

TEXAS JOURNEY

by Gerry Booth

The Journey Begins

My mother and my grandmother were my sources of knowledge about my family. My grandmother told me many stories about the family to entertain me or get me to go to sleep. She would tell the stories and visions would pop into my head. She told me that the Shipmans came to Texas in a wagon train. She also said that when our Shipmans left South Carolina, they let their neighbors know where they had headed by carving GTT on the door. Now being raised during the fifties when TV had many popular western shows, I envisioned the long wagon trains headed west like those that traveled on the Oregon Trail. So, I thought my family came to Texas in a long wagon train with Stephen F. Austin in the lead.



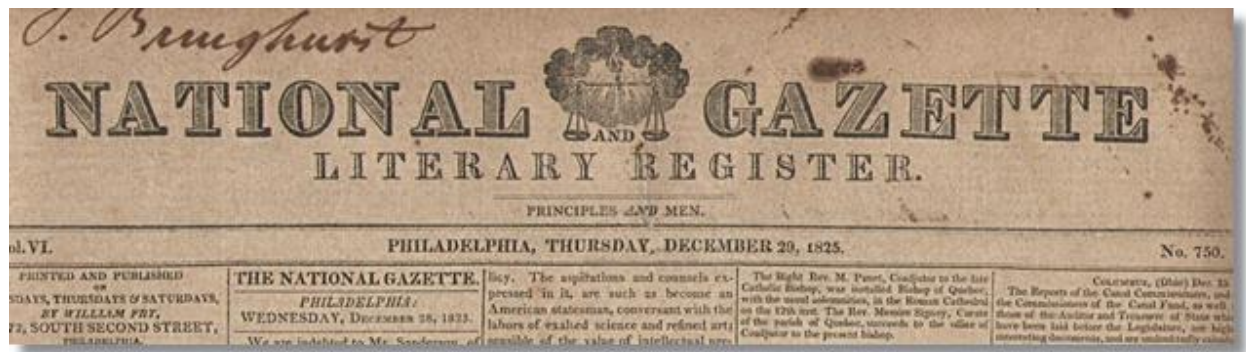
Whoa! That's not the way it happened.

Before we continue our story with the facts, I must first correct an error in my last article. I wrote that Jacob Francisco, Sr was ordered to be part of a road crew in Lincoln County, Tennessee on August 30, 1810. (Lincoln County was created in 1809 from parts of Bedford County, Tennessee). This was incorrect. It was Jacob Francisco, Jr. who was ordered to be on the road crew. Jacob, Jr. was 22 in 1810, while his father was about 55 years old with a drinking problem. According to Shirley Wicker Hendrix, who was a researcher of the Francisco family, Jacob and Rebecca's daughter, Hannah, was married to Daniel Lee who had a sister named Phoebe who was married to Christopher Landers. About 1809 or 1810, after her husband's death, Phoebe moved to Bedford County, Tennessee where Christopher Landers had a land grant. Ms. Hendrix believed that Jacob and Rebecca and their family moved to Bedford also. This is where Jacob, Jr. was viewing a road. In 1819, Jacob Sr.'s debts could not be collected in Bedford County probably because he had died.

Now back to the Shipmans. Moses Shipman left South Carolina with his family. Along the way, others joined his family but he did not head out to Texas in a Hollywood movie-type wagon train. His family traveled for a while, then stopped for a few months and raised a crop to make a little money and get more supplies to travel a little farther. Some of the time it appears they may have traveled alone.

When Moses left South Carolina, he did not mark his door "GTT." Moses Shipman started his westward trip in 1814. After the financial Panic of 1819, many people escaping debt would move to Texas. To let their neighbors know where they had gone, they would chalk on their front door "GTT." Moses Shipman left South Carolina five years before this practice had begun.

The first time the phrase “gone to Texas” was printed in a newspaper article was on December 29, 1825, in the *National Gazette and Literary Register* published in Philadelphia to report that Missouri Senator, Colonel Martin Parmer had left Missouri and gone to Texas.



