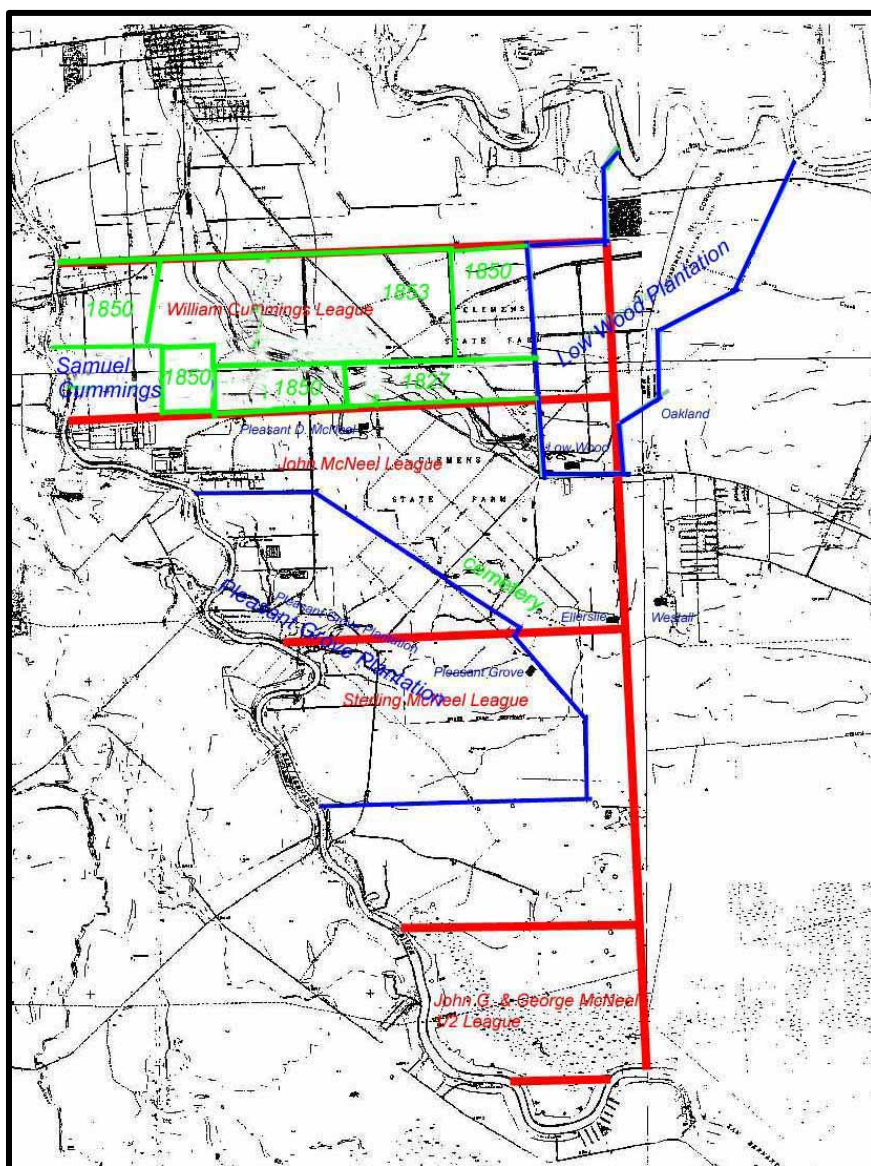
⁶⁴ BCDR: G56/58

⁶⁵ BCDR: G 643/44

⁶⁶ BCDR: G 641/43

used these same lands to secure a mortgage of \$12,226.67 with J. H. Brower & Co.⁶⁷ In 1858 J. Greenville McNeel purchased from the Leander H. McNeel estate the Pleasant D. McNeel dwelling house, Negro houses, and all the land on which they stood for \$4000.⁶⁸ Greenville McNeel now owned most of the lands which his brothers once held together on Gulf Prairie except for the homestead of Leander H. McNeel on which his ex-wife and children were living.

J. Greenville McNeel also sued the estate of Leander H. McNeel Sr. for a partition of lands. This was accomplished in 1859. The Pleasant Grove Plantation lands were surveyed to be 3720 acres.⁶⁹ It should be remembered that there were no definite boundary lines between the sugar plantation of Pleasant D. McNeel and J. Greenville's Ellerslie Plantation only jointly held property.



⁶⁷ BCDR: H 112/14

⁶⁸ BCDR: H 518/20

⁶⁹ BCDR: J 242/48

In the 1860 Agricultural Census John G. McNeel is listed with 1550 improved acres, 24450 acres unimproved, and \$30,000 worth of farm machinery. He owned 50 horses, 100 mules, 60 milch cows, 50 work oxen, 1800 head of cattle, and 200 hogs. The plantation produced 15,000 bushels of corn, 300 bushels of Irish potatoes, 3000 of sweet potatoes, 500 lbs. of butter, 4000 lbs. of tobacco, 275 bales of cotton, 300 hogsheads of sugar, and 30,000 gallons of molasses in 1859. There were 176 slaves on the property in 36 dwellings, these would have included the dwellings on Ellerslie and what was Pleasant D. McNeel's sugar plantation.

In the 1860 Federal Census the John G. McNeel household is listed:

John G. McNeel	Planter	58M	Kentucky	
Alma A. B. McNeel		34F	New York	(2 nd wife)
George W. McNeel		22M	Texas	
John G. McNeel, Jr.		18M	Texas	
Pleasant D. McNeel, Jr.		16M	Texas	
Morgan L. McNeel		13M	Texas	

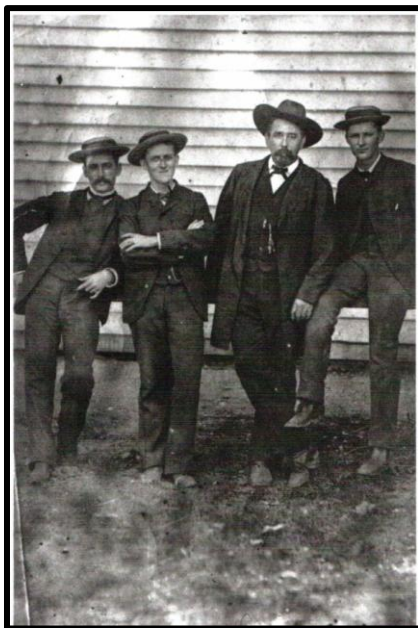


Photo Courtesy of Brazoria County Historical Museum 2000.008p.0063

John G. McNeel Jr., Pleasant D. McNeel Jr., J. Greenville McNeel Sr., and Morgan L. McNeel⁷⁰

Courtesy of the Brazoria County Historical Museum (Appears to be taken prior to Civil War)

In a separate household:

Pleasant D. McNeel, Sr.		63M	Kentucky
Q. Baser	Overseer	35M	Alabama
J. Wilsmer	Carpenter	27M	England
B. Underwood	Cooper	65M	Pennsylvania

⁷⁰ The photo was not labeled but based on later photos after the Civil War this is the best assumption by the author. In the Confederate Service Record of John G. McNeel Jr. he is described as 5 feet 9 1/2 inches in height with light complexion, dark hair and eyes.

The children of deceased Leander H. McNeel Sr. along with his ex-wife, Jane Dawson who had remarried, were living at Pleasant Grove in 1860:

Leander H. McNeel, Jr.	Planter	22M	Texas
Sterling McNeel		18M	Texas
Nancy E. McNeel		16F	Texas
John McNeel		13M	Texas
Jane Dawson(Mother)		42F	Louisiana
Pablo Matellis	Tailor	40M	Mexico

In the 1860 Agricultural Census Leander H. McNeel Jr. had 600 improved acres, 9928 unimproved acres, and only \$1020 worth of farm machinery. He owned 20 horses, 30 mules, 30 work oxen, 600 head of cattle, and 50 hogs. In 1859 the plantation produced 3000 bushels of corn, 100 of Irish potatoes, 200 lbs. of butter, 5 tons of hay, 187 bales of cotton, 8 hogsheads of sugar, and 2400 gallons of molasses. There were 57 slaves on the property in 18 dwellings.

Before the Civil War, John G. McNeel had been sending his older sons to the east coast to receive their education. From 1856-1857 George W. McNeel attended the College of New Jersey. In 1858 he attended Centre College, Danville Kentucky. He transferred to Rutgers University in 1859 and received his A. B. Degree in June 1860. His brother John G. McNeel Jr. was also enrolled at Rutgers in 1860 as a sophomore. Pleasant D. McNeel arrived in 1861. After graduation George W. then continued his studies at Princeton. George W. McNeel married Maria Pell Brower, daughter of John H. Brower⁷¹ February 28, 1861 in Flushing, New York before returning to Texas.⁷²

With the beginning of the Civil War John G., Jr. and Pleasant D. McNeel Jr. left New York and returned to Texas. September 7, 1861 George W. and John G. McNeel Jr. both enlisted in Co. B 8th Texas Calvary, Terry's Texas Rangers, for the duration of the war. George W. McNeel was elected 1st Lieutenant and would later advance to captain when John A. Wharton was elected colonel. Pleasant D. McNeel Jr. joined the brothers January 14, 1862 at Ransom's Place also enlisting for the duration of the war. Terry's Texas Rangers saw action in several skirmishes and the battles before Murfreesboro, Tennessee during this time. By the end of the year, December 1, 1862, John G. McNeel was discharged from the Rangers being unfit for duty due to premonitory symptoms of consumption. He returned to Brazoria County and with a warmer climate his health returned prompting him to volunteer for service, January 1863, as a private with Co. G 13th Texas Volunteers, Bates' Regiment guarding the Texas coast.

