

# ELIZA SIMS AND TWO LIBRARIES A Family History

By Clinton F. Cross



ELIZA HARLAN CROSS (1814-1897)  
At time of marriage to Joseph Oliver Cross

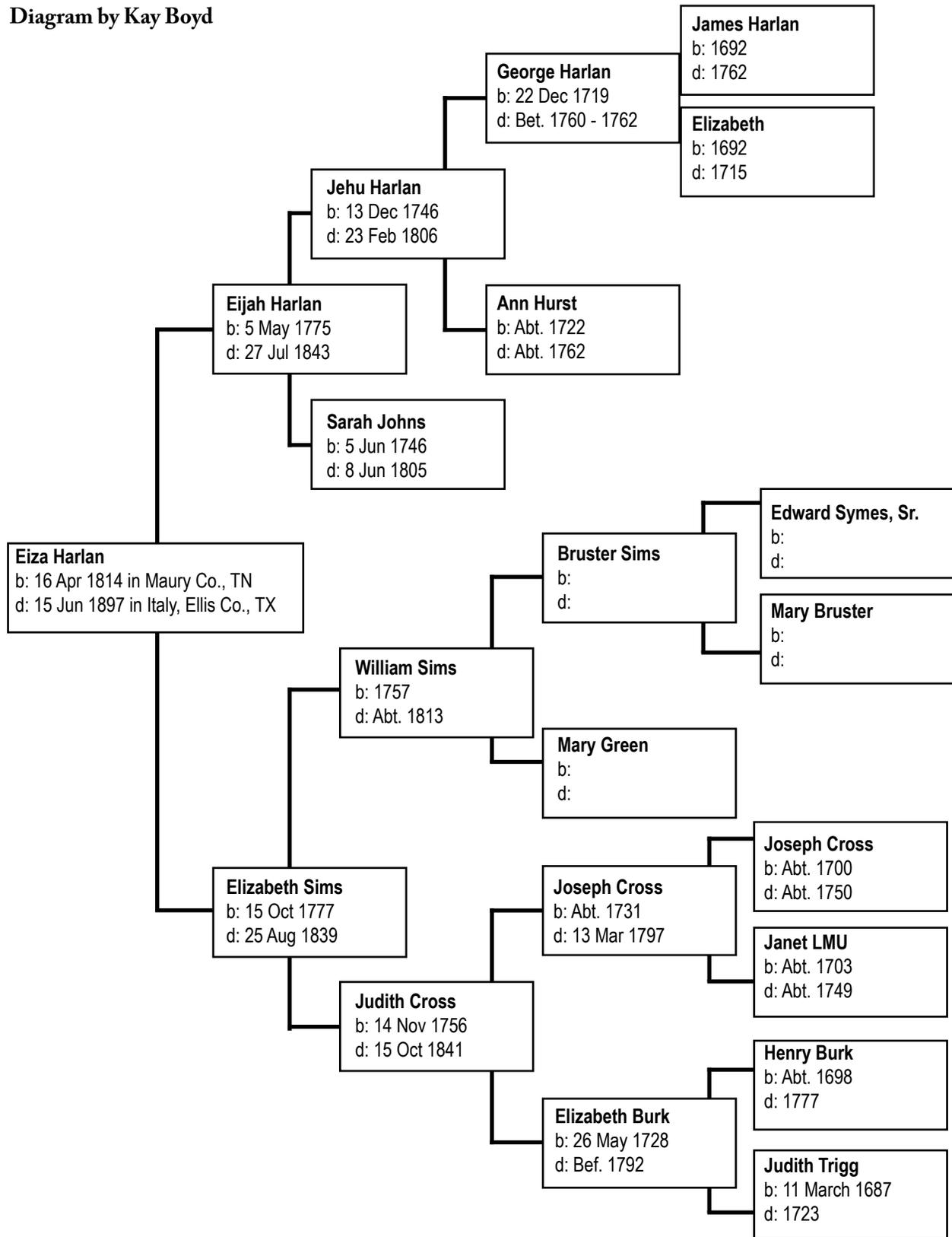


## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	3
The Harlan Family in America.....	4
The Sims Family in America .....	7
The Cross Family in America.....	9
Three Families in Tennessee .....	13
Eliza's First Marriage.....	13
What's Going On? .....	14
Eliza's Second Marriage .....	15
The Dunlap Family in America.....	17
The Texas Migration.....	17
Eliza's Third Marriage .....	18
Eliza's Fourth Marriage .....	19
Eliza's Children and Grandchildren .....	23
Eliza and Two Libraries .....	25
Tribute.....	26
Sources .....	27
Appendix.....	31

