

WILLIAMSON, ROBERT McALPIN - Born in Washington, Wilkes County Georgia in 1806, and died in Wharton, Texas, December 22, 1859. He was the son of Peter B. and Rebeca McAlpin Williamson. Rebecca McAlpin Williamson died when Robert was a baby and left her children, Micajah, Nancy, and Robert McAlpin, to be reared by their grandmother, Sarah Gilliam Williamson. They enjoyed the best educational advantages existing in the South at that period of the Nation's development. The school career of young Robert McAlpin was unfortunately terminated in his fifteenth year. A baffling illness confined him to his home for two years, and left him a cripple for life. His right leg was drawn back at the knee, so he was compelled to wear a wooden leg from his knee to the ground. From this infirmity, later in life, a name was coined, and the crippled boy of Georgia became the distinguished "Three-legged Willie" of Texas History. During his illness and long confinement, under the wise direction of his uncles, Dr. Thompson Bird and Judge Duncan G. Campbell, he read wisely, perfected himself in mathematics, acquired a fundamental knowledge of modern languages, and begun the study of law. He was admitted to the bar before he was nineteen years of age, and practiced law in Judge Campbell's office in Milledgeville, Georgia, for a year before coming to Texas.

In an unnumbered headright certificate issued to Judge Williamson in 1838 by the Board of Land Commissioners for Bastrop County it is stated that he came to Texas in 1826. On the assumption that he had received one-fourth of a league of land, the amount usually granted to single men under the Mexican law, the headright was for

three-fourths of one league and labor of land, married men being entitled to receive a total of one league of land and labor of land under the laws of the Republic, including that previously secured from the Mexican Government. Major Williamson, however, altho single at that time received title to a league of land situated in what is now Austin County, April 23, 1831, it being a special grant.

Judge Williamson first located in San Felipe de Austin, mastered the Spanish language, acquired a thorough knowledge of the Spanish land laws, and entered upon the practice of his profession. He became so proficient in the use of several languages that he was excelled by but few of his contemporaries.

On January 23, 1830, R. M. Williamson became associated with Godwin B. Cotton in the publication of "The Texas Gazette", which was the first American newspaper published in Austin's colony. The Texas Gazette has been erroneously referred to as "The Cotton Plant" by several writers. On January 15, 1831, Cotton disposed of his interest in the paper to R. M. Williamson and John Aitkin and the name was changed to "The Mexican Citizen". After a few numbers, however, the name was changed to "The Mexican Nation," presumably at the suggestion of Father Michael Muldoon, a representative of the Mexican government. The publication of this paper was suspended sometime during the year 1831.

On June 4, 1832, R. M. Williamson appealed to the colonies to proceed to Anahuac to free William B. Travis, Patrick Jack, Monroe Edwards, and other prominent Texans, who had been arrested and im-

prisoned by orders of the despotic agent of the Mexican government, John Davis Bradburn. And from this time, with the exception of the short lived political peace of 1834, when he served as Alcalde at San Felipe de Austin, so active and energetic were the efforts of Williamson in endeavoring to combat the several Mexican dictators' usurpation of power, he was proscribed and his arrest ordered.

On July 4, 1835 he presided over the meeting held at San Felipe, and issued his famous "Liberty or Death Address", urging the colonists to fight for liberty. However, to relieve the anxiety of his friends he returned to Mina (Bastrop) and from there continued his activities in arousing the colonists to a sense of their wrongs.

On October 1, 1835, he was at Gonzales with John A. Wharton, W. H. Jack, Francis W. Johnson, and other patriotic leaders raising the "Old Cannon Flag" and defying the Mexican soldiers. On November 3, he was at the San Felipe Consultation as a representative of the Municipality of Bastrop. He was commissioned Major on November 25, and given command of a corps of Rangers to be stationed at Bastrop.

In February 1836 Major Williamson's Rangers were stationed at Gonzales, and engaged in gathering supplies for the Texans besieged in the Alamo. From Gonzales on February 5, he issued an appeal to "Fellow Citizens of Texas", urging the people to come to the rescue of Travis, Bowie and the 150 Texans in the Alamo surrounded by the Mexican army.