Pleasant D. McNeel Jr. died near War Trace, Tennessee due to complications from typhoid fever March 18, 1863. The Reverend Robert F. Bunting, Chaplain for the regiment, wrote an open letter to the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* in Houston, Texas:

It becomes again my sad duty to record the death of another Ranger by disease. Pleasant D. McNeill, Company B, son of Hon. J. G. McNeill, of Brazoria County, died near Fairfield, on

⁷¹ Owner of J. H. Brower & Co.

⁷² Her sister Elizabeth B. Brower wed Morgan L. Smith owner of the Waldeck Plantation.

the 18th March. Attacked by intermittent fever, it terminated in congestion of the brain...During the engagements his bearing was that of the brave and gallant soldier, and he elicited the commendation of his comrades...Maj. Geo. W. McNeill was by his side and rendered all the assistance which a devoted brother could give to soothe his suffering and comfort his heart...⁷³

In the service record of George W. McNeel he is listed as having resigned his Lieutenant's position January 10, 1863.⁷⁴ After the death of his brother Pleasant he returned to Texas. His first child, John G. McNeel, Jr., had been born in December 1862. In the early part of 1862 he had been back in Brazoria County as Provost Marshal on Colonel John A. Wharton's staff trying to enlist more men for the Confederacy. His office was in Columbia.⁷⁵

With the Union invasion of the lower Texas coast, December 1863 to March 1864 Ellerslie was the headquarters of Confederate Major General John Bankhead Magruder. As General Magruder tried to anticipate the moves of Union General Nathan P. Banks the number of Confederate troops in Brazoria County was greatly increased during this time period.

George W. McNeel was the Division Inspector with the rank of major on Major General John B. Magruder's staff January 1864. When Union General Nathaniel P. Banks abandoned Texas and began his Red River Campaign George W. McNeel was back on the battlefield. April 10, 1864, Major General Hamilton P. Bee reported at Pleasant Hill, Louisiana on the battles at Mansfield and Pleasant Hill: "...Major McNeil, of my personal staff, had his horse killed, and our casualties were heavy... It is proper to bear testimony to the gallant and useful services rendered me by ...Maj. George W. McNeil, aide de camp..."⁷⁶ On the 18th of April Col. G. W. Chilton and Major G. W. McNeel, of General Bee's staff took a flag of truce to the Federals allowing medical supplies to be delivered to their wounded.⁷⁷

Major General John A. Wharton assumed command of Major General Tom Green's cavalry corps on the 25th April, 1864. Major George W. McNeel joined his staff and on May 7, was killed by Union troops while reconnoitering the Federals' position on Bayou Rapides. Brigadier H. P. Bee wrote: "Maj. George W. McNeil, of my staff, was killed near Alexandria, while temporarily on the staff of Major General Wharton...My regrets for George McNeil will be appreciated by all who knew him. ..." ⁷⁸ Union Brigadier General M. K. Lawler entered in his report: "Major McNeil, acting assistant inspector-general on the staff of the rebel General Bee, was killed on this day by Cameron's pickets while reconnoitering our lines."⁷⁹

⁷³ Cutrer, Thomas W., ed., *Our Trust is in the God of Battles*, The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, Tennessee, 2006, p. 146. *Tri-Weekly Telegraph*, April 29, 1863, Houston, Texas

⁷⁴ Another reference cites that he resigned in Oakland, Kentucky in 1862.

⁷⁵ *The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events*, p. 765

⁷⁶ *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., Vol. XXXIV Pt 1, pp. 607-610

⁷⁷ *Daily Constitutionalist*, May 21, 1864, Augusta, Georgia (Reprint from *Telegraph*, April 22, 1864, Houston, Texas)

⁷⁸ *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., Vol. XXXIV Pt 1, Letter Brigadier General H. P. Bee to Captain B. F. Weems, May 14, 1864, p. 612

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, Letter Brigadier General M. K. Lawler, Commanding to Brigadier General William Dwight, Chief of Staff, May 22, 1864, p.277



George W. McNeel Rutgers 1860 ⁸⁰

His stepmother, Alma A. McNeel entered in the family Bible: "George W. McNeel eldest son of John G. McNeel...was killed at Gordon's Bridge Bayou Rapides La. by the Federals...Aged 26 years, 7 months and 10 days. His life has been given a noble sacrifice in his country's service, he died in the discharge of his duty, faithful unto death.----His step Mother makes this record to his memory."⁸¹

August 27, 1864 Alma A. Blydenburgh McNeel died of typhoid fever at Ellerslie. It is presumed she is buried in the McNeel family cemetery although there is not a marker.

After the Civil War J. Greenville McNeel with his two remaining sons, John G. Jr. and Morgan L. McNeel tried to make the plantation produce once again. Pleasant D. McNeel Sr. was also still alive. According to Pinkie Kelly, one of the slaves on the plantation: "I never heard much 'bout no war and Marse Greenville never told us we was free. First I know was one day we gwine to de fields and a man come ridin' up and say, "Whar you folks gwine?" We say we gwine to de fields and then he says to Marse Greenville, "you can't work these people without pay, 'cause they's as free as you is." Law we sho' shout, young folks and old folks too. But we stay there, no place to go, so we jes' stay."⁸²

In January 1868 Lizzie McNeel, wife of Morgan, wrote her father David Henry Reid in Georgia: "...the negroes now hiring, scarcely at all and the farmers have abandoned the idea of using them at present although the Scotch are arriving weekly—the demand is greater than the supply. Col. McNeel went to Galveston for the purpose of engaging twenty apiece for his sons. But they are snatched as soon as they land and he only got fifteen...The gardner and family came this morning but I have not seen them yet. We have plenty house servants. The same old ones doing as well as we could expect—and the field negroes, I am heartily glad are out of sight they were a continual source of annoyance..."⁸³

J. Greenville McNeel Sr. suffered an unspecified injury "en route" from Texas in September 1866. He felt that he had become incapacitated enough that he was unable to carry on the plantation any longer. The main operation of Ellerslie was turned over to Morgan L. McNeel. In 1868 J. Greenville McNeel Sr. wrote: "...We had our cane all planted...we have every hope of a

⁸⁰ Binns, Stephen, "Class of 60", *Smithsonian in Your Classroom*, Fall 2010

⁸¹ McNeel Family File, Brazoria County Historical Museum

⁸² Aunt Pinkie Kelly born on Ellerslie Plantation, *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938*, Vol. 16, p. 254, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

⁸³ "Letter Elizabeth Reid McNeel to D. H. Reid", January 23, 1868, McNeel Family File, Brazoria County Historical Museum, Angleton, Texas

remunerating crop of say 300,000 pounds of sugar and 500 Bls. of molasses with a fair season...unfortunately the negroes would not work in 1866 and we lost all our cane nearly. Only make enough to plant 200 acres this year. Morgan came in very auspiciously just in time to secure a good set of hands for the year quite enough to cultivate the cane crop and make plenty of corn. The cotton crop throughout all the coast country an entire failure...caterpillars eat it up. Morgan on his arrival...took entire control of the Farm and Hands, paid off the hands of 1867 and made new bargains for the present year. Allowing a large margin for my love for Morgan I must say his industry and good sense and Judgement cannot be scarcely equaled certainly not excelled by one so young. Rises before day takes coffee rings the bell at daylight. Has near 500 acres land plowed in all and had built nearly every_____ fence. Mr. Rousck is on his staff...⁸⁴



Ellerslie Plantation Bell Courtesy of Brazoria County Historical Museum 2000.008p.0085

As funds were needed to keep the plantation going J Greenville McNeel went to some of his creditors as before the war and to his family. For \$10,000 he mortgaged a half interest in the original Ellerslie lands to R. & D. G. Mills excluding his homestead in July 1870.⁸⁵ From Maria McNeel, widow of George W. McNeel, he obtained \$3750 with ½ interest in the P. D. McNeel League as security.⁸⁶

Over the years J. Greenville McNeel Sr. had used moneys inherited by his wife Ann Augusta McNeel from her father's estate and had not distributed any of it to his children. In 1870 he agreed to mortgage to Morgan and Maria for \$10,000 each a half interest in all his lands except his homestead as security.⁸⁷ Maria with her two children, John G. and Georgiana, by George W. McNeel returned to New York to live with her family while Morgan remained at Ellerslie with his.

J. Greenville McNeel Sr. is listed with Morgan McNeel's family in the same household at Ellerslie in the 1870 Federal Census:

John G. McNeel	Farmer	65M	Kentucky
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⁸⁴“Letter J. Greenville McNeel to D. H. Reid”, February 9, 1868, McNeel Family File, Brazoria County Historical Museum, Angleton, Texas

⁸⁵ BCDR: M 239

⁸⁶ BCDR: M 245

⁸⁷ BCDR: M 246

Morgan McNeel	24 M	Texas
Elizabeth McNeel	22 F	Georgia
Annie McNeel	3 F	Georgia (?)
Robert McNeel	1M	Georgia (?)