ANCESTORS OF ELIZA HARLAN

Diagram by Kay Boyd



## Introduction

**T**his article is about Eliza Harlan-Cross-Tannehill-Dunlap-Sims (#2871) (Harlan, 644).<sup>1</sup> Eliza was born in Mt. Pleasant, Maury County, Tennessee, the year Francis Scott Key wrote the ‘Star Spangled Banner, during the War of 1812. She was the first of three children born to Elijah and Elizabeth [Sims] Harlan. She died in Italy, Ellis County, Texas in 1897, shortly before the outbreak of hostilities in the Spanish American War.

Eliza’s first husband was Joseph Oliver Cross, her first cousin once removed; her second husband was William Tannehill, the brother of Rebecca [Tannehill] Calhoun who later became her first child’s mother-in-law; her third husband was Samuel Dunlap, whose brother later became her second child’s father-in-law. Her fourth husband was the son of John Sims, who was the brother of her mother Elizabeth Sims and her first cousin.

Her first cousin and fourth husband Nicholas P. Sims and her son Oscar E. Dunlap founded the Nicholas P. Sims Library in Waxahachie, Texas. The Nicholas P. Sims Library was one of the first ten public libraries and one of the first privately owned libraries in Texas. Another son, Samuel Meriwether Dunlap, Jr. founded the Samuel M. Dunlap Memorial Library in Italy, Texas.

Although she first married at the age of 13 and confronted many challenges, she provided for her children, educated herself and her children, and in many ways contributed to her family’s welfare and her community’s development.

Eliza’s family history is the history of a prominent Southern family, some members of which in the midst of a proud but repressive White Southern culture continued to support the egalitarian values first embraced by their seventeenth century Harlan ancestors. It is more than a family history and the story of one woman’s life; it is a journey through America’s past.

1. For the reader’s benefit, a number in this paper after the name of a person descended from the immigrant George Harlan (in this case #2871 for Eliza) refers to the number in Alpheus Harlan’s book *Genealogy of the Harlan Family* (1687-1912) (A. Harlan) used to identify a particular individual among several individuals with possibly the same name. Although printed copies of Alpheus Harlan’s book are presently difficult to obtain, the reader can find a version of the book on the Internet. It is perhaps the most important resource presently available in tracing the genealogical history of the Harlan family in America.

## The Harlan Family in America

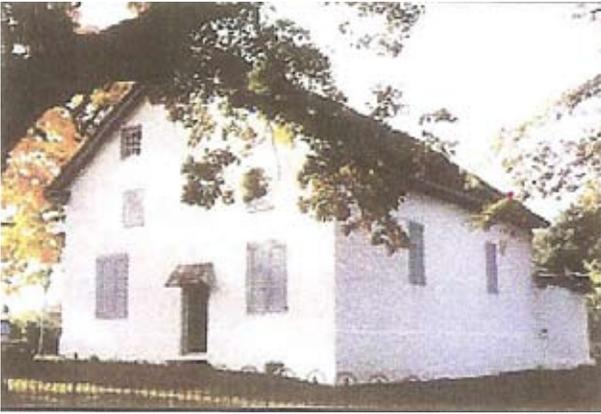
**A**s noted on her gravestone, Eliza was born a 'Harlan.' The first Harlan to come to America was George Harland (#3). George was baptized on January 11, 1650, at the Monastery of Monkwearmouth in England, founded in 674 A.D. He probably converted to the Society of Friends while still residing in Durham, England, and thereafter moved to County Down in Northern Ireland, which was England's first colony. In 1678, at a time when the English people were very agitated about an alleged "Popish Plot" to kill King Charles II, he married Elizabeth Duck. The marriage is recorded in the marriage registry in the Lurgan Meeting House, County Down, Ireland, as follows:

George Harland in the parish of Donna long, County of Down and Elizabeth Duck of Lurgan in ye parish of Shank ell and County of Ardmagh having intentions of marriage (according to God's ordinance) did lay their said intents before ye mens and women's meetings who taking it into their considerations desired of them to wait a time in which time several friends were appointed to make inquiry of ye several places where their residence are or of later yeare have been whether ye man is free from all other women, and ye woman free from all other men and whether their relations and parents are satisfied with their said intentions. And they professing themselves a second time before ye men's and women's meetings and an account being bought to ye meeting, where all things being found clear and their intentions of marriage being several times published in ye meetings to which they do belong, and nothing appearing against it, a meeting of ye people of God was appointed at the house of the Marke Wright, in ye parish of Shankell, on the 27th day of ye 9th month anno 1678, where they being contracted the said George Harland declared publicly and solemnly in the presence of God and of his people I take Elizabeth Duck to be my wife and ye said Elizabeth Duck declared in like manner, I give myself to George Harland to be his wife, and I take him to be my husband, as witness our hands. Signed George Harland and Elizabeth Harland. [www.harlanfamilyinamerica.com](http://www.harlanfamilyinamerica.com)

Only seven years before their marriage, William Penn faced trial for the crime of conducting a service for the Society of Friends on the streets of London (the police having barred them from entering the church). The jury refused to convict, in spite of the judges instructing them to do so, thereby popularizing the right to trial by jury.

In 1687, six years after William Penn settled Philadelphia and two years after James II was crowned King of England, George Harlan purchased land in what is now Delaware and migrated to America. He first settled at Centre in New Castle County, but soon moved to the Brandywine Valley of Pennsylvania and purchased 470 acres in Kennett, now Pennsbury Township. He became a leader in the Pennsylvania Colony. In 1695, he ran for the Provincial Assembly from New Castle County, and he won the election. That same year William Penn appointed him the governor of the three lower counties of Pennsylvania (which is now the state of Delaware). In 1712, he ran again for the Provincial Assembly, this time from Chester County, and again won the election.

George Harland was one of the first of the Friends from Ireland to settle in Kennett near a settlement of Indians. In 1701, after the Indians moved, he obtained a warrant for 200 acres in a bend of the creek that the Indians had inhabited.



*Old Kennett meeting house*

The land was granted “in regard of the great trouble and charge he has bore in fencing and maintaining the same for the said Indians while living thereon.” (A. Harlan 4).

George attended many Quaker meetings. The Quakers kept records of those meetings and some still exist. The records indicate that George Harland was instrumental in establishing a number of Quaker Meeting Houses, including the Old Kennett Meeting House built around 1710, and the Centre Meeting House constructed around 1711 ([www.pym.org](http://www.pym.org)).

George Harland died on July 17, 1714. His Will, proved August 2, 1714, left to his son Aaron a clock and great brass kettle; to his bother Michael Harlan, a young Susquehama mare; and to his indentured servant Mary Matthews at “expiration of time” a cow, calf and mare. He directed that his body be buried by his wife on

Alphonsus Kirk’s land (A. Harlan 5-6). (Alphonsus Kirk was an old friend. He witnessed George’s marriage to Elizabeth Duck in England in 1878; and he was one of the first of the Quakers from Ireland who, along with George, moved into the Kennett area). The reports from George’s executors revealed the existence of more property; including a bed, wearing apparel, two pillows and pillowcases, two sheets, a rug, a blanket, a bedstead, a chest, a table, a skillet, a frying pan, one gun, two cows, some horses, and a number of other miscellaneous items (A. Harlan 6-7).

George Harland is buried in the cemetery next to the Old Center Meeting House on Alphonsus Kirk’s land (A. Harlan 2). His family did not place a marker on the plot where he was buried as Quakers did not mark individual graves.

George Harland had nine children. The seventh child, James (#11), born in 1692, was Eliza’s great-great-grandfather. James grew up in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and attended the Old Kennett Meeting House. At some time in his life, he discontinued the use of the ‘d’ in his surname. In 1715, one year after his father’s death, he married a woman by the name of Elizabeth.