About March 1 he was ordered to Bastrop to take command of Captain Tuglinson's Rangers and to protect the assembled settlers' fam-

illies. On the retirement of the Texas army his Rangers guarded the retreat of the fugative families as they followed the army, but the desire of Major Williamson for active service was so great he turned over the command to Lieutenant George M. Petty, and hurried on to join General Houston. At Washington on the Brazos he took command of Captain Chance's Volunteers and reached the army in time to fight in the battle of San Jacinto April 21.

On March 20, 1848, R. M. Williamson was issued Donation Certificate No. 99 for 640 acres of land in Navarro County, in consideration of having fought at San Jacinto, April 21, 1836. On the same date he was issued Bounty Certificate No. 360 for 640 acres of land for having served in the Texas army from November 28, 1835 to June 10, 1836. His headright certificate for a league and labor of land from the Washington County Board of Land Commissioners is dated May 2, 1839. He received many grants of land from the Republic of Texas and the State of Texas for services in various capacities.

After the organization of the new Government of the Republic, Congress on December 16, 1836, elected him Judge of the Third Judicial District, which automatically made him a member of the First Supreme Court, of which James Collinworth was Chief Justice. He then removed his place of residence to Washington, Texas.

In 1839 Judge Williamson resigned from the Judicial Bench to resume his practice at the bar, but at the solicitation of Washington County friends, who desired him to represent that county in Congress, he became a candidate, and was elected Representative at the ensuing

election. His entry into the political arena, lost the Texas bar a brilliant mind.

On November 13, 1840, Judge Williamson took his seat in the House of Representatives of the Fifth Congress, as a Representative from Washington County. He was re-elected to the Sixth and Seventh Congresses. He was defeated for Senator to the Eighth Congress by Judge Jesse Grimes. In the Ninth and last Congress he was returned to the Lower House by Washington County. After Texas entered the Union he was a senator of the Sixteenth District, composed of Washington and Milam Counties, in the First and Second Legislature, February 16, 1846 to

About 1851, he retired to his farm at Independence, Washington County, Texas, and devoted his life to the education of his children. On November 17, 1856 his wife died in Independence. In 1857 a severe attack of illness arrested his mental brilliancy. He died at Wharton, Texas December 22, 1859.

In 1930 his remains were removed by the State of Texas from Wharton to Austin, and reinterred in the State Cemetery. On March 13, 1930, after impressive ceremonies were held in the Senate Chamber of the Capitol, by a Joint Session of the State Legislature, his remains were laid to rest beside his fellow patriots in "The Arling of Texas." A monument has been erected to his memory, appropriately inscribed.

On April 21, 1837, Robert McAlpin Williamson was married to Mary, the only child of Gustavus E. Edwards, of Austin County, Texas.

Of this union were born seven children - Henry Collinsworth, who died in infancy; Peter B., wounded in the battle of Gettysburg on July 3, 1863, and died in a Federal hospital; Julia Rebecca, who married William T. Rice, of Lowndes County, Alabama, and died near Prattville, Alabama in 1867; Patrick Jack, who served in Hood's Texas Brigade in the Civil War, and who died in Millican, Texas during the yellow fever epidemic of 1867, and Willie Annexus, who married Minna Nott.

Surviving grandchildren of Judge and Mrs. Robert M. Williamson are Thaddeus B. Rice of Greensboro, Georgia; James D. Williamson, 2411 Austin Avenue, Waco, and Rufus Nott Williamson, 2604 Parrot Avenue, Waco.

Williamson County, Texas was named in honor of Robert M. Williamson.