John G. McNeel Jr. lived at a separate residence with his family:

John G. McNeel	Farmer	28 M	Texas
Eugenia McNeel		22 F	Alabama
George W. McNeel		3 M	Texas
Andrew Westall		24 M	Texas

December 28, 1870 J. Greenville McNeel Sr. signed a prenuptial agreement with Laura Virginia Roane, age 43, and once again married. The gist of their agreement was that Greenville would pay \$3000 for Laura to release all claim to his homestead.⁸⁸ In April 1839 Laura V. Roane had come to Texas with her mother, Anne Contesse Irby Roane after the death of her father, Dr. James Roane of Tennessee. Her sister Christiana Irby Roane had married Thomas G. Masterson in 1834 and resided in Velasco at the time of their arrival. Laura had been the music teacher for J. Greenville's niece, Elizabeth A. McNeel during the Civil War. J. Greenville McNeel must have gotten to know her at this time as he was administrator for Leander H. McNeel's estate and was responsible for seeing that her tuition was paid in 1861 and 1862.

Pleasant Duke McNeel Sr. passed away December 1871, presumably buried in the McNeel Cemetery without a marker. He left his estate to John Greenville McNeel Jr. and Georgiana McNeel, the children of George W. McNeel in New York, with a provision to care for the graveyard where his mother and father were buried.⁸⁹

John H. Brower had been fronting John G. McNeel Sr. money to keep Ellerslie operational. In 1772 McNeel cosigned his whole crop to John H. Brower & Co. and R. & D. G. Mills for \$1000 from each firm.⁹⁰ His crops for 1873 and 1874 were both mortgaged to John H. Brower & Co.⁹¹

⁸⁸ BCDR: N 67/68 This agreement would become the focus of law suits after the death of J. Greenville McNeel Sr.

⁸⁹ Record of Wills: E 242

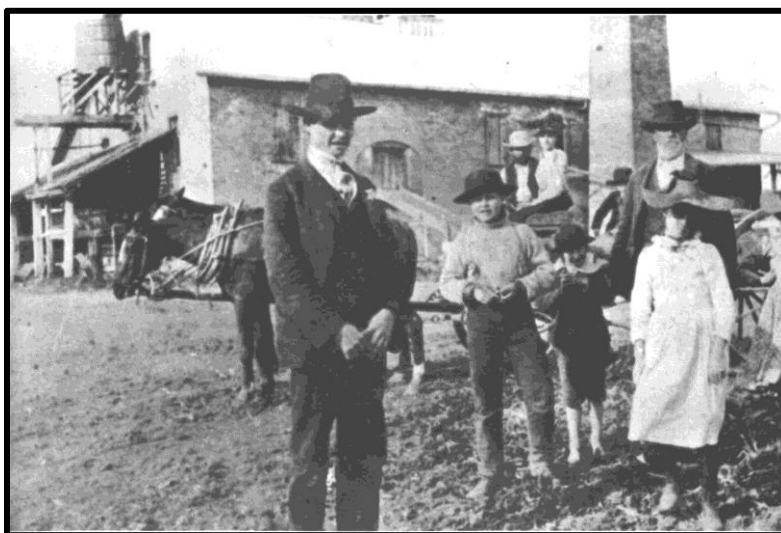
⁹⁰ BCDR: N 338/40

⁹¹ BCDR: O 5 & O 409/10



Back Row: Morgan L. S. McNeel, J. Greenville McNeel Sr., J. Greenville McNeel Jr., Elizabeth Reid McNeel
 Front Row: George Pleasant McNeel, Annie McNeel (All best guesses)(Possible Hospital In Background)
 Unlabeled & Unknown Date (~1874?) Courtesy Brazoria County Historical Museum 2000.008p.0061

August 19, 1874 Morgan L. McNeel was killed as the result of a horse accident leaving his wife Elizabeth and four young children. Elizabeth would sell out a mortgage on the livestock that her husband had sold for \$2200 gold.⁹² Elizabeth and the children moved back to Marietta, Georgia to be near her family where their descendants became quite successful. The McNeel Marble Co. started in the 1890's and ran until 1960.



Ellerslie Sugar Mill in Background

(None of Individuals labeled in either photo-best guesses)

Unlabeled & Unknown Date (~1874?) Courtesy Brazoria County Historical Museum 2000.008p.0062

⁹² BCDR: O 579/80

J. Greenville McNeel Sr. died August 17, 1876 and was presumably buried in the McNeel family cemetery without a marker. John G. McNeel Jr. decided that he had inherited the Ellerslie homestead of 200 acres and sold the property to Eugene J. Wilson for \$1600 in 1878.⁹³

According to the last will and testament of John G. McNeel Sr., he left the 200 acre Ellerslie homestead to the children of George W. and Maria McNeel. His son John G. McNeel Jr. was to be able to live on the property and maintain it until his nephew “John G. McNeel Jr. Jr.” was twenty one. All of this was contingent on the grandchildren paying his “good wife Laura V. McNeel” \$3000.⁹⁴ Laura V. McNeel sued John G. McNeel Jr. and the case went all the way to the Texas Supreme Court where it was held in Laura’s favor as according to the prenuptial agreement she signed since she was to receive \$3000 which did not happen therefore she was entitled to the homestead. Laura V. McNeel was able to purchase the homestead for \$1250 at a court ordered sale in 1881.⁹⁵ The next year she sold the homestead which she had been living on to James Marion Huntington for \$5000 and moved to Houston to be with her mother and the Masterson family.⁹⁶

The mortgages on J. Greenville McNeel’s lands signed in 1870 were foreclosed in the US Circuit Court in Galveston, and by decree of the court, the lands covered in them were sold by Special Commissioner to John H. Brower in January 1879.⁹⁷ The lands not covered in the above mortgages were sold to J. H. Brower the next month for \$10,145.⁹⁸ Brower set up a trust with Hewitt & Blydenburgh including all his lands from the McNeels for the benefit of his six daughters.⁹⁹

James Marion Huntington had married Elizabeth A. McNeel, daughter of Leander H. McNeel Sr., in September 1872. He and Elizabeth purchased the interest of Sterling McNeel Jr. in the 200 acre Pleasant Grove homestead of Leander H. McNeel Sr. the same year for \$1018.05.¹⁰⁰ Elizabeth had previously purchased the interests of her other brothers in the homestead in 1869.¹⁰¹ The couple may have early on lived at Pleasant Grove. J. Marion Huntington from Indiana had the financial resources which the impoverished McNeel family lacked. The lands associated with the Leander H. McNeel Sr. estate were under heavy financial pressure.

⁹³ BCDR: Q 533/34

⁹⁴ ROW F 2/3 The apparent passing over of his son John G. Greenville Jr. in his will may have something to do with his behavior during this period. He was charged with “aggravated assault and battery” for beating Mathilda Johnson, freedwoman, July 30, 1871 and October 3, 1875 he was charged “assault & battery” for taking a knife and cutting Allen Kelly, freedman. This continued after the death of his father as he was charged with “threatening the life of J. H. Tabler” October 19, 1877. Criminal Cases: 886, 1122, & 1272 According to Abner Strobel J. Greenville McNeel Sr. had to pay several fines to the Freedman’s Bureau in order to keep his sons and their cousins out of jail.

⁹⁵ BCDR: T 499

⁹⁶ BCDR: U 76/77

⁹⁷ BCDR: R 601/04

⁹⁸ BCDR: R 598/601

⁹⁹ BCDR: R 251, R 256, S 144/49 & S 196/98

¹⁰⁰ BCDR: N 724/25

¹⁰¹ BCDR: N 19 & N19/20

After the death of Leander H. McNeel Sr. in 1851, J. Greenville McNeel Sr. and Pleasant D. McNeel had become co-administrators of his estate. The education of the older boys is not certain though they did receive a higher education. Sterling McNeel was in Hartford, Connecticut possibly attending Trinity College in 1860. With the beginning of the Civil War Leander H. McNeel Jr. joined his cousins George W. and John G. McNeel Jr. and enlisted in Co. B 8th Texas Calvary, Terry's Texas Rangers, for the duration of the war September 7, 1861. Leander transferred to the 13th Texas Infantry in January 1865. Sterling McNeel enlisted with General Joseph's Bates Regiment staying in Texas.

Nancy D. Randon had relinquished her guardianship of Elizabeth (Nannie) A. McNeel in November 1855 and Nannie returned to Pleasant Grove. J. Greenville McNeel then became her guardian.¹⁰² Before the Civil War Nannie at age 15 was attending Chapel Hill in 1861. She returned home for a while and then in 1863 attended school in Huntsville, Texas, probably Austin College.¹⁰³

A list of claims against the Leander H. McNeel estate at the end of 1860 amounted to \$53901.22. Pleasant Grove Plantation was being rented by the estate. All the slaves were leased to various individuals throughout the county for a total of \$6475 for the year 1861. Sterling McNeel was leasing the plantation for only \$5.00 for 1863. The dwelling house and 75 acres was rented for \$5.00 by Mrs. Dawson and it remained the home of the minor children. For the 1863 the slaves were rented out for \$6475 to various individuals. This was providing cash for the minor children's living expenses. Each child also had their own personal slave. Leander H. McNeel Jr. who was on duty in the Confederate Army had his personal slave with him.¹⁰⁴

In 1866 and 1867 the plantation lands were rented to William Masterson for \$100 and \$51 respectively.

