

Texana, Texas  
July 15, 1837

Robert S. Barr, Esq.  
Postmaster General,  
Houston, Texas.

Dear Sir:

Permit me to inform you that the Mail Bag or Portmaneau in which the mail is delivered to this place has no lock or any other fastening, in consequence of which the number of letters received to-day from the Postmaster at Houston does not correspond with the way bill. The way bil of July 8th states a letter unpaid 25 cents should have been received, and I received only one paid and one free.

I give you this information in order that the evil may be corrected, otherwise should my returns not correspond with the number of letters mailed for this place that I be not considered the defaultee.

Your obedient servant,

John S. Menefee, Postmaster.

BARR, ROBERT - Born at Urbana, Champaign County, Ohio in 1802. In the Certificate of Character files in the Spanish Archives in the General Land Office, Austin there is a letter dated San Felipe de Austin, Texas, December 5, 1832 from Mr. Barr to Stephen F. Austin in which he expresses a desire to secure land in one of Austin's colonies. He stated that he was 30 years of age, single and was from Ohio. As a matter of fact he was at that time a married man and was the father of three children.

Receiving no land from Austin, Mr. Barr settled at Tenoxtitlan in Robertson's Colony in what is now Burleson County, altho he received title to no land in the colony. He was living there in 1834. Since he participated in the battle of San Jacinto as a member of Captain William H. Patton's Company of Columbia Volunteers it appears that he was living in Brazoria Municipality when he joined the army.

Headright Certificate No. 23/59 for one-third of a league of land was issued in General Barr's name February 21, 1860 but delivered to his heirs. Had his wife accompanied him to Texas his heirs would have been entitled to receive a league and labor of land. Donation Certificate No. 96 for 640 acres of land was issued in General Barr's name April 26, 1878, due him for having participated in the battle of San Jacinto. The heirs in 1878 were his children Robert Barr, Jr. of Travis County, Texas, and Lewelly Y. and James A. Barr of Cincinnati, Ohio.

General Barr was appointed Postmaster General of the Republic,

70  
170

December 22, 1836 by President Houston and was re-appointed by President Lamar.

General Barr died in Houston at 9 A. M. On October 11, 1839 of yellow fever and was buried the following day. The Telegraph and Texas Register, Houston, stated that more people attended his funeral than had attended any previous funeral in Houston. He was buried under the auspices of the two Masonic, and one Odd Fellow, Lodges of Houston and the M<sub>1</sub>lam Guards. He was a member of Holland (Masonic) Lodge No. 1, Houston and in spite of the fact that two members of this lodge wrote to his widow in Urbana, Ohio, October 20, 1839 that he was buried in "the church yard of the city" he was probably buried in the old City Cemetery, now known as Founders Memorial Park, the only cemetery in Houston at that time. The State of Texas had a monument erected to his memory in Memorial Park in 1936.

On January 9, 1856, the heirs of Mr. Barr applied to the Commissioner of Claims for the lands due Mr. Barr from the State of Texas. Much information concerning Mr. Barr is in File 291, Court of Claims, General Land Office. In the deposition signed June 16, 1858, by William K. Ward of Champaign County, Ohio, he stated that he knew General Barr in Urbana before he went to Texas and afterwards knew him in Texas. He stated that General Barr was a prosperous merchant and dealer in stock cattle in the year 1828. He said he was a married man; that his wife had since died but at that time 1858, his three children were living. These were Lewellyn Y. Barr of Cincinnati; James A. Barr and Robert Barr of Urbana, Ohio. Mr.

Ward further stated that when General Barr left for Texas his wife and children remained in Urbana. He said that sometime in the period from 1837 to 1840 he (Ward) knew a boy in Tenoxtitlan, Texas, by the name of Fletcher Barr who was reputed to be the illegitimate son of Robert Barr and a Mrs. Rhoda Boren. He stated that he had returned to Ohio with Mr. Barr for a visit in 1838 and later in Houston the grave of Mr. Barr had been pointed out to him. He was told that General Barr died of yellow fever.

A copy of the marriage records of Champaign County, Ohio, was filed with the Court of Claims. It showed that Robert Barr and Phoebe Ward were married at the home of Miss Ward's parents in Urbana, Ohio, Tuesday evening, December 11, 1831, by John Brich, minister of the "Gospel of Christ."

A. M. Tompkins and Ewin Morehouse were appointed a committee by Holland Lodge No. A. F. & A. M., Houston to advise Mrs. Robert Barr of Urbana, Ohio - a photostatic copy of the letter they wrote was in later years presented to the Lodge by the descendants of General Barr. Following is a copy of the letter:

"Houston  
Octr. 20th 1839

Respected Madam

It is with deep feeling of sorrow that we reflect that this world it but "a fleeting shore" that All are Mortal and that all are born to die - and it is with lasting and unfeigned regret that we have to preform the melancholy task of announcing to you a yet more melancholy fact. ----- Majr. ROBERT BARR is no more!!! -----

He was our intermate and particular friend who has been our associate and Companion for several years, he was hurried off after a sickness of three days with yellow fever; he died 8 days ago - every attention that could be paid to any man was Given to him in his last illness - His death has Cast an universal Gloom over our young Republic and never since the foundation of our city has any one died so universally loved so universally respected - he was buried in the church yard of the city on the day after his decease With military and civic honors and was followed to his long home by all the inhabitants almost of Houston together with his brothers of the three lodges of this city -

Any thing we can do for you in Texas in relation to his last remains or in relation to his effects or any other wish you have - you can but signify it and we would render it with more than cheerfulness -

We truly condole with you

We are madam with much respect

your obt servts

A. M. Tomkins

E. Morehouse

N.B.

We send by mail some of the papers of this city in which you will find an account of his death and interement.

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To -  
Mrs. Robert Barr  
Urbana, Ohio. U.S."

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