James’ new wife, Elizabeth, may have been an Anglican. In any case, an Anglican priest without prior approval by the Society of Friends married James and Elizabeth. The Society of Friends considered sanctioning James:

From the minutes of Center Monthly Meeting, 1, 2, 1716/17: Whereas complaint having been made concerning James Harlan taking a wife contrary to the good order established amongst Friends and hath been labored from time to time to bring him to a sense of his weakness in so doing but he yett seems to be insensible thereof, wherefore the meeting appoints Robert Johnson and Dayen Miller to speak to him and desire him to our next monthly meeting to see if he will condemn the said action, and that he give account to the next meeting also (A. Harlan 19).

James responded:

To the Monthly Meeting held at ye Senter this 4<sup>th</sup> Day of ye 3d Month 1717: Whereas I Jeames Harlan have sometime ago Married a wife from amongst Friends Contrary to the good order established amongst them which proceedings I am right sorry for and give this as a Testimony against myself for said disorderly doings. Given under my hand the day and year above said. JEAMES HARLAN (A. Harlan 19).

The Quakers apparently forgave James Harlan, probably because he acknowledged his wrongdoing. In any event, the Society did not sanction or expel him (A. Harlan 19).

James and Elizabeth had ten children; eight boys and two girls. Eliza's great-grandfather George (#45), the second oldest, was born in 1718.

After the birth of his first five children, James moved from Kennett Township to Nantmeal Township in the northwestern part of Chester County, Pennsylvania. There James settled upon a tract of 500 acres. Although he did not secure a deed, he probably had a legal claim to it. In 1731, he conveyed by deed the land to one James Gibbons (M. Harlan 15). At that time, his son George Harlan (#45) would have been 13 or 14 years old.

According to M. Douglas Harlan, sometime between 1732 and 1744, James and his family joined a larger westward migratory movement and moved a short distance to Frederick County, Virginia (now near Martinsburg, Berkeley County, West Virginia). Douglas Harlan argues that James and his family probably arrived early in the migration when they could find fertile land and a remarkably valuable spring only three miles from crossing the Potomac River (M. Harlan 15, 16). James and his son George probably built the home at Spring Mills, known as Spring Hill, located about two miles from the Potomac River near the boundary between West Virginia and Virginia (M. Harlan 18). Spring Hill was until recently owned by George's progeny. It remains to this day a local landmark.

During the Indian uprising in the 1750s and later during the French and Indian Wars, many Quakers in Berkeley County began to associate themselves with the Presbyterian Church. However, James and his son George apparently remained faithful to the Society of Friends. Both were subject to fines and imprisonment, but steadfastly maintained the Friends' unwavering stand for peace (M. Harlan 16, 17).

George (#45) married Ann Hurst (Alpheus Harlan mistakenly identifies George's wife as Ann "Hunt") (Norman 3). George and Ann, the great grandparents of John Marshall Harlan (#2969) and Eliza [Harlan] Sims (#2871), had six children. Jehu, 1746-1806 (#212), was Eliza's grandfather; and James, 1755-1816 (#216), was John Marshall Harlan's grandfather. Both Jehu and James were born at Spring Hill.

Jehu (#212) married Sarah Johns in 1767-68, shortly after the conclusion of the French and Indian Wars. Jehu (George's oldest son) and Sarah continued to live at Spring Hill after their marriage. There, in 1775, as America struggled to gain its independence from England, the couple had their fourth child, Eliza's father Elijah Harlan (#824).

On September 11, 1777, 90 years after George Harlan migrated to America, almost 50 years after Eliza's great-great-grandfather James (#11) left the Brandywine area, and approximately 35 years after James and his son and Eliza's great-grandfather George moved to Berkeley County, British troops marched past George Harlan's church, the Old Kennett Meeting House, and engaged Generals Washington and Lafayette in the Battle of Brandywine Creek. At the time, Eliza's grandfather Jehu (#212) was 31 years old and living at "Spring Hill." Her father Elijah (#824) was a two-year-old baby.



*Falling Waters Prebysteryan Church*

When Jehu and Sarah were 50 years old, they deeded land for a Presbyterian church in Falling Waters which is now located in Spring Mills. Sarah Harlan died in 1805 and was the first member of the Harlan family buried at Falling Waters Presbyterian Church. Jehu died in 1806 and was buried in the Friends Burying Ground of Falling Waters.