After the Civil War Pleasant Grove was overwhelmed by debt and was barely staying afloat. In the 1870 Federal Census the McNeel children are listed with their mother:

Leander McNeel	30M	Texas
Jane [Dawson]	49F	Louisiana (mother)
Sterling McNeel	Farmer 28 M	Texas
John McNeel	22 M	Texas
Elizabeth McNeel	19F	Texas
Mary McNeel	45F (Black)	South Carolina ¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Record of Wills: B 402 Nancy Randon lost her own daughter this same year.

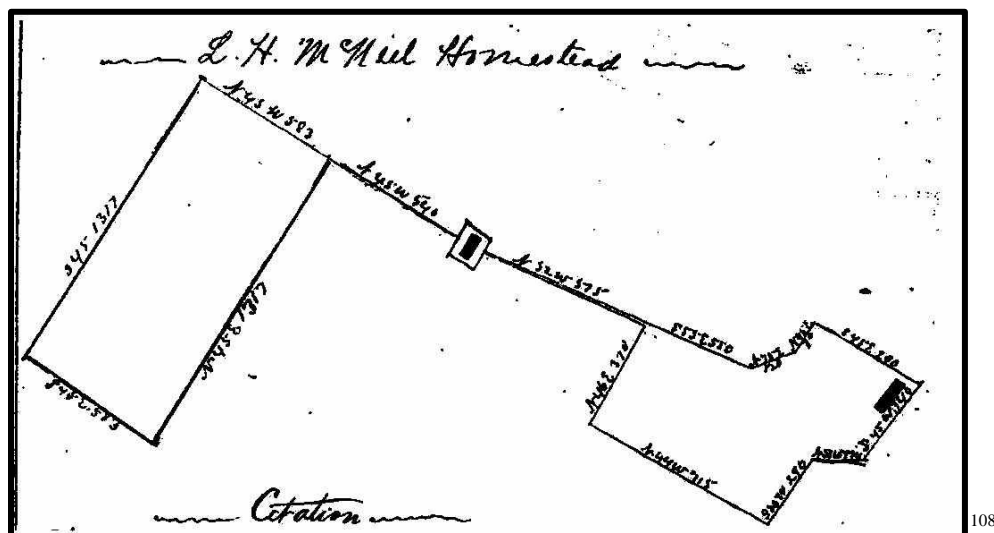
¹⁰³ ROW: C 311, 364, 599-600 & 605

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ In the same vicinity is a black family, Becky McNeel aged 28, Alex McNeel aged 16, and Han McNeel aged 13. During the year 1870 Sterling McNeel was found guilty of "fornication" for the previous five years and fined \$500. "Rebecca" was the name of the young lady involved. Rebecca was paid for "housekeeping and services" for the years 1866-1870. These payments were in the form of livestock transferred to her name by Sterling McNeel.(BCDR: L338 & M 298) In 1872 John McNeel gave to his brother Sterling and his wife "Rebecca" 10 acres of land.(BCDR: N 356) No official marriage record found.

John McNeel would purchase 250 acres out of his father's estate in 1870 and make his home on the San Bernard River near Hinkle's Ferry.¹⁰⁶

In 1873 Pleasant Grove Plantation was divided up into ~ 40 acre plots and sold off to satisfy creditors. John H. Brower was one of the main purchasers.¹⁰⁷ The 200 acre homestead was surveyed for the Elizabeth N. Huntington and Sterling McNeel before she and her husband purchased it in 1872. The shape of the homestead plot is unusual in that it included the main dwelling on 36 acres, a second brick building on 2 acres, and a separate 136 acre field all laid out along a road.



Only two years after her marriage Elizabeth (Nannie) A. Huntington died without issue in 1874.¹⁰⁹ Her husband J. Marion Huntington would remain in Brazoria County and remarry in 1885 to Ann Contesse Roane.¹¹⁰ In 1880 Nancy McNeel Randon and Laura's mother, Ann Roane, had been living with her at Ellerslie. In September 1881 J. Marion Huntington had purchased the 200 acre homestead at Ellerslie from Laura V. McNeel, widow of J. Greenville McNeel Sr.¹¹¹ Ann C. Huntington became the new mistress of Ellerslie. Marion Huntington would continue to buy acreage in the area to add to his ranch at Ellerslie. In 1886 Pleasant Grove was rented to the Weldon family who resided on the property for many years.¹¹²

¹⁰⁶ BCDR: M 15/17

¹⁰⁷ BCDR: O 378/82 & O 382/86

¹⁰⁸ ROW: E 308/09

¹⁰⁹ It is often written by several authors on Brazoria County history that Ellerslie was sold to J. Greenville McNeel Sr.'s niece, Elizabeth "Nannie" McNeel Huntington. Even the historical marker for Ellerslie has this description. This could not have happened if she died in 1874 before J. G. McNeel Sr. Her husband, several years after her death, did purchase Ellerslie. She did own the Pleasant Grove homestead during her life time`.

¹¹⁰ Ann Contesse Roane was a relative of the Archibald Roane, one time Governor of Tennessee.

¹¹¹ BCDR: U 76/77

¹¹² Platter, A. A., *Educational, Social, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County, Texas*, Doctorial Dissertation, University of Houston, Houston, Texas, 1961, p. 118.

The McNeel men seemed to have suffered hard times as by 1880 none were living with their spouses and almost all of the lands associated with their fathers' plantations had been sold off to cover debts.¹¹³ Leander H. McNeel was living alone as a teacher. Sterling, a saddler, and John McNeel, a farmer, were living together. John G. McNeel had possibly moved to Fort Bend County for work. Leander and John G. McNeel may have worked as teachers for the freedman bureau at different times.¹¹⁴



Lank Wooley holding horse, Ann C. Huntington walkway near home, J. Marion Huntington holding Catherine Huntington, Spencer Huntington young boy, Ruth Huntington young girl, Lee McNeel man near home in background (Leander H. McNeel son of Leander McNeel Jr.)-Based on the birth of Catherine Huntington that would make this picture 1893-Courtesy of the Brazoria County Historical Museum (Roof area of picture appears to have been photo shopped)

¹¹³ John McNeel's wife Mahala and their two children were living in West Columbia. According to the family John was an alcoholic and left his family. Her mother and siblings had moved in with her. John McNeel was charged with assaulting Anna Fe Neals, a freedwoman, with a butcher knife in September 1877. The three brothers were all charged with "fornication" numerous during the 1870's. Most of these case records have been removed from the courthouse so there are no particulars. Sterling McNeel was charged with the murder of Sam James, a freedman, July 28, 1886. Mary and Dan Goodwin testified that Sam James was shot at 150 yards from the corner of a fence. They heard the shot and "someone hallow Lord have mercy Sterling has shot me in the back". After the shot they saw Sterling McNeel "in a stooping posture" running to his house. Sterling skipped out of the county and lived near Hempstead while trying to dodge the law. In 1887 he was found lying unconscious on the Texas and New Orleans Road about 4 miles from Houston. He stated at this time that Leander and John McNeel were dead (Leander was not dead). He claimed to have been assaulted and robbed by two black youths. The police found out he was wanted for murder. *Fort Worth Daily Gazette*, September 7, 1887, Fort Worth, Texas

¹¹⁴ George Hall, whose parents were slaves on the Low Wood Plantation, attended a school near the Brazos River on the Peach Point Plantation where Leander McNeel Jr. and John G. McNeel Jr. taught. Platter, A. A., *Educational, Social, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County, Texas*, Doctorial Dissertation, University of Houston, Houston, Texas, 1961, p. 109.

J. Marion and Ann Huntington would have four children while living at Ellerslie, Spencer W., Ruth, Catherine T., and George Ransom Huntington. Playing in the attic of the Ellerslie Mansion, Kate and her younger brother, George set a fire among some cotton seed stored there. The children didn't tell anyone what they had done and the fire smoldered for several days before it erupted and burnt the house to the ground ~1896-1898.

The family moved into the hospital but was there only a couple of years when the 1900 hurricane blew down the hospital. The Huntington's then moved into the overseer's home which had been near the old mansion. This home was enlarged and then in 1937 or 1938 an upstairs was added to the building.

After Ann C. Huntington died in 1912,¹¹⁵ J. Marion Huntington married Dr. Sofie Herzog the next year. They both had previous marriages and signed a prenuptial agreement deciding that the property owned by each of them at beginning of their marriage would be held separate from each other.¹¹⁶ Being educated in Vienna, Austria, Dr. Sofie Herzog was the first female doctor in Brazoria County. In 1906 the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexican Railway appointed Dr. Sofie chief surgeon for the company. After her marriage with Marion Huntington she drove back and forth from Ellerslie to her office in Brazoria in her Ford, the first automobile in the county. Dr. Sofie Herzog Huntington died of a stroke in Houston, Texas July 21, 1925.