WILLIAMSON, R. M. - General Houston at the camp opposite Groce's sent the following order to Major Williamson:

To Maj. R. M. Williamson - You are ordered to report yourself at Headquarters. My Aide de Camp, Major Jas. Collinsworth will assume command at Washington. - He has my orders to keep out spies, and to adopt such measures as he may deem proper for the safety of the place. I disapprove the killing of those two Mexicans- -they should have been sent to me for examination - I have no idea but that they were deserters from the enemy, and important information might have been obtained from them. I order, without exception the destruction of all ardent spirits at Washington, and wherever it may be found - I have not delegated any power to any persons to arrest or try persons for offenses. - I wish Col. Pettus to repair to camp and report to me."

Houston to R. M. Williamson, A. J. Houston, Independence of Texas, p. 197.

WILLIAMSON, ROBERT McALPIN, Grandson of Micajah Williamson who was a colonel in General Elijah Clark's Georgia Division of the American Army in the Revolutionary War. Micajah Williamson was married to Sarah Gilliam and to this union were born the following children: A son (Name not known to the compiler) twelve years old, hung during the Revolutionary War by Tarleton, British Commander, for refusing to reveal the hiding place of General Francis Marion.

1. Charles, married Mary, daughter of General Elijah Clark.
2. Micajah, Jr., who fought in the Revolutionary War.
3. Peter B., married Rebecca McAlpin of Wilkes County, Georgia.
(Children of this union were Micajah and Robert McAlpin Williamson. Robert removed to Texas, fought in the War of Texas Independence; became a member of the Supreme Court of Texas and served in the Congress of the Republic of Texas.)
4. Nancy, married John Clark who became governor of Georgia.
5. Sarah, married Judge John Griffin and after his death married Judge Charles Tait, who served in the United States Senate 1809-19.
6. Susan, married Dr. Thompson Bird of Bibb County, Georgia.
Their daughter married Judge L. Q. C. Lamar, whose son L. Q. C. Lamar, Jr., removed to Mississippi and was sent to the United States Senate, served as Secretary of the Interior President Cleveland's Cabinet and in 1888 was made a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.
7. Martha, married Colonel Thomas Fitch.

8. William Washington, married Molly Fitch.
9. Elizabeth, married Peterson Thweat.
10. Jefferson, died unmarried.
11. Mary, married Duncan G. Campbell, at one time member of the House of Representatives from Wilkes County, Georgia. Their son John A. Campbell became one of the Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States.

FROM ABOVE ON REPEATS SKETCH ON WILLIAMSON ON PRECEEDING PAGES

On April 21, 1837, Robert McAlpin Williamson was married to Mary Edwards, only child of Gustavus E. Edwards of Austin County, Texas, then in her seventeenth year. To this union were born seven children:

1. Hoxey Collinsworth, died in infancy.
2. Peter B., wounded in the Battle of Gettysburg on July 3, 1863, and died in a Federal hospital.
3. Julia Rebecca, married William T. Rice of Lowndes County, Alabama, and died near Prattville, Alabama, in 1867. William T. Rice died in Prattville at a later date. The children of this union were; (a) Catherine, died in 1866, aged three years. (b) Thaddeus B., married Maymie Bowen, daughter of Thomas Jefferson Bowen of Georgia. Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Rice reside at Greensboro, Georgia. They have no children. (c) Julia Rebecca, died in Prattville, Alabama, in 1888.