In his Will, Jehu left Elijah the sum of \$1,030 to be paid at the rate of \$200 annually by his executors which, with "what I have already given him," he says he conceives to be his share of the estate (M. Harlan 27).

Jehu died in 1806. Shortly thereafter Elijah, one of Jehu's 11 children and also one of his younger sons, went to Tennessee.

## The Sims Family in America

According to Nicholas P. Sims, Bruster Sims was the father of the William Sims in America who was the progenitor of Eliza's maternal family line. He fought in the American Revolution. Some of his descendants claimed he was a colonel.

There were three levels of military participation for Virginians during the war: the Continental Line, which was composed of full-time troops; the Virginia Line, which was a state organization, also composed of full-time troops; and the county militias. Sims was probably in the militia.

The British captured Sims and forced him to march up and down a line following his Negro servant Kit who beat a drum as Sims marched behind him.

On August 9, 1773, William Sims married Judith Cross, daughter of Joseph Cross and Elizabeth Burk. They parented William, born 1773; Jane, born 1774; John, born 1775 who was Nicholas Sims' father; Elizabeth, born 1777 who was Eliza's Mother; Mary, born 1778; Mildred, born 1780; Nancy, born 1785 who married a 'Jerry Harlan' whose precise identity is unknown; Martha, born 1787; Susannah, born 1789; Thomas, born 1791; Sarah, born 1793; and Frances, born 1796.

William and Judy [Cross] Sims and their 12 children moved to Maury County, Tennessee, in 1807. His wife's brother Oliver Cross would soon follow. Both Sims and Cross established residences near Mount Pleasant. Elijah Harlan also moved to Mount Pleasant at the same time.



*William Sims' home, Mt. Pleasant Tennessee*

PHOTO COURTESY OF SHELBY ROGERS

In 1811, William and Judy's daughter Elizabeth [Sims] Tinsley married Elijah Harlan. It was a second marriage for both Elijah and Elizabeth--Elijah having been married to a Christiana Harlan (A. Harlan 108) (#865, daughter of George Harlan--#220--and Catherine Pope) (A. Harlan 108), who died in 1808; and Elizabeth, having been married to a William Tinsley. Eliza, their first child, was born in 1814.

William Sims died in 1814 (the year Eliza, his granddaughter, was born). He wrote two Wills, one in 1812 and one in 1813. In his 1813 Will, Sims conveyed 150 acres of property to his son William Sims, Jr. In that document, he reserved one acre of land for the purpose of a cemetery. The Will states that "on this 28th day of September of the year 1836 between

Thomas Sims executor of the estate of William Sims, deceased, of the one part, to William Sims of the other, both of Maury County in the state of Tennessee, and that for and in consideration the sum of \$235 to me said executor paid by the said William Sims, receipt hereof is hereby acknowledged, do convey to said William Sims 50 acres of land in said state and county in conformity of the provisions of the last will and testament of said William Sims.” In addition, there follows a description of the property and then it states:

Out of this property which I reserve in conformity with the provisions of said will, one acre for a burying ground beginning at a point north 50 degrees, west 15 chains and 18 lengths from the southwest corner of said 51 acres and northeast for compliment and I the said Thomas Sims executor does warrant and defend the above described premises against the legal equitable claim of any person whomsoever to the said William Sims his heirs and assigns forever; Thomas Sims, executor.

Eliza’s mother, Elizabeth; her first husband, Joseph Oliver Cross; and a daughter, Elizabeth are all buried on that piece of property.

A visitor can locate the property by taking Cross Bridges Road from Mount Pleasant, Tennessee, and going two miles to a point where the road turns sharply to the left. The cemetery is just beyond this turn in a pasture on Road Place. The cemetery is located on private property.

Thanks to Jim Tinsley, a descendant of Joseph Oliver Cross and his son Jehu Cross, we have photographs of the “Cross” cemetery.

For more information about the history of Eliza’s maternal ancestral line, please refer to Michal Farmer’s website, referenced in the ‘Sources’ section at the end of this paper. Ms. Farmer’s research is thorough, detailed, and reliable.