Dr. Sofie Herzog Huntington in Her Office in Brazoria

J. Marion Huntington died in 1927 and his surviving children inherited Ellerslie. Kate Huntington never married and lived in the overseer's home until her death in the 1960's. The ranch stayed in the Huntington family until George R. Huntington Jr. sold 1582 acres to the Phillips Petroleum Company in 1974.¹¹⁷ When James A. Creighton was doing historical research in 1934 the overseer's home was still in good condition, the sugar mill still had some of the grinding machinery in it, the tannery, blacksmith shop, and one of the slave quarters were

¹¹⁵ Ann C. Huntington is buried in the Gulf Prairie Cemetery next to her son Spencer.

¹¹⁶ BCDR: 123 73/74

¹¹⁷ BCDR: 1974017365

still standing. The machinery in the mill was taken apart in 1953.¹¹⁸ In 1983 the overseer's home was burned by vandals.

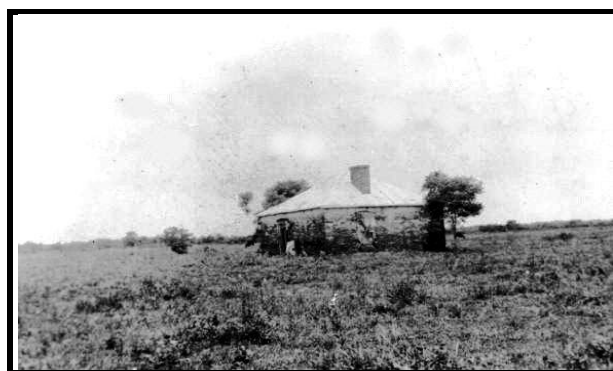


Ruins of Overseer's Home Courtesy of Brazoria County Historical Museum 1984.025p.0007

N. Russell Scott bought the property from Phillips Petroleum Co. in 1997 and is the current owner.¹¹⁹ A few ruins of the old plantation still remain; most of which are in further disrepair since the pictures below were taken in the 1980's.



Underground Cistern



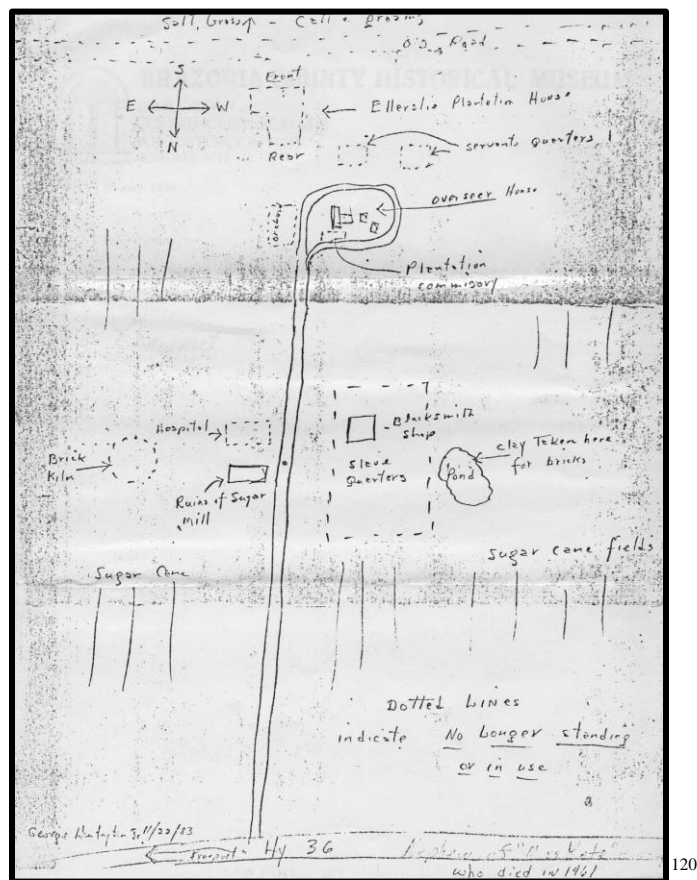
Blacksmith's Shop

Courtesy of Brazoria County Historical Museum 1998.016p.001 & 1983.006p.0015

¹¹⁸ Creighton, James A., *Narrative History of Brazoria County*, Texian Press, Waco, Texas, 1975, pp. 221-222.

¹¹⁹ BCDR: 1997005846

George R. Huntington Jr. left a hand drawing of the layout of Ellerslie Plantation in 1983:



The lands associated with Pleasant Grove and the Pleasant D. McNeel sugar plantation which included ten separate tracts of land bought by John H. Brower were sold by his estate in 1890 to Eckstein Norton.¹²¹ Norton's heirs sold 5527 acres of this property to Governor Joseph D. Sayers for \$44,216 in 1899.¹²²

This acreage in the William Cummings, John McNeel, and Sterling McNeel leagues would become the William C. Clemens prison farm.¹²³ The Low Wood Plantation then was added to this acreage in January 1902. The state soon built a large capacity sugar mill that could grind 900 tons of sugar cane every 24 hours and a railroad track from the sugar house to the landing on the Brazos River.¹²⁴ The 1908 plan included 1,785 acres of corn, 700 acres cotton, 1,000 acres of maize, 543 acres of food crops and remainder for livestock.¹²⁵ The sugar mill ground cane from neighboring sugar producers as well as other state prison farms.

¹²⁰ Ellerslie Plantation File, Brazoria County Historical Museum, Angleton, Texas

¹²¹ BCDR: 6 96/109

¹²² BCDR: 5 326/31

¹²³ William C. Clemens was President of the Texas State Penitentiary Board at this time. TPS Biennial Report, 1900 p. 12; 1902 p 21

¹²⁴ TPS Biennial Report 1902, p 21; 1904 p 4; 1906, p.14

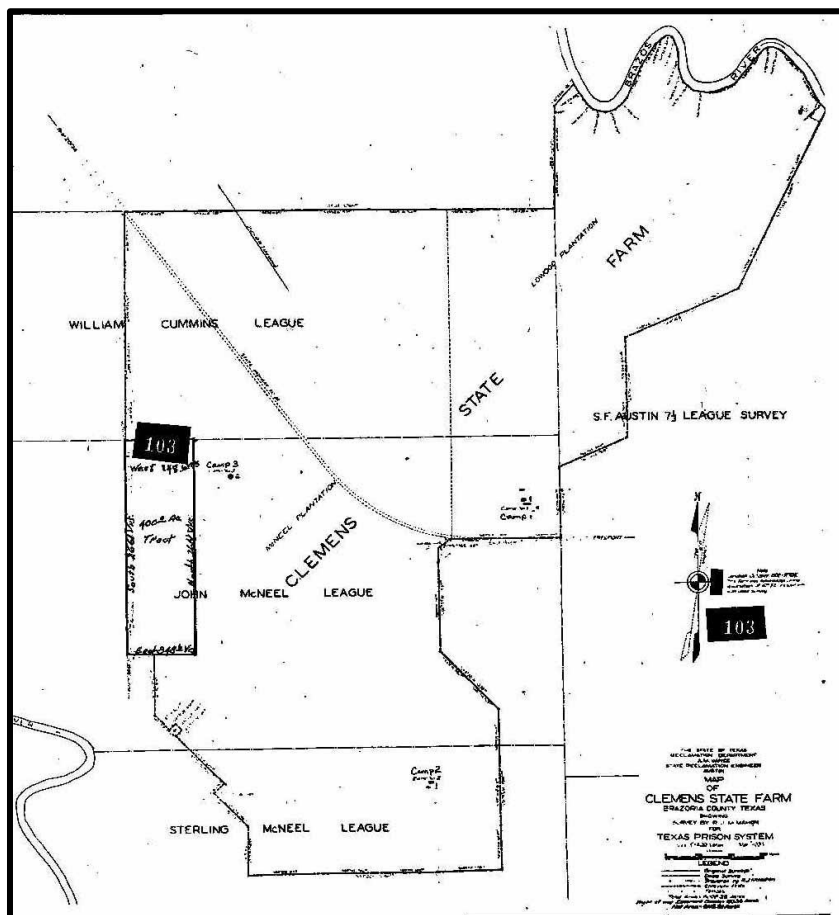
¹²⁵ *Angleton Times*, November 30, 1967, Angleton, Texas



Sugar Mill at Clemens Unit

Courtesy of the Brazoria County Historical Museum 1998.021p.0002

The mansion for the Pleasant Grove Plantation, which had withstood the 1900 hurricane, was torn down by the prison system and this area became known as Camp 2. The improvements made by Pleasant D. McNeel on his plantation became Camp 3. Camp 1 was the improvements on the Low Wood Plantation made by the Mills brothers. Each of these locations would hold major archeological sites. Camp 1 is now on private property.