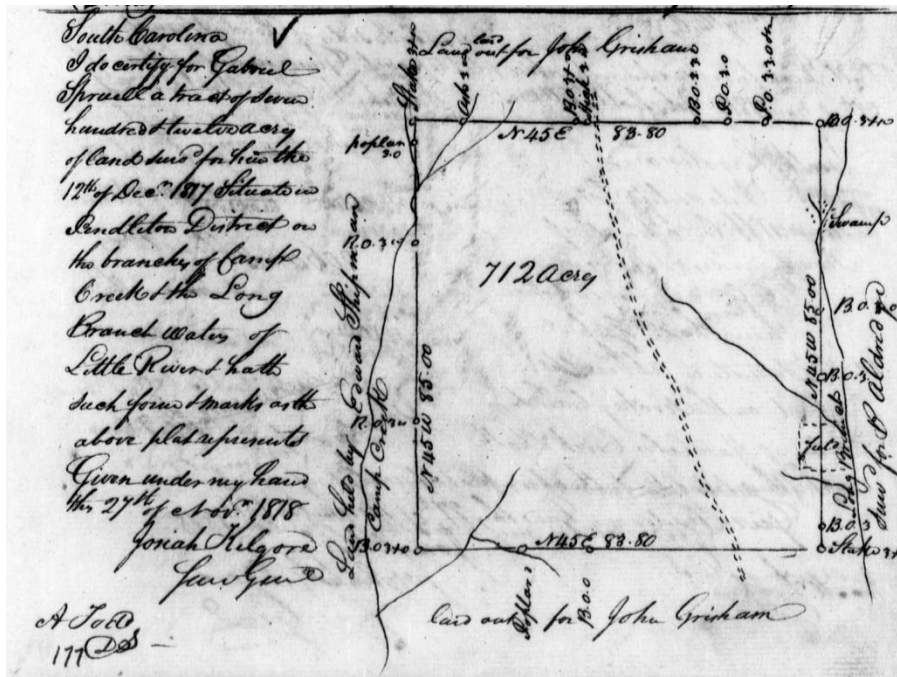
LOUISVILLE (Ky.) Dec. 10.
Missouri.—The Independent Patriot states that “there are now four vacancies in the Senate of Missouri; that the Legislature convenes in January next, and the acting Governor has failed to issue writs of election, as required by the constitution. Speaking of the Senators whose places have to be supplied by the election of others, the editor says, Col. M’Guire has resigned, Mr. Carr has removed from the State, Mr. Brown is at Santa Fé, in the service of the General Government, and Col. Palmer is said to have taken French leave and gone to Texas. In addition to this, it is stated, that “the acting Governor’s seat will be vacant until after the votes for Governor are counted, as he cannot play Governor and Senator, both at the same time.”

In one of the earlier articles, I quoted Daniel Shipman’s description of his father’s dream to go to Texas and have enough land for all of his children. This was probably a “confused” memory. When Moses left South Carolina, Texas was still held by Spain. It was not being colonized, so land was not being granted to colonists at that time.

We do know that Moses had tried migrating westward and returned to North Carolina. We know that his siblings and his cousins had migrated westward. Moses probably had communications from some of these family members, so once again, Moses decided he would migrate westward. Moses was 40 years old. His family at this time included his wife Mary Robinson Shipman (31), and his children Daniel (13), Edward (11), Mary (9), John McMinn (6), Christana Reed (4), and James Robinson (1).

I do not know the exact location from which Moses started his journey. This is what I do know. In 1810, Moses and Mary Shipman had a daughter Christana Reed (my grandmother), born in South Carolina. Narrowing the location of where Moses lived, he was listed on the 1810 US Census in the Pendleton District of South Carolina along with John Robinson, his wife Mary’s father, and with an Edward Shipman, possibly his father but if not, definitely one of his relatives.

