

HILL, WILLIAM WARNER - The compiler is responsible for Captain Hill's name being omitted from the bronze plaque in the San Jacinto memorial monument on which are inscribed the names of the Texans who were detailed to guard the baggage at the camp opposite Harrisburg, April 21, 1836. It should be added to the list.

Captain Hill was born in Pulaski county, Kentucky in 1807. When appearing before the Board of Land Commissioners for Washington County, July 5, 1838, he stated that he came to Texas in December, 1834, single, but had since married. He was issued Headright Certificate No. 537 for two-thirds of a league and one labor of land. Previously he had received Headright Certificate No. 475 for one-third of a league from the Washington county Board. In this certificate it is stated that he had arrived in Texas in February, 1835.

On a muster roll in the General Land Office Captain Hill's name appears as having enrolled as First Lieutenant in Captain George W. Barrett's Company, July 20, 1835. At the time the battle of San Jacinto was fought, he was captain of Company H, First Regiment of Volunteers, but being sick at the camp of Charles Donoho's he did not participate in the battle.

Most of the men in Captain Hill's company lived in the present county of Washington. An original roll of his company at muster April 11, 1836, was on September 13, 1913, in the possession of Mrs. R. E. Pennington of Brenham, Texas. A photostatic copy is in the Archives of the Texas State Library, Austin. From a study of the roll it seems that the company was organized at the home of Asa Mitchell

March 1, 1836. It also seems that Joseph P. Lynch was captain of the company until March 11th when Hill succeeded him in Command. The men prior to that time are shown as having been enlisted by Captain Lynch and after that by Captain Hill.

Mr. H. H. Swisher was First Lieutenant of Captain Hill's Company but at San Jacinto the company was commanded by Robert Stevenson, a private in the company. Shortly after the battle Captain Hill rejoined his company and remained in command of it until it was disbanded at Victoria, May 30, 1836.

On page 36 of the San Jacinto rolls in the General Land Office there are listed the names of seven men whose names are omitted from the San Jacinto rolls printed in 1836 who received donation certificates for land for having been detailed to guard the baggage at the camp opposite Harrisburg April 21, 1836. These certificates were issued on the following dates: Nicholas Whitehead, May 18, 1838; James Hughes, June 6, 1838; Jacob Castleman, September 28, 1838; James Hollingsworth, May 3, 1839; Benjamin F. Swoap, May 4, 1839; Jeremiah W. Simpson, January 6, 1840; and Sion W. Perry, January 17, 1851.

As early as the year 1840 men known to have been left at the camp at Harrisburg, or at Donoho's were issued donation certificates for land for having participated in the battle of San Jacinto and in later years the terms "having participated in the battle of San Jacinto", and "having been detailed to guard the baggage" became synonymous.

On page 14 of the San Jacinto rolls printed in 1836 and on page 35 of the San Jacinto rolls in the General Land Office it is shown

that Captain Hill was sick and that his company was commanded at San Jacinto by R. Stevenson. Yet on January 9, 1840 Captain Hill was issued Donation Certificate No. 993 for 640 acres of land for having participated in the battle of San Jacinto.

Three other men not listed by the compiler as participants of the battle of San Jacinto whose names appear on page 36 of the Land Office San Jacinto rolls but are omitted from the rolls printed in 1836 are Richard Hope who did not receive a donation certificate and Willard Chamberlin and Isham G. Belcher who received donation certificates for land for having participated in the Storming and Capture of Bexar, December 5 to 10, 1835. Had each of them received donation certificates for having fought in the battle of San Jacinto the compiler, for the reasons given, would not have listed them as participants of the battle.

The probable reason for the names of so many of Captain Hill's Company being omitted from the rolls of those who were detailed to guard the baggage at the camp opposite Harrisburg, April 21, 1836 is explained by Dr. William P. Smith in a letter written by him July 20, 1858 from his home in Fayetteville, Texas to Richardson and company and published in the Texas Almanac of 1859. Dr. Smith received Donation Certificate No. 1161 for 640 acres of land August 15, 1841 for having been detailed to guard the baggage at the Harrisburg Camp, yet in his letter he speaks of it as "my San Jacinto donation," adding evidence to the statement made that the terms "having participated in the battle", and "having been detailed to guard the baggage" in time

became synonymous.

Following is a copy of Dr. Smith's letter:

"Messrs. Richardson & Co. - In your notice of your Almanac, for 1859, I see you contemplate publishing the names of those who were in the battle of San Jacinto. In Gen. Houston's published account of that battle he does not say one word about those who were really connected with the army, yet on detached service by his own order. This is certainly not doing them justice. For instance, Major McNutt was appointed to the command of the guard over the sick, the baggage, etc. at the upper encampment. I, as one of the surgeons of the army, was left at (Charles Donohoo's, in what is now Waller County) in charge of some sixty sick with the measles, being the sick of both regiments. So soon as I got them in condition so that some could go on to the settlements, to regain their health, Captain Hill of Washington County and myself, took those who were able to join the army, and dashed on as rapidly as possible, to join the main army, before the battle. When we arrived on the 20th of April, 1836, at the upper encampment, the end was knocked out of the ferry-boat, and while some workmen were repairing it, Cos' division was between us and the main army, we could not arrive there until the battle was over, and then we hastened to the scene as quickly as possible. I was there in time to aid in attending to the sick and wounded. I was acting under a commission, as Regimental Surgeon, with the appointment of David G. Burnet, President ad interim, and Thomas J. Rusk, Secretary of War. I was regularly discharged by M. B. Lamar, then Secretary of War, some two months after

the battle. I have obtained my 640 acres San Jacinto donation, and think that myself, with others similarly situated, who were at our post doing detailed service by order of the Commander-in-chief, are entitled to some public consideration. Would it not be well, in your coming issue to make some honorable mention of those on detached service?"