The family cemetery was preserved and cleaned up by Warden L. G. Bounds.¹²⁶ According to early aerial photos it may have been larger than present. The cemetery itself presents several questions. There is buried in the cemetery according to the grave marker Pleasant D. McNeel Jr., son of Leander H. McNeel. Of course, Leander H. McNeel Sr. did not have a son Pleasant D. McNeel Jr. according to family records. In 1914 Charles H. Ficklin was buried in the graveyard with an unknown connection to the property. Perhaps he was part of the prison system. There is also one crypt with a blank marker. There should be several more graves in the McNeel family cemetery.¹²⁷



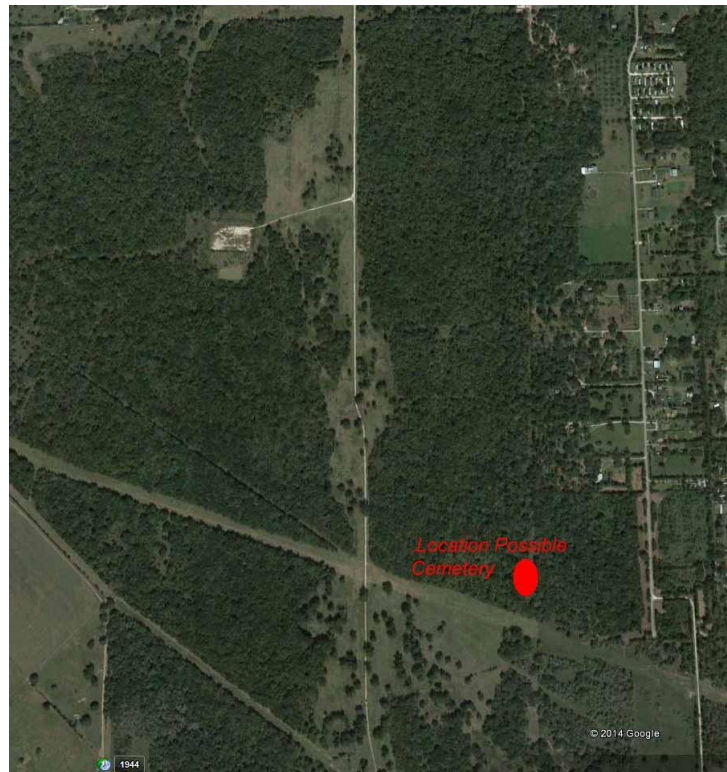
McNeel Family Cemetery on Clemens Prison Farm Property
Photo Courtesy of Brazoria County Historical Museum 2003.005p.0071

The William Cummings League should hold the homestead of John Shelby McNeel who lived on a 300 acre tract during the 1840's and the homestead of Samuel A. Cummings who lived on a 400 tract along the San Bernard River. This property was the home of Nicholas Lynch before his death.

¹²⁶ Platter, A. A., *Educational, Social, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County, Texas*, Doctoral Dissertation, University of Houston, Houston, Texas, 1961, p. 118.

¹²⁷The graves of J. Greenville McNeel Sr., Alma McNeel, his second wife, Pleasant D. McNeel Sr., Sterling McNeel, and several other McNeel relatives should be in this cemetery if there is not another graveyard located on the Ellerslie property.

A possible slave cemetery is located on the Ellerslie ranch lands near the fence row with the Westall Plantation just north of a pipeline crossing. This could possibly be the cemetery for both Ellerslie and the Westall Plantation.



Appendix A John McNeel Family

John McNeel b. November 21, 1770 South Carolina

d. August 27, 1833 Brazoria County, Texas (buried McNeel Cemetery)

m. January 3, 1793

Elizabeth Nancy Mitchell b. 1776 Kentucky

d. February 1844 Brazoria County, Texas (buried McNeel Cemetery)

A. **Nancy D. McNeel** b. March 9, 1794 Kentucky

d. 1883 Fort Bend County, Texas

m. 1823 (divorced 1850's)

David Randon b. 1795 Mississippi Reservation (Alabama)(Part Indian)

d. August 26, 1867 Fort Bend County, Texas

1. Josephine Randon b. 1830 d. 1855

B. **Pleasant D. McNeel** b. July 19, 1796 Kentucky

d. December 1871 Brazoria County, Texas (buried McNeel Cemetery ?)

C. **Sterling McNeel** b. April 19, 1799 Kentucky

d. 1854 Brazoria County, Texas (buried McNeel Cemetery ?)

1. Adopted Sterling Blackwell son of Sally Ann Blackwell (his son by Sally did not marry)

- D. **John Greenville McNeel** b. October 23, 1801 Kentucky
 d. August 17, 1876 Ellerslie
 m. 1st May 25, 1833, Brazoria County, Texas by bond \$10,000
- Ann Augusta Westall b. August 17, 1816 Tennessee
 d. March 24, 1848 Brazoria County, Texas (Buried McNeel Cemetery)
1. Elizabeth Emeline McNeel b. January 5, 1836
 d. August 8, 1838
 2. George Washington McNeel b. September 27, 1837
 d. May 7, 1864 Bayou Rapides, Louisiana (KIA by Union troops)
 m. February 28, 1861 Flushing, Queens, New York
 - Maria Pell Brower b. August 4, 1840 New York
 d. May 31, 1889 New York
 - a. John Greenville McNeel, Jr. b. December 20, 1862 d.
 - b. Georgiana McNeel b. October 14, 1864 d.
 3. Robert Mills McNeel b. June 12, 1840
 d. June 14, 1841 (Buried McNeel Cemetery)
 4. John Greenville McNeel Jr. b. January 8, 1842
 d. 1893??
 m. January 19, 1864 Harris County, Texas
 - Eugenia J. Pool b. November 8, 1847 Alabama
 d. July 11, 1928 Houston, Texas (remarried ~1874 Joseph Abel Roussel)
 - a. George Pleasant McNeel b. April 1867 d. June 20, 1922 Baton Rouge, Louisiana
 5. Pleasant D. McNeel Jr. b. January 14, 1844
 d. March 18, 1863 War Trace, Tennessee (Typhoid Fever)
 6. Ann Olivia McNeel b. March 23, 1845
 d. August 20, 1845 (buried McNeel Cemetery)
 7. Morgan Louis Shelby McNeel b. October 3, 1846
 d. August 19, 1874 Brazoria (buried McNeel Cemetery)
 m. October 31, 1866 Eatonton, Putnam County, Georgia
 - Elizabeth (Lizzie) Brewer Reid b. January 21, 1845 d. September 6, 1936 Eatonton, Georgia
 - a. Annie Reid McNeel b. 1868 Georgia
 - b. Robert Mills McNeel b. October 1869 d. April 7, 1937 Dade County, Florida
 - c. George Washington McNeel b. 1872 Brazoria County
 - d. Morgan L. McNeel Jr. b. November 29, 1873 d. August 20, 1941 Marietta, Georgia
 - m. 2nd July 13, 1854 Smithtown, New York
- Alma Amelia Blydenburgh b. 1821 New York
 d. August 26, 1864 Ellerslie, Brazoria County, Texas (Typhoid Fever)
- m. 3rd. 1870
- Laura V. Roane b. July 27, 1827 Tennessee
 d. March 31, 1886 Houston, Texas (buried Glenwood Cemetery, Houston)

- E. **George Washington McNeel** b. May 29, 1804 Kentucky
d. June 24, 1834
m.
Elizabeth ?
- F. **Albert Gallatin McNeel** b. January 16, 1807 d. October 5, 1808
- G. **Levi L. McNeel** b. November 1, 1809 d. February 14, 1810
- H. **Leander Harrison McNeel** b. December 5, 1812 Warren County, Kentucky
d. October 20, 1851 Brazoria County, Texas (McNeel Cemetery)
m. by bond \$10,000 April 23, 1835
Jane LaMothe b. 1820 Louisiana
1. Leander H. McNeel Jr. b. 1840 Brazoria County, Texas
d. May 16, 1892 Hinkles Ferry, Brazoria County, Texas

(Mary Butler b. 1840 Washington, D. C.)(Black)
d. 1910
 - a. Leander (Lee) H. McNeel, Jr. b. 1866 d. June 30, 1952 Galveston, Texas
 - b. Anderson McNeel b. 1872
 - c. Possibly 8 more children
 2. Sterling McNeel Jr. b. 1842 Brazoria County, Texas
d. after 1900?? (listed as day laborer 1900 Census)
(Rebecca McNeel)(Black)
 3. Elizabeth(Nancy-Nannie) A. McNeel b. 1845
d. 1874 (buried McNeel Cemetery?)
m. September 17, 1872
James Marion Huntington b. 1845 Indiana
d. June 3, 1927 Texas
 4. John McNeel b. 1847 Brazoria County, Texas
d. before 1887 ?
m.
Mahala Ellen Nichelson b. November 16, 1847 Louisiana
d. December 21, 1935 West Columbia, Texas (Divorced remarries
Samuel Preston Tinsley December 7, 1881)
 - a. Ella Nancy McNeel b. August 14, 1873 d. January 1966 Angleton, Texas
 - b. John Perry McNeel b. March 12, 1875 d. August 4, 1962 LaGrange, Texas
- I. **Elizabeth Gains McNeel** b. January 23, 1815
d. July 3, 1837 Brazoria County, Texas (childbirth) (buried McNeel Cemetery)
m. By bond of \$50,000 January 26, 1836 Brazoria County, Texas
Robert G. Mills b. March 9, 1809 Logan County, Kentucky
d. April 13, 1888 Galveston, Texas
- J. **Margaret T. McNeel** b. February 14, 1818
d. October 15, 1819

