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GRAY, MAYBERRY B. ("MUSTANG"). Born in Spartanburg District, now Spartanburg County, South Carolina, in 1817. In applying for land in Austin's Fifth Colony he stated that he was twenty-one years of age and had arrived in Texas in January, 1835. This being true, he would have been born in 1814; but when he enlisted in the army on March 6, 1836, he gave his age as nineteen years, which was probably correct. He was evidently aware of the fact that to acquire land in the colonies he would have to be of legal age. He received title to one-fourth of a league of land situated in the present count of Washington on Jackson Creek.

On an original roll of Captain William W. Hill's company, a photostatic copy of which is in the Archives of the State Library, the following information regarding Mr. Gray is given. He was recruited by Gray at the Town of Washington, March 6, 1836. He stated that he was nineteen years of age and was born in Spartanburg District, South Carolina. He was described as being six feet, one inch high, of fair complexion, with blue eyes and brown hair. He was a farmer by occupation. In Service Record No. 2663 it is certified that he served in Captain Hill's company from March 1 to May 30, 1836. As stated, however, he is shown to have enrolled March 6th instead of March 1st. On May 22, 1838, he was issued Donation Certificate No. 179 for having participated in the battle of San Jacinto. The land was surveyed in Navarro County in 1845. He received a Headright Certificate from the Harrisburg County Board of Land Commissioners in 1838 for one-twelfth of a league of land, representing the difference

between the one-fourth of a league he had previously received and the one-third of a league he was entitled to receive after a revision of the law. His certificate was lost and another was issued to his heirs October 10, 1857. The land was surveyed in Harris County between Buffalo Bayou and Bray's Bayou in 1857.

Mr. Gray became known as "Mustang Gray" and in the course of time became somewhat notorious. After his death a book was written about him, but copies of it are now difficult to obtain. Mr. J. J. Linn in his book "Fifty Years in Texas" had the following to say about his activities:

"During the year 1842 seven Mexicans came from Camargo, on the Rio Grande, to the mission of Refugio, from which place they despatched a messenger to the mayor of Victoria, Wiginton, asking permission to visit Mr. Ydisore Benavides at his ranch on the Chocolate. The mayor readily complying with their wishes, the party proceeded to their destination. One of the number was a brother to Mrs. Benavides, and he brought her some money to which she was entitled from her father's estate. They had also some fine Mexican blankets and other articles of Mexican manufacture, which they purposed bartering for tobacco and other articles of necessity in their families. In Victoria at that time was a company of organized bandits and cut-throats called the Cow Boys, whose leader was one Wells. Among the number was the cold-blooded assassin, Mabry Gray, whose fiendish atrocities furnished the imagination of Hon. Jesse Clements of Alabama the material for the mock-heroic fiction known once, but now happily scarce, as Mustang Gray.

The party of seven Mexicans completed the period of their visit and departed with some bales of tobacco, dry-goods, etc., for their homes. The 'Cow Boys', or more properly 'Men Slayers' followed them, instigated by the craving of a consuming cupidity, to their camp a few miles beyond the town of Goliad, where they accepted the hospitalities of their intended victims and ate at their camp fire. "Mustang Gray", that moral monstrosity, announced their fate to the doomed men. Doubtless Mustang felt an exquisite thrill of pleasure pervade his brutal soul at this refinement of demoniacal cruelty, as the cat does in torturing the terrorized mouse before feasting upon it. The 'doomed seven' were tied together and (was it in mockery or through respect for the Dieth?) informed that they would be allowed a few minutes in which to offer up their prayers. This last sad duty performed, the victims announced with heroic resignation that they were prepared to receive the messengers of death. Whereupon the 'Cow Boys' emptied the contents of their guns into their persons and the paltry plunder was all their own. To the victors belong the spoils!.....

One of the Mexicans, as if Providence specially interposed to save him, was not hit, though the handkerchief with which his eyes were bandaged, was perforated by buckshot and rifle balls. He fell, however, and feigned death. The ghouls stripped him and the others to the drawers and undershirt, and departed, their hearts elated by victory and proud of their prowess at arms! The survivor (Manuell Escobon) found friends to administer to his wants and eventually came to Victoria. The officers heard his narrative of the horrible affair,

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myself acting as interpreter. Good people were horror stricken at the outrage, but no attempt was made to bring the criminals to justice."

The Adjutant General of the Army furnished the following information regarding Mr. Gray, December 4, 1933:

"The records on file in this office show that one M. B. Gray, 1st Lietutenant, Captain Bell's Company, Texas Mounted Volunteers, was mustered into the service near Corpus Christi, Texas, for three months, September 10, 1845. Service was continued for another three months, and for a third period of three months, and he was finally mustered out with the company at Matamoras, Mexico, July 6, 1846.

The records also show that one Mayberry B. Gray, Captain of a Company of Texas Mounted Rangers, was mustered into the service at Matamoras, Mexico, for twelve months, July 21, 1846, and was mustered out with the company and honorably discharged at Camargo, Mexico, July 17, 1847. No further record of him has been found."

In Baker's Scrap Book, page 582, it is stated that Captain Gray died in 1848.

Colonel John S. ("Rip") Ford in the San Antonio Express, August 31, 1897, is quoted as saying: "Just after peace had been declared, Captain Mustang Gray died at Camargo. He had achieved a great notoriety. He made a lady cousin his heir -- Mrs. Clements."