¹ https://www.texashistorypage.com/Martin_Parmer.html



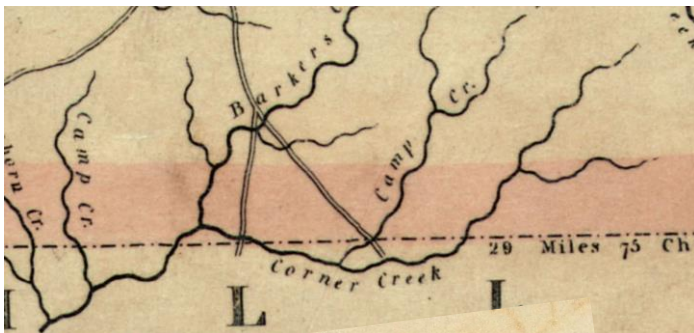
I have not been able to locate a document showing that Moses Shipman owned land in Pendleton District but I have located a document that his brother-in-law did. His brother-in-law Gabriel Spruell (abt. 1770-), was married to Mary Robinson Shipman's sister, Anna "Annie" Robinson Spruell (1778-1840).²

Gabriel purchased this land in 1817 three years after Moses left the area. The land next to Gabriel Spruell's land was held by Edward Shipman. I have not found when Edward Shipman purchased his land. The next question is, which Edward Shipman was this? There are three Edwards that are likely possibilities. One possibility is that Edward Shipman was Moses' father. However, Moses' father Edward Shipman

died in 1814 in Buncombe County, North Carolina. If this land was his, it had probably been given to someone else by the time of this deed. The second possibility is that Edward Shipman could have been Moses Shipman's brother, Edward Shipman, Jr. The third possibility, Edward Shipman could have been the husband of Hannah Robinson Shipman (1776-1870), the sister of Mary Davis Robinson Shipman. His father was Jacob Shipman (1746-1794) and this Edward (1771-1864) was the brother of Jo Elizabeth Shipman Burleson (1770-1834), who married Captain James Burleson (1775-1836).

Regardless of which Edward Shipman this was, this deed proves that there were Shipmans in Pendleton District. I suspect that the Robinsons and Shipmans were living near each other. This land in Pendleton District is on the branch of Camp

Creek of the Long Branch waters of Little River. Little River is on the border of Pendleton District and Abbeville. There are two Camp Creeks. The exact location is still not clear, but this is probably the vicinity where Moses, Mary, and their children lived.



This map is an 1820 map of Pendleton District.



This map is an 1820 map of Abbeville, the county just below the Pendleton District. It fits right on the bottom of the Pendleton District map. You can see the meandering Little River on both maps. And you can see Corners Creek on both maps. Little River is not labeled on the Pendleton map and the two Camp Creeks are not labeled on the Abbeville map. However, if you look at them together, and you adjust the maps so that the borders for the two districts are oriented the same way, you can see that Camp Creek is a branch of Little River. In both maps,

² <https://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/> Enter search "Full Name" – Spruell, Gabriel.

there are double lines representing roads that appear to be the same two roads on both maps. I believe this is the area of the land grant for Spruell and Edward Shipman's land that was adjacent. This does not tell us exactly where Moses was but I believe it is reasonable to assume that he was in this vicinity. It is possible that Moses rented land in this area or that he may have lived on a relative's land. So, this is where I believe the journey began.

Pendleton District was not only the home to the Shipmans and Robinsons but also to two men who were important to Texas history. Samuel Augustus Maverick (1803-1870) and Thomas Jefferson Rusk (1803-1857). Both men were born in Pendleton District, South Carolina, both were born in 1803, both moved to Texas, and both signed the Texas Declaration of Independence.

In 1845 Samuel Maverick was given 400 head of cattle for payment on a debt. He was living at Decros Point on the Gulf Coast of Texas. When Samuel's family returned to live in San Antonio, Samuel left the cattle behind. The cattle were allowed to wander and were never branded. People in the area would refer to any unbranded cow as "one of Maverick's." This is the origin of the term for an unbranded calf or an unorthodox or independent-minded person.

On April 19, 1836, after the defeat at the Alamo and the massacre of the Texas Army under Colonel James W. Fannin at Goliad on Palm Sunday and just two days before the battle of San Jacinto, Thomas Rusk wrote this letter³:

WAR DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
HARRISBURG, APRIL 10, 1836.