*Sims/Cross Cemetery, Maury County, Tennessee*

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JIM TINSLEY

## The Cross Family in America

**E**liza's great-great-grandfather, Joseph Cross (1700-1751), immigrant, departed England from St. Olive, Hart Street, London, for America in 1720. This was the year of the first stock market crash in English history, known as the 'South Sea Bubble.'

On September 27, a few weeks after the market crashed, Cross signed on as an indentured servant with an English labor broker, Ambrose Cocke. He agreed to work in a tobacco field for four years, and Cocke agreed to arrange his passage to America. He landed in Essex County, Virginia, where the primary agricultural crop was tobacco. His ship captain paid for his passage, but then in effect sold him to his future employer for a period of at least four years. Although many indentured servants died, Cross knew how to read and write and perhaps for that reason successfully completed his servitude.

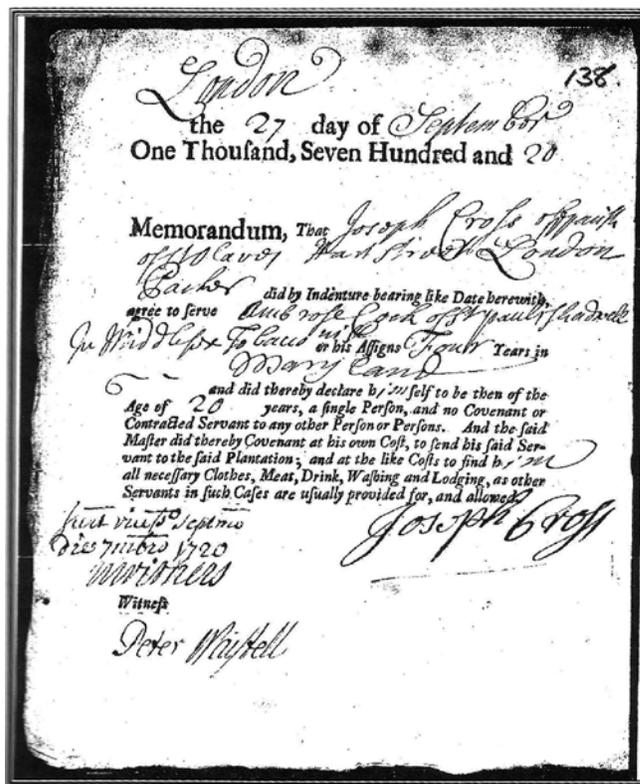
Cavaliers, who supported the King during the English Revolution, primarily settled Essex County. During the American Revolution, Essex County harbored many Loyalists. The Scots-Irish, many of whom came to America with grievances against the English, settled Hanover County. Most of these settlers and their descendants became enthusiastic supporters of the American Revolution.

In 1724 when he completed his indentured servitude, Joseph received a headright of 50 acres of land far west of Essex County. He chose, however, not to accept the headright; instead becoming a sharecropper working for someone else.

Shortly after obtaining his freedom, Joseph married a woman by the name of Jean. Joseph and Jane had two children; Samuel was born in 1727 and Joseph Cross, Sr. was born in 1731.

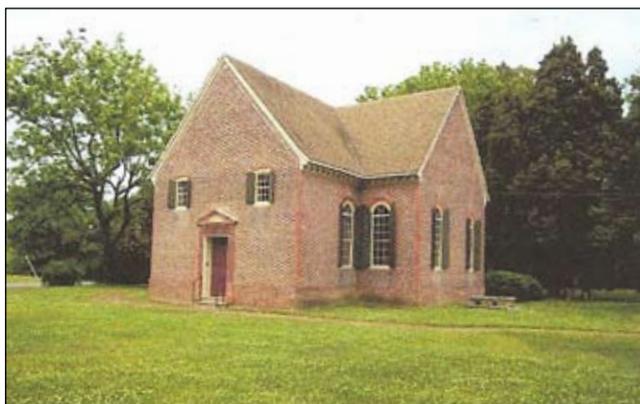
In 1734, Joseph Cross sold his headright to William Beverley.