Appendix B

James Marion Huntington Family

James Marion Huntington b. 1845 Indiana

d. June 3, 1927 Texas

m. 1st September 17, 1872

Elizabeth A. McNeel b. 1845 Pleasant Grove Plantation, Brazoria County, Texas

d. 1874 Brazoria County, Texas

m. 2nd August 21, 1885 Brazoria County, Texas

Ann Contesse Roane b. April 7, 1857 Washington, D. C. (Archibald Campbell Roane & Ruth Allen)

d. August 12, 1912 Brazoria County, Texas (Buried Gulf Prairie Cemetery)

1. Spencer W. Huntington b. 1888 d. 1905 (Buried Gulf Prairie Cemetery)

2. Ruth R. Huntington b. May 19, 1890 d. June 13, 1926 Houston, Texas

3. Catherine (Kate) Taft Huntington b. December 10, 1892 d. 1961

4. George Ransom Huntington b. February 27, 1894

m. 3rd August 21, 1913

Sofie Dalia Herzog b. February 4, 1846 Vienna, Austria

d. July 21, 1925 Houston, Texas (stroke)

Appendix C Deed Records

GRANTORS	GRANTEES	Kind of Instrument	Book	Page	Month	Day	Year	Acres	Description
Stephen F. Austin	John McNeel	Deed			Aug	3	1824		1 League
Stephen F. Austin	Pleasant D. McNeel	Deed			Aug	7	1824		1 League
Stephen F. Austin	Sterling McNeel	Deed			Aug	19	1824		1 League
Stephen F. Austin	John G. & George W. McNeel	Deed			Aug	10	1824		½ League each
Stephen F. Austin	William Cummings	Deed							1 League
William Cummings	Sterling McNeel	Deed	C	507/08	Nov	2	1827		Agrees to purchase at \$.75/acre SE corner
Sterling McNeel	vs William Cummings Estate	Decree	C	506	Nov	15	1839	640	SE corner William Cummings League
William Cummings Estate	Sterling McNeel	Decree	C	505/06	Jan	11	1840	640	SE Corner William Cummings League
William Cummings Estate	Pickney S. McNeel	Deed	C	502/03	Feb	24	1840	300	
Pickney S. McNeel	John S. McNeel	Deed	A	282/83	July	9	1840	300	\$500 Out of Cummings League
David & Nancy Randon	Pleasant D., Sterling, John G. & Leander H. McNeel	Release	D	324/25	May	30	1846		Release all claim to her dead mother, father, sister's , and brother's estates
Leander H. McNeel	Morgan L. Smith	Mortgage	D	359/61	May	1	1847		\$5353.01 15 slaves-over ½ African + ¼ interest in 2 leagues of land security
Leander H. McNeel	Jane McNeel	Divorce Decree	D	483/87	Nov	10	1847		Leander assumed all debts-\$27,437-Jane received 3slaves
McNeel Brothers	David G. Mills John G. McNeel	Deed	E	237	June	1	1849		Release of land sold in SE corner
Samuel A. Cummings	David G. Mills John G. McNeel	Deed	E	339	Jan	23	1850	1000	\$3000 William Cummings League NE corner
Samuel A. Cummings	Leander H. Pleasant D. John G. McNeel	Release	E	340	Jan	23	1850	640	Release all claim to SE corner William Cummings League
David G. Mills	McNeel brothers	Deed	E	344	June	13	1849		\$50 His labor
Andrew Cummings	Leander H. McNeel	Deed	E	484/85	Aug	5	1850	470	\$1666 NW corner William Cummings League
Sterling McNeel	Pleasant, John, & Leander McNeel	Deed	E	530/32	Sept	23	1850		\$20,000 sold all his interest in the land east of the San Bernard-Leander got ½ the home & sugar mill Sterling & Pleasant had built
McNeel Brothers		Partition	E	535/36	Sept	23	1850		Several tracts owned by them divided in ¼ shares
John Shelby & Laura McNeel	Pleasant, John, & Leander McNeel	Deed	E	538/39	Oct	22	1850	300	\$3250 Land on which John S. McNeel now resides
Sterling McNeel	Leander H. McNeel	Deed	F	31	Nov	6	1850		Gift of his ¼ interest in all his lands in lower county
Samuel A. & Ellen Cummings	John G. McNeel	Deed	F	541	June	10	1853	1416	\$7000 the remaining part of William Cummings League
Pleasant D. McNeel	J. H. Brower & Co. New York	Mortgage	G	56	July	1	1853	3690	\$14223.71 His sugar plantation as security
Pleasant D. McNeel	John G. McNeel	Deed	G	641/43	July	8	1856		\$20,000 1/3 Interest in 3 tracts on which he lives

									except house & sugar mill + all other lands
Pleasant D. McNeel	John G. McNeel	Deed	G	643/44	July	2	1856		\$31,000 all his slaves + livestock & farm equipment
John G. McNeel	J. H. Brower & Co.	Mortgage	H	112/14	March	30	1857	3690	\$12,226.67 Pleasant D. McNeel sugar plantation as security in 3 leagues
Leander McNeel Estate	John G. McNeel	Deed	H	518/20	Jan	1	1858		\$4000 Pleasant D. McNeel dwelling & Negro houses & land on which they stand-PD McNeel lately resided
Leander McNeel Estate	John G. McNeel Sr.	Partition	J	242/48	March	14	1859		Partition of L. H. McNeel estate lands from brothers
Robert Mills	John G. McNeel	Release	J	477					Gray & Moore League
Sterling McNeel	Rebecca McNeel	Deed	L	338	Feb	4	1868		6 Mules for being housekeeper 1866-1868
Leander H. McNeel Estate	John McNeel	Deed	M	15/17	Feb	2	1870	250	\$625 on the San Bernard from his father's estate
John G. McNeel, Sr.	R. & D. G. Mills	Mortgage	M	239	July	15	1870		\$10,000 1/2 interest 3 tracts
John G. McNeel, Sr.	Maria McNeel	Mortgage	M	245	Aug	1	1870		\$3750 1/2 interest P.D. McNeel league
John G. McNeel, Sr.	Morgan L. McNeel Maria McNeel	Mortgage	M	246/49	July	10	1870		\$10,000 each 1/2 interest in all lands except homestead
John G. McNeel, Jr.	John G. McNeel, Sr.	Deed	M	249	July	12	1870	50	Quit claim to his father
John G. McNeel	Pleasant D. McNeel	Mortgage	M	250	July	13	1870		\$7000 various tracts & lots as security
Sterling McNeel	Rebecca McNeel	Deed	M	298	July	19	1870		Mare, three colts, milch cow & calf services to date
Leander H. McNeel Estate	John McNeel	Deed	M	528	Sept	14	1871		\$154 Sale May 18, 1867 Cattle LM brand
L. H. McNeel, Jr.	John McNeel	Deed	M	775	March	17	1872		\$400 his interest in P. D. McNeel estate
John McNeel	Elizabeth Nancy McNeel	Deed	N	19	Nov	18	1869	200	\$250 1/4 interest in LH McNeel Homestead
Leander H. McNeel Jr.	Elizabeth Nancy McNeel	Deed	N	19/20	Nov	18	1869	200	\$200 1/4 interest In L. H. McNeel Homestead
John G. McNeel Sr.	Laura V. Roane	Prenup	N	67/68	Dec	28	1870	200	\$3000 to release right to Ellerslie Homestead
John G. McNeel Sr.	J. H. Brower & Co. R. & D. G. Mills	Mortgage	N	338/40	Nov	8	1872		All 1872 crop \$1000 each firm to work plantation
John McNeel	Sterling & Rebecca McNeel	Deed	N	356	Dec	9	1872	10	10 acres out of 250 acre tract given to his brother
Sterling McNeel Jr.	Marion Huntington	Deed	N	724/25	July	18	1873	200	\$1018.05 L.H. McNeel Homestead forced sale
John G. McNeel Sr.	John H. Brower	Mortgage	O	5/6	Oct	25	1873		\$3000 1873 crops consigned to Brower & Co.
Leander H. McNeel Estate	Various buyers	Deed	O	378/82	Aug	5	1873		Several tracts + 1/2 interest on mill on P. D. McNeel land
Leander H. McNeel Estate	Various buyers	Deed	O	382/86	Oct	20	1873		Pleasant Grove Lands
John G. McNeel, Sr.	John H. Brower	Mortgage	O	409/10	July	2	1874		Money to keep Ellerslie running - entire crop
Elizabeth McNeel (Widow)	Marion Huntington	Deed	O	579/80	March	6	1875		\$2200 gold transfer mortgage on livestock
John G. McNeel Jr.	George Melgaard	Deed	Q	177	June	19	1877		Livestock - Mules
John G. McNeel Jr.	Sterling McNeel Jr.	Deed	Q	303	July	1	1877		\$500 Cattle
John G. McNeel, Jr.	Eugene J. Wilson	Deed	Q	533/34	Feb	11	1878	200	\$1600 200 Ellerslie Homestead