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TO THE PEOPLE OF TEXAS: —Fellow citizens, let me make one more appeal to you to turn and rally to the standard of your country. The army reached here yesterday late in the day; scouts arrested three of the Mexicans, one captain, one a correo (express rider) direct from Mexico, and another, a servant. From the prisoners we learned many interesting facts. Santa Anna himself is just below us, within the sound of the drum, and has, we understand, only five hundred men. We are parading and preparing our forces for the purpose of marching upon him: he has a reinforcement of about one thousand men upon the Brazos, about forty miles from here. A few hours more will decide the fate of our army, and what an astonishing fact it is that, at the very moment when the fate of your wives, your children, your homes, your country, and all that is dear to a freeman, are suspended upon the issue of one battle, not one-fourth of the people (men) of Texas are in the army. Are you Americans? Are you freemen? If you are, prove your blood and birth by rallying at once to your country's standard. Your general is at the head of a brave and chivalrous band, and throws himself, sword in hand, into the breach, to save his country and vindicate her rights. Enthusiasm prevails in the army, but I look around and see that many, very many, whom I had anticipated would be first in the fight, are not here. Rise up at once! concentrate and march to the field; make a vigorous effort and the country is safe; a different course disgraces and ruins you, and what is life worth with the loss of liberty! May I never survive it. Your fellow citizen,

(Signed)

THOS. J. RUSK,
Secretary of War.
APRIL 19th, 1836.

Thomas Rusk fought at San Jacinto. After San Jacinto, he conducted a military funeral for the troops massacred at Goliad. Remember the battle cry at San Jacinto was: Remember the Alamo! Remember Goliad! When Texas became a state, Thomas Rusk and Sam Houston became the first two senators to represent Texas.

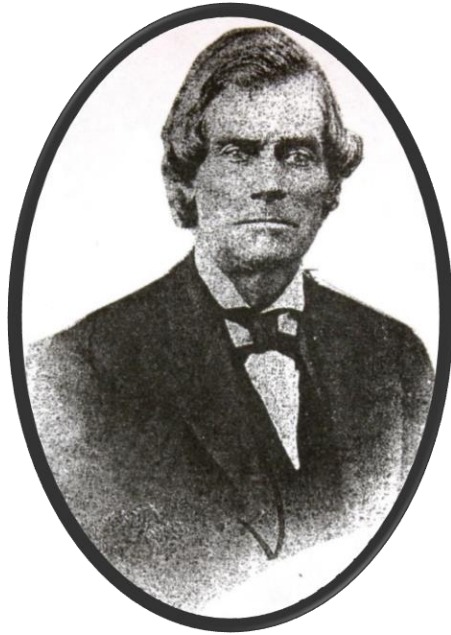
³ Daniel Shipman, *Frontier Life*, (1879), 140.

Moses Shipman's second attempt to move away from the Carolinas began in March of 1814. I will quote Moses Shipman's oldest son, Daniel, to tell the story of my family's journey. I have added pictures and additional information in [brackets] that I hope will be of interest and/or helpful.

Daniel wrote his memories in his book *Frontier Life 58 Years in Texas*. The book begins with a description of his family.

Chapter I.

HISTORY AND INCIDENTS IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE SHIPMAN FAMILY



My great grandfather [Daniel Shipman] and one brother on my father's side [Joseph Shipman], and a half brother, a Mr. Gage [David Gage], were of Welch descent, and came together to America.

My great grandfather settled in North Carolina, his brother in New Jersey. But I have never known of their half brother's whereabouts.

Mary Robinson was the maiden name of my mother, who was of Irish and English parentage, and the second daughter of John Robinson, of South Carolina.

My father and mother were married on the 19th of January, 1798. The writer of this book was their second son, born February 20th, 1801, after the death of my oldest brother. After me were four sons and four daughters, to wit:

Edward, born in Tennessee, March 1st 1803.

Mary, born in North Carolina, September 28th, 1805.

John McMinn, born in same state, March 17th, 1808.

Christana Reed, born August 23rd, 1810, in South Carolina.

James Robinson, born in same state, April 8th, 1813.

Moses, born in Franklin Co., Tennessee, January 16th, 1816.