4. Patrick Jack, died during the yellow fever epidemic of 1867 at Millican, Texas.

5. Willie Annexus, born at Gays Hill, Washington County, Texas, January 13, 1845, and died at Fort Worth, Texas, June 15, 1903, and was buried at Waco, Texas. He married Minna Mott, daughter of Dr. Rufus Abram Nott of South Carolina and Louisiana, July 13, 1866. Mrs. Williamson died at Beaumont, Texas, April 20, 1930. The children of this union were: (a) Rufus Nott, married first Bettie Motz, daughter of Captain George Motz of North Carolina and Waco, Texas. The children of this marriage are: Roberta McAlpin, married to Thomas Ney Hunt of Houston, Texas. Thomas Ney Hunt served in the United States Navy in the "orth War. Willie Annexus II married to Donalda Mabry of Beaumont, Texas. He served in France in the World War. Rufus Nott's second marriage was to Georgie F. Eddleman, daughter of William Henry Eddleman of Lake Charles, Louisiana. Their children are: Rufus Nott, Jr., died in infancy; and James D. II of Waco, Texas. Mr. and Mrs. Rufus Nott Williamson reside at 1919 Colcord Ave. Waco, Texas. (b) Robert McAlpin married Effie Gilmer, daughter of Alexander Gilmer of Orange, Texas. Their children are: Dorothy, died in infancy. Alexander Gilmer, served in the World War, and died later in Dallas. Marjorie Effie, of Dallas, Texas. Robert McAlpin, Jr., of Dallas, Texas. Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Williamson reside at 4923 Gaston Avenue, Dallas, Texas. (c) James D., married first May Lambdin, daughter of A. M. Lambdin

of Barnesville, Georgia. Mrs. Williamson died in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1927. She had no children. James D. married the second time to Mrs. Lucille Grider Marshall of Waco, Texas. Of this union there are no children. Mr. and Mrs. James D. Williamson reside at 2411 Austin Avenue, Waco, Texas.

6. James Bennett, born at Independence, Texas; died at Livingston, Texas, about 1910, and buried at Livingston, Texas. James Bennett married first Katherine Bissett of Rockport, Texas. Mrs. Williamson and twin children died at Rockport in 1876. James Bennett married the second time Mrs. _____ of Louisiana. Their children were: (a) Robert McAlpin, accidentally killed about 1906. (b) Lena, married to _____ Reed of Livingston, Texas. Their children were: Robert Delaney and James Franklin. The address of the Reed family is not of record.

7. Susan Bruce, born in Independence, Texas, and died at Prattville, Alabama, about 1873.

Note:

Feb. 14, 1834

Robert M. Williamson, Alcalde

Austin Municipality

Page 52 Book B Lewisville

LaFayette County

Thomas Dillard sold land in L. County

WILLIAMSON, ROBERT McALPIN

REPEATS SKETCH OF WILLIAMSON SAME AS PRECEEDING ONE TO:

About March 1, 1836, Major Williamson was placed in command of Captain John J. Tumilson's rangers who had been ordered to Bastrop to protect the frontier and to cover the retreat of the congregated unprotected families of the settlers as they followed the retreating Texas army. The movement of the fleeing families was too slow and the temptation for a action too great for Major Williamson; therefore he turned over the command to Lieutenant George M. Petty and hastened to join the main army. Noah Smithwick, a member of Major Williamson's command, was not in the battle of San Jacinto but couched for the statement that Major Williamson reached the army in time to engage in the conflict. Dr. Nicholas D. Labadie also states that Major Williamson was in the battle. Major Williamson was issued a donation certificate for 640 acres of land for "having participated in the battle of San Jacinto." He was a member of Captain William H. Smith's cavalry company.

Upon the organization of the government of the Republic, Congress on December 16, 1836, elected Major Williamson judge of the Third Judicial District, which automatically made him a member of the first Supreme Court, of which James Collinworth was Chief Justice. He then moved his residence to Washington.

Book A, pages 21 to 24 inclusive, contains the minutes of the

gress he was returned to the lower house. Upon Texas entering the union he was sent to the legislature and served in one branch or the other until 1850.

Judge Williamson's last appearance before the public was as a candidate for Congress, when he was defeated by a few votes by Volney E. Howard. About 1851 he retired to his farm at Independence in Washington County where he led a quiet and retired life, devoting himself exclusively to the education of his children.

In 1857 a severe attack of illness arrested his mental brilliancy, which was further impaired by the death of his wife in 1858. From these combined shocks his mind never entirely recovered before the time of his peaceful death at Wharton, December 22, 1859.

The remains of Judge Williamson were removed to the State Cemetery at Austin, Texas, in 1930, and a monument erected at his new grave by the State of Texas.

Three grandsons of Judge Williamson were alive in 1932, Rufus N. and Robert N. Williamson of Waco, and J. D. Williamson of St. Louis.