John G. McNeel, Jr	J. H. Jenn	Deed	Q	591	Feb	18	1878		Colt
John G. McNeel Jr.	Eugene J. Wilson	Deed	R	220/21	Sept	4	1878		\$2000 debt lost suit \$10-John G. McNeel Interest in Ellerslie Homestead
Eugene Wilson	John H. Brower	Deed	R	221/22	Sept	4	1878		\$1000 John G. McNeel Jr. interest in Ellerslie
John G. McNeel Jr.	John H. Brower	Deed	R	222/23	Sept	4	1878		\$1000 Ellerslie,PDMcNeel LH McNeel lands his interst
John McNeel	Mahala E. McNeel	Deed	R	729	Jan	2	1879	100	½ 200 acres he still owned
Estate John G. McNeel Sr.	John H. Brower	Deed	R	598/600	Feb	17	1879		Ellerslie Plantation Lands \$10,145
Estate John G. McNeel Sr.	John H. Brower	Deed	R	601/03	Jan	19	1879		All lands except 200 acre homestead.
John H. Brower	Thomas B. Hewitt John B. Blydenburgh	Trust	S	144/49	July	31	1879		Set a trust for his six daughters with all the McNeel lands
John H. Brower	Thomas B. Hewitt John B. Blydenburgh	Trust	S	196/98	Sept	27	1879		Trustees to divide any proceeds from lands named in R-222/23 to his six daughters
John McNeel	Marion Huntington	Mortgage	S	367/68	Dec	31	1879		\$123 note 100 acres security
John McNeel	A. B. Krause	Deed	S	471	March	6	1880	70	Out of his 100 acres
Estate Leander H. McNeel	Marion Huntington	Deed	T	176/77	April	22	1881		8 Lots
Estate John G. McNeel Sr.	Laura V. McNeel	Deed	T	499/501	Sept	26	1881	200	\$1250 Court ordered sale Ellerslie Homestead
Laura V. McNeel	Marion Huntington	Deed	U	76/77	Feb	28	1882	200	\$5000 Homestead out of 5740 acres
John G. McNeel Sr.	John G. McNeel Jr.		21	311	March	3	1874		For over \$4000 he owed his son all his interest in direct US tax & son release claim on homestead
John H. Brower et al	vs John G. McNeel	Court Decree	76	15/17	June	24	1872		60 days to pay \$12,313.19 –Brower \$11,950 Mariah & children \$11,950 Morgan L. McNeel \$4492.82 Mariah McNeel \$11,313.38 R & DG Mills
J. H. Shapard		Affidavit	76	22/24	Feb	25	1890		
John H. Brower et al	Vs John G. McNeel Jr.	Decree	76	26/29	June	28	1878		Mortgage Stock of Cattle to Maria Mortgage of Morgan transferred to Lizzie final
J. H. Brower estate	Eckstein Norton Staten Island, NY	Deed	6	96/109	April	24	1890		\$43,592 -10 tracts including the McNeel properties
Eckstein Norton estate	George Norton James H. Moore Lucy Moore	Deed	32	223/26	June	5	1895		Division of Property
George Norton Kentucky James H. Moore Lucy Moore New York	Governor Joseph D. Sayers	Deed	5	326/31	Nov	27	1899	5527	\$44,216 –Penitentiary Board Start of Clemens Prison Farm
Marion Huntington	Sofie Herzog	Prenup	123	73/74	Aug	18	1913		No intermingling of property by either side
George R. Huntington Jr.	Phillips Petroleum Co.	Deed	19740 17365		Aug	14	1974	1582	Phillips Petroleum
Phillips Petroleum Co.	N. Russell Scott	Deed	19970 05845		Feb	4	1997	1541	

Appendix D
List of Slaves Mortgaged by Leander H. McNeel in 1847

African Negro Man	Bowie	21years of age
African Negro Man	Jack	21
African Negro Man	Judge	21
American Negro Boy	Willey	18
African Negro Woman	Ellen	21
African Negro Woman	Maria	21
Her child	Louisa	1
African Negro Man	Dick	45
African Negro Man	Ben	40
African Negro Man	Arch	35
American Negro Man	Will	22
American Negro Girl	Harriet	18
American Negro Woman	Mary	20
Her child	Jeff	9

Appendix E
List of Slaves Leander H. McNeel Estate 1851

Negro Man Slave Named	Zan	\$1000.00
	Coats	1000.00
	Jerry	1000.00
	Edmund	1000.00
	Gabe	1000.00
	Peter	1000.00
	Emory Lee	1000.00
	Harvey	1000.00
	Jack	1000.00
	Tom (Moore)	1000.00
	Frank	1000.00
	Bowie	1000.00
	Abram	1000.00
	Limus	1000.00
	Judge	800.00
	Wiley	500.00
	Harvey	800.00
	Wesley	800.00
	(Little)Peter	800.00
	Dick	400.00
	Ben	400.00
	Arch	500.00
	Tom (Hays)	700.00
	Harry	400.00
	Mingo	150.00
Negro Woman Named	Ann & her infant about 5 mos. old	800.00
	Harriet & her child Jim	600.00
	Susan & her child Amy	800.00
	Maria & her child Albert	800.00
	Aung & her child Susan	900.00
	Caroline	600.00
	Annette	700.00
	Charlotte	750.00
	Mary (Butler)	750.00
	Mary	600.00
	Mary Ann	700.00
	Fanny	500.00
	Bundy	800.00
Negro Boy Slave Named	Jeff	450.00
	Sam	600.00
	William	200.00
	Monroe	150.00
Negro Girl Slave Named	Kit	400.00
	Becky	350.00
	Minerva	300.00
	Rose	250.00

Appendix F
List of Slaves Sold by Pleasant D. McNeel 1856

Berry age	35
Lem	25
Ned	25
Frank	21
Pete	24
Party	37
Albert	38
Jeff	40
Lee	23
By	40
Jonah	40
Dave	39
John	14
Harry	11
Gabriel	50
Jerry	50
Charles	50
Ellen	32
Minty	20
Viny	35
Amelia	21
M. Griffin	20
Sarah	20
Jane	17
Kitt	26
Mary A.	30
Mary B.	15
Emily	10
Bob	30
Dave	8
Red Berry	6
Tally	5
John B.	5
Nanny	3
Jane	3
Louisa	1
Ellen	1
Martha	2
Ben	1
Child	8 mo.
Noah	3
Kitty & child Sambo	40

Also interest in slaves Arch, Jerry, Black, Cudgo, Julianne , Georgianne, Allen, and Mose

Appendix G

Last Will and Testament of John Greenville McNeel Senior

In the name of God Amen. I John G. McNeel Senr. of Brazoria County State of Texas of sound mind and memory do make this my last will and testament.

1st I revoke all other wills made by me heretofore made.

2nd I appoint David G. Mills John G. McNeel Jr. & Marion Huntington Executors to this will.

I direct they shall not be required to give Bonds or Security to this will as Executors, nor return any appraisement of my estate to the Court. I desire neither the District or County Court or any other Court shall have or exercise any Control or Jurisdiction on my Estate or on my Executors but that they shall turn over my Estate as I now direct after the lien my wife Laura V. McNeel holds is paid off.

I will and bequeath to my Grand children John G. McNeel Jr. Jr. and his Sister Georgia McNeel they being the children of my son George W. McNeel Deceased and Maria B. McNeel his wife now living in New York, the Homestead upon which I now reside, known as Ellerslie Plantation. They paying the debt I owe my good wife Laura V. McNeel it being the sum of Three Thousand Dollars and the interest that may accrue. My said Grand children to have possession of the above Homestead when John G. McNeel Jr. Jr. becomes Twenty One years of age, and Should my said Grand children die without issue then this property to go to my –John G. McNeel Jr. I will and bequeath to my son John G. McNeel Jr. except farming utensils on my Homestead know as Ellerslie Plantation and the use of said Homestead free of rent until my Grand Child John G. McNeel Jr. Jr. shall be twenty one years of age & should my grand children John G. McNeel Jr. Jr. and Georgia McNeel die without issue I give & bequeath my homestead to my son John G. McNeel Jr. I will and bequeath to my son John G. McNeel Jr. my Portrait & that of my Deceased wife A. A. B. McNeel, now in the hands of Mr. B. B. Blydenburgh New York, but the gift of the portrait of my Deceased wife to be subject to the approval of Mr. B. B. Blydenburgh and I also will & bequeath all the gains and acquists that would ____ accrue to me to my Son John G. McNeel Jr.

I will & bequeath unto my four Grand Children Annie R. McNeel Robert Mills McNeel George W. McNeel and Infant (name not known) being children of my Son Morgan L. McNeel Decd. & his wife Lizzie R. McNeel now living in Georgia New Prison Bonds drawn in my favor by the State of Texas for One Hundred Dollars each & numbered 4419 to 4427 the numbers inclusive and one Bond for Seventy (\$70) Dollars Number 478 this last Bond being in hands of Messrs Ball Hutchings & Co. Galveston. The coupons being paid to the First day of July 1876.

I will & bequeath to by wife Laura V. McNeel whatever furniture & Carpet she may wish or require to furnish herself a room comfortably.

Having the privilege from my daughter Maria B. McNeel & her children to kill beef out of her Stock of Cattle for the use of Ellerslie Plantation I hereby relinquish to the said Maria B. McNeel & her children all such privilege that may have been received in my Conveyance to the said Maria B. McNeel & her children.

In testimony whereof I have here unto set my hand and Scroll for Seal this 1st day of August AD. 1876. Signed Sealed & Published by the Testator as his last will and testament in our presence & in the presence of each other. The word Published inserted before signing.

J. G. McNeel Senr.

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