Elizabeth, born in Howard county, Mo., February 3rd, 1819.

Lucetta, born in Arkansas, December 28th, 1821.

OUR TRIP

We made our Northwestern start from South Carolina on the 5th of March, 1814. We went to North Carolina, Buncombe county, and stopped until fall, with the calculation to start again about November. Father [Moses] rented a farm on the bank of a river called French Broad. While making our crop we



were in fair view of one of the most beautiful range of high mountains, far away on the other side of the river, in a Northwesterly direction, which appeared to be one of

the most beautiful – variegated with colors of a great many different shades of purple, white, red, pale and deep blue; I suppose caused by the different distances, some appearing to be rising higher and higher, and all of which appeared to rival each other in way of height and beauty, and some of the most distant seemed to be a deep blue cloud, and every one appeared to have a peculiar shade of its own, and of a bluish caste. It seemed to me that I can see them yet in my mind’s eye, notwithstanding it



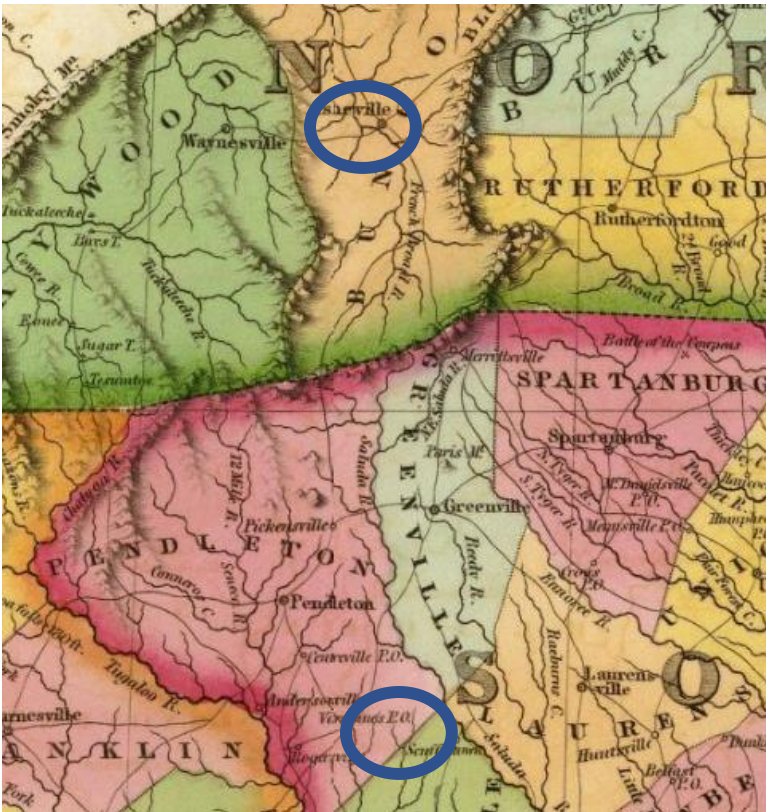
has now been over sixty years since I saw them. The highest and most conspicuous of the mountains is called Mount Pisgah.⁴ French Broad river is the principal stream that I learned to swim in. Although it is a deep, sluggish, running stream, we boys could and did find some shallow and swift places, which we frequently, particularly on

Saturday evenings, after we had finished our week’s work, at one certain place, where my mind has frequently visited since then, and again have I so often thought of the luxuriant and beautiful shades on the nice white sandy banks, most splendid and magnificent tall poplar trees and waving willows, under which the deep blue waters rolled beneath, wending their way towards the Father of Waters.⁵



⁴ Mount Pisgah is a mountain in the Appalachian mountain range and part of the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina near Asheville. www.blueridgemountaintravel.com

⁵ Robert S. Duncanson (1821–1872), *French Broad River*, circa 1850–1851. Oil on canvas, 17 × 24 inches. Courtesy Private Collection, Bronxville, N.Y. Courtesy Private Collection, NY. https://blueridgeimpressions.files.wordpress.com/2021/06/boyle-fig-3-rsd-french-broad-river-dsc_0153-1.jpg



This map is of North and South Carolina in 1825, made just a few years after the Shipmans left the Carolinas. The two blue circles give an approximate location of the starting point in Pendleton District in South Carolina to where they stopped near Ashville on the first leg of their journey to Texas.⁶

Why did Moses go north to Buncombe County, North Carolina, if his goal was to move westward?

