

[Sarah Marlin Pruett]

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Early History

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McLennan County, Texas

District No. 8

OCT 1 1937

No. Words 1132

File No. 200

Page No. 1

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TEXAS References

A. Sarah Marlin Pruett, Perry, Texas

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B. Maggie Strange, Reisel, Texas. [Davis?]

James and John Marlin came from Ireland to the United States and drifted to Texas and finally, settled near what was then the town of Fieson, capitol of the province of Viesca in Robertson's colony, which was on the west banks of the Brazos river near where the town of Marlin now stands. The town of Perry was named for Judge A. G. Perry, grandfather of Mrs. Sarah Marlin Pruett. Sarah Marlin Pruett was born March 25th, 1863 near the present town of Perry, Texas. At the age of seventeen, she married Sam Marlin, son of James Marlin and they moved to Reagan.

At the time that the Marlin family came to Viesca, the country had few settlers and the Mexicans and Indians were very dangerous. The little frontier town had no fort and no soldiers, so, when the Texans went to war with Mexico, many of the settlers there, and around the Falls of the Brazos, moved to places more densely populated.

After the War with Mexico, the Marlins and the Morgans were among the first to return to their former home. John Marlin settled about four miles from the present town of Marlin. Other pioneers settled near, and the settlement came to be known as "Bucksnot." There were two or three stores and a blacksmith shop, but it was the trading center for the country for miles around. Bucksnot was the first post office in Falls county and some of the old settlers still call it "Old Marlin." [C. 12 - 2/11/41 Tex.]

After the War with Mexico, the Indians were fierce and kept the settlers in a constant state of terror. During this time, occurred one of the first Indian massacres in Falls county. This is known as "The Morgan 2 Massacre.(A)

James Marlin and George Morgan built a cabin of hewed cedar on what is known now as the Rock Dam road. The two families lived together in this cabin. That was the custom of the time, as it afforded better protection from Indians and aid in case of illness or distress. The old couple of Morgans were quite old people, but George Morgan was about twenty-

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two or twenty-three years of age and recently married to Stacy Ann Marlin. Mr. and Mrs. James Marlin had a son, Isiah, about ten years of age and two daughters. These were: Stacy Ann Marlin and Adeline who was about sixteen years old and very beautiful. (A & B).

On the morning of January 1839, the men folks who lived in this cabin, except old man, James Marlin, had gone about eighteen or twenty miles south of Old Marlin to get a load of corn. At that time, their roads were only bridle paths or cow trails, without bridges and there were several streams, swollen by recent rains, which the men were forced to cross.

The women knew that the men could not be there that night, so they hurried through their household tasks, finished milking and feeding and got in wood, water and kindling before night. Also, they rushed to eat their supper before night so that no light would be needed other than that of the fire in the fireplace. They were sitting by the fireside carding wool when the dreaded Indian yell was heard right by the door. In the twinkling of an eye, the Indians had broken down the door and were in the house hacking the women and children with their tomahawks. The old couple were killed instantly and scalped. Mrs. James Marlin and the little blonde Adeline were mercifully killed at once. ³ In some manner, Isaac Marlin, the little ten year-old boy, managed to slip out of the house as the Indians got in, and he ran out in the dark and hid in a fence corner. The Indians cut Adeline's head off and scalped her long, beautiful hair from it. Her body was found in one place and the bloody, beaten head in another. The Indians beat Stacy Ann, the other girl, until she fainted, and they left her for dead. She fell through the floor where the puncheon boards had been palled up by the savages. When they chopped her head with their tomakawks, she put up her hands to try to shield her face and eyes and they chopped her hands up in a terrible fashion. She lay quietly under the floor, not daring to move, because she knew that the Indians would chop her head from her body to make sure that she was dead. Then she heard the Indians leave the house and go riding away, she began to crawl out from under the house. She was very weak from pain and the loss of blood and it was a terrible effort to try to crawl. She managed to crawl out of the house and into the woods nearby. She stayed there all night. The wolves howled around her all night, because they could

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smell the blood from her wounds. They came so close that she thought every minute that she would be torn to pieces, but she was too terrified to return to the house. The Indians often returned to a place where they had killed and robbed and would set fire to the house to get rid of the bodies. (A & B).

Stacy Ann fell off to sleep the next morning and did not wake until the afternoon. She was feverish and very thirsty. She saw some of their milk cows going to a pond at a spring. The old bell cow was the nearest and she managed to crawl to this gentle, old animal and to catch on to the bell strap. In this way, the cow drug her to the water where she quenched her thirst. Then, she made her way to the house. 4 In the meantime, Isaac Marlin, the little boy, had slipped back to the house after he was shure the redskins had really gone. He found that his mother had been brutally and horribly murdered. He spread a quilt over the bodies and started out to John Marlin's house to spread the news. It was after ten o'clock, but the brave little boy made the trip. The next morning, the men who had gone to Old Marlin joined John Marlin and they went to the cabin of the tragedy. That afternoon, they saw Stacy Ann slowly creeping to the house. At first, they thought she was an Indian, but her feeble cries drew them to help her. She lay for days, just barely alive from the shock of the tragedy and the loss of blood. (A).

Stacy Ann lived to raise a family and outlived her husband. She told many thrilling stories of the early settlement of Texas and of her experiences. Her hands were terribly scarred from the blows she had received from the Indians' tomahawks and the scars in her head were so bad that she always wore a cloth cap over her head to hide them. She had a sweet face and a kind word and cheery smile for everyone. (B).

Awhile after the Morgan and Marlin massacre, the Indians attacked the home of John Marlin. His son, Benjamin Marlin, Garrett Menifee and Thomas Menifee were there when the Indians came to charge the house. They killed seven of the Indians and this caused the others to leave. The settlers organized a fighting force with Benjamin Bryant of Bryant's Station in command. They decided to engage the Indians in battle and frighten them out of

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the country. They encountered Jose Maria and his Indians at Morgan's Point, near Perry, in the open post oak woods close to a dry ravine. Jose Maria's men won the battle, but the loss was so great that a treaty of peace was made with the Indians and James Marlin. 5 By this treaty, the Indians were not so hostile but pushed farther west. New settlers moved in, and schools and churches were built. The Indians had captured the slave girl belonging to Mrs. Marlin. She was never heard of again. Slave owners who came to settle in and around Perry brought their slaves from other states. The county was organized in 1850 from Milam and Limestone Counties and a log courthouse was built upon the square.

Isaac Marlin never married. He was a prosperous farmer. When the Civil War broke out, he was one of the first volunteers from Falls County. He was killed in action, and buried in an unknown grave.

The Marlin family and the Morgans were the first pioneers in Falls county. A monument has been erected to their memory on the site of the old homestead.