Captain Hill organized a ranging company July 1 and commanded it until October 1, 1836. For this service he was on December 5, 1837, issued Bounty Certificate No. 705 for 320 acres of land.

The following information about Captain Hill is shown on his muster roll: He was born in Summerset, Pulaski County, Kentucky in 1807. He was five feet, eleven inches in height; of dark complexion, with blue eyes and black hair. His occupation was given as "horse and mule trader". The Marriage Records of Washington County disclose that Captain Hill was twice married. On April 5, 1837, he was married to Maria Coles, daughter of Judge John P. Coles by Shubal Marsh, J. P. and on February 20, 1848, he was married to Mary E. Nevel of Brazos County.

Captain Hill represented Washington County in the First and Second Congresses of the Republic October 3, 1836 to May 24, 1838, being a member of the House of Representatives.

Captain Hill moved to Burleson County and there, as shown in the Probate records of that county, died in 1862, survived by his widow Mrs. Mary Hill and three children, (1) Mary Delilah, (2) James Tyler and (3) William B. Hill.

(1) Mary Delilah Hill, daughter of Captain William W. Hill was married to James West Dallas, son of James L. Dallas. There were no children of this union.

(2) James Tyler Hill was married to Lillie Stribling. Their children were (a) Scott and (b) James Raymond Hill, Jr.

(b) James Raymond Hill, Jr. was married to Lula Milam. Mr. and Mrs. Hill reside at 1421 Pennsylvania Avenue, Ft. Worth. The names and addresses of their surviving children are Dr. Joel M. Hill, 2008 Colquitt Street, Houston; and Miss Laura E. Hill, 1421 Pennsylvania Avenue, Ft. Worth.

(3) William B. Hill was married to Laura West. Their only child, Bledsoe Hill, was drowned in early manhood.

May 25, 1940

Mrs. Madge W. Hearne,
2112 Dryden Road,
Houston, Texas

Dear Mrs. Hearne:

I have your favor of May 26 in which you enclose a letter from Mr. James R. Hill, Ft. Worth regarding the services of Captain William W. Hill.

In his letter Mr. Hill says:

During the battle, Captain Hill was sick with measles, and he was detailed by General Sam Houston to guard the baggage at the camp opposite Harrisburg.

In the San Jacinto monument there is a huge bronze plaque on which is the name of Captain Hill. Heading the plaque are these words:

OBEYING THE INSTRUCTIONS OF GENERAL HOUSTON THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS AND MEN REMAINED APRIL 21, 1836 AT THE CAMP OF THE TEXAS ARMY ESTABLISHED OPPOSITE HARRISBURG. THERE THE SICK WERE ATTENDED BY THEIR COMRADES WHO ALSO GUARDED THE BAGGAGE AND ACTED AS REAR GUARD OF THE MAIN ARMY.

I feel confident that Mr. Hill did not see this plaque on his visit to the monument.

Sincerely yours,

JAMES RAY HILL

Among the Anglo-Saxon colonizers of Texas was the family of James Ray Hill. His paternal grandfather, Captain William Warner Hill, was born in Somerset, Pulaski County, Kentucky in 1807. On coming to Washington County, Texas, as an unmarried "horse and mule trader" at age of 27, he as five feet, eleven inches in height, with blue eyes, black hair and dark complexion. At 31 he married Maria Coles, daughter of Judge John B. Coles. The latter in 1828 was alcalde of Cole's Settlement (now Independence), Texas, and in 1837 he was the first Chief Justice of Washing^{ton} County, Texas. William Warner Hill's title of Captain was received from being in charge of Company H, First Regiment of Volunteers Texas Army at the Battle of San Jacinto. During the battle, Captain Hill was sick with measles, and he was detailed by General Sam Houston to guard the baggage at the camp opposite Harrisburg. For that service he was issued Donation Certificate No. 993 for 640 acres of land. To have guarded the baggage and to have participated in the actual battle were considered symmimous. Captain Hill organized and commanded a regular company from July to October 1836, for ~~which~~ which service he was issued Bounty Certificate No. 705 for 320 acres of land. He was the Washington County member of the House of Representatives in the First (1836) and Second (1838) Congresses of the Texas Republic. He died age 55 in Burleson County, Texas. Among Captain Hill's children was James Tyler Hill, father of James Ray Hill. James Tyler Hill was born at Independence, Texas, in 1845. While in his teens he fought in the army of the Con-

federacy. Then he married Lillie Stribling, daughter of a prosperous Independence planter. His death occurred at the age of 27, in 1873 when his son, James Ray was 6 months old.

(Source of authority for proceeding information is a personal communication to Dr. Joel Milam Hill Houston, Texas, from L. W. Kemp, 214 Westmoreland, Houston, Texas)

Letterhead: H-Y OIL COMPANY, Inc. 802 Dan Waggoner Building
Fort Worth, Texas

May 14th, 1940

Mrs. Madge Hearne,
2112 Dryden Road,
Houston, Texas.

Dear Madge:

No doubt you will be surprised to hear from me, but the thing I am writing about is this, and I believe you can have it done, - my Grandfather, William Warner Hill, it seems to me should have his name on the tablet at the San Jacinto monument. Enclosed you will find some data about my Grandfather, which entitles his decedents to have his name placed on this tablet, and I feel sure you can have this done.

It was a great pleasure to have seen you last summer and I hope to get to see you again at the next re-union; I enjoyed that day very much indeed, even if it was the hottest day I ever felt in Washington County.

With very best wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,

(signed) J. R. Hill

JRH/rm