Moss had lived in Buncombe and he had owned land there on Mud Creek. Perhaps he needed to tend to some business or perhaps he wanted to say goodbye to some friends or family. On Ancestry several people have referred to an account in the Shipman Book in the Henderson County Genealogy Society library in Henderson, North Carolina. Comments in the book from Hugh Shipman state that Edward, Moses' father, had intended to go with Moses but had become sick and died in 1814, in Buncombe, North Carolina. Perhaps, Moses traveled to Buncombe so his father could join him in his travels. It is reasonable to assume

that Edward was living in Buncombe. There is an Edward Shipman listed on the 1810 US Census for Buncombe. There is also a record of Edward granting land he too owned on Mud Creek in Buncombe County to his son Edward, Jr. in 1813, perhaps in preparation for leaving North Carolina. In the record the last two entries indicate that Edward, Jr., 12 years later, granted this land to one of his sons, Stephen, and also granted another tract he apparently owned to his son, Joseph.⁷

| 3146-S | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------|------|------|----------------------------------|
| Date of Instrument | Grantor | Grantee | Date Recorded | Book | Page | Description |
| 11-24-1919 | Sherwald, Alpha C. | Sherwald, Vicotr | 11-26-1919 | 234 | 466 | Separation |
| 11-24-1919 | Sherwald, Victor | Sherwald, Alpha C. | 11-26-1919 | 234 | 466 | Separation |
| 5-12-1915 | Sherwood, Mildred E. | Bryson, B. C. and wife | 5-13-1915 | 199 | 211 | Averys Cr. TS |
| 4- 6-1915 | Sherwood, Mildred E. | Watkins, F. C. | 4- 8-1915 | 200 | 411 | Fr. Brd. Ave. |
| 3-29-1916 | Sherwood, Mildred E. | Clark, E. C. and wife | 4- 4-1916 | 206 | 500 | 27 acres Smiths Mill Cr. |
| 4- 5-1916 | Sherwood, Mildred E. | Poovey, W. E. et al | 4- 7-1916 | 207 | 112 | Haywood Rd. W. Ashe. |
| 10-21-1815 | Shipman, Daniel | Shipman, Hezekiah | 9-16-1819 | 11 | 444 | 150 acres Shoal Cr. |
| ?- ?-1813 | Shipman, Edward Sr. | Shipman, Edward Jr. | 9- 7-1813 | F | 54 | 150 acres Mud Cr. |
| 4-12-1801 | Shipman, Edward | Blythe, Jesse | -?- | 3 | 303 | 100 acres |
| 11-21-1817 | Shipman, Edward Jr. | Crumley, M. Henry | -?- | 12 | 299 | 50 acres James Cr., near Mud Cr. |
| 8- 2-1825 | Shipman, Edward | Shipman, Stephen | 3-23-1827 | 13 | 471 | 150 acres Little Mud Cr. |
| 8- 2-1825 | Shipman, Edward | Shipman, Joseph | 3-28-1827 | 13 | 476 | 200 acres Little Mud Cr. |

Daniel never mentions his grandfather dying. In his writings, he sometimes leaves the details out and he often refers to relatives as friends. Despite these missing details, his account does provide a picture of the experiences the Shipmans had as they crossed the country.

Just below Ashville, in Buncombe County, the Shipmans made their first stop in the long journey. Moses spent the summer here where he planted a crop, harvested it, and sold it. On September 13, of that year 1814, the British bombarded Fort McHenry in Baltimore, Maryland. That night Francis Scot Key waited for dawn to see if the American flag was still flying. At dawn on the 14th of September, he wrote the Star-Spangled Banner. One month later on October 14th Moses headed for Tennessee.

⁶ Map of North & South Carolina y Henry S. Tanner, 1825

⁷ <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3Q1-6HPP?i=315&cat=571683>