In 1741, Joseph was able to purchase a 270 acre plantation from the Reverend Robert Rose, an Anglican minister at Vauter's Church in St. Anne's parish in the northwestern half of Essex County, near Loretto, Virginia. Rose also served



*Memorandum of Indenture signed by immigrant Joseph Cross in London, England on 27 september, 1720. His indentured service paid for his passage to Colonial America.*

COURTESY OF MARK CROSS



*Vauter's Church, near Loretto, Essex County, Virginia; pastor was the Reverend Robert Rose. The Joseph Cross Family attended services at this church.*

COURTESY OF WAYNE AND CAROL CROSS

as pastor at Sale's Church in South Farnham Parish, located at Farmer's Hall near present day Champlain. It was located on Wassanasson Creek (presently Farmer's Hall Creek). The Reverend Rose lived nearby. Reflecting the survival on anachronistic English property law and the importance of social status, the transaction was initially documented as a lease. In exchange for the use of the land, planter Joseph Cross agreed to pay "gentleman" Robert Rose an insignificant amount of money (it was not about the money) and the rent of "one ear of Indian corn if demanded on the Feast of All Saints."

This transaction was not the actual agreement but an acknowledgment of social status. Another document was prepared in which Rose sold the same property to Joseph for 100 pounds. With this purchase, Joseph acquired increased social status and legal rights, including the right to vote.

In 1745, John Cheek sold Joseph Cross 62 more acres. His eldest son Samuel witnessed the purchase. In 1750, Joseph Cross, Sr. purchased another 126 acres, adjacent to the land he had purchased from Cheek.

The County Clerk, possibly fulfilling the role of a lawyer, wrote Joseph Cross' Will in 1747.

Joseph Cross, 50 years of age, died in March of 1751. The estate was settled without difficulty. The administration of the estate never mentioned Jane, probably because she had predeceased him.

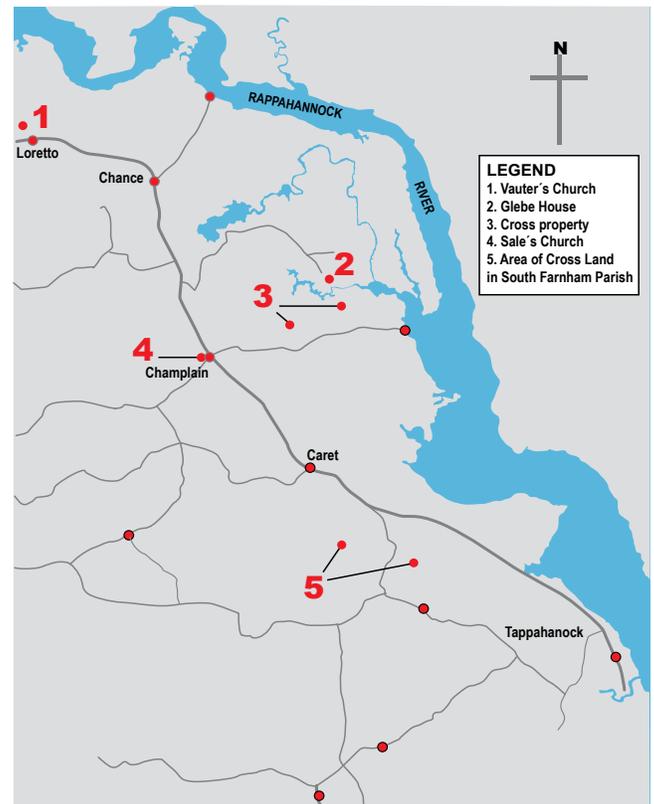
Three neighbors made an inventory of Joseph's property and returned an appraisal in May of 1751. The seven slaves who constituted Joseph's most valuable assets ranged in value from 40 pounds each for a man named Samson and a woman named Peg, to ten pounds for a boy named Jack. The appraisal also noted a mare, two aged sheep, a few pigs and some poultry. His household goods included furniture, a spinning wheel, assorted rugs and blankets, a brass candlestick, three old guns, a sword, a parcel of books, and various other items. The entire estate, exclusive of land, was valued at 271 pounds. At the time of his death, Joseph Cross owned 458 acres of land.

On October 15, 1751, Samuel and Joseph Cross, Sr., sons and co-executors of the estate, returned an account to the Executor for the expenses incurred in settling their father's estate. Included was a charge of ten shillings payable to a Mrs. Hannah Upshaw for two gallons of brandy for the funeral.

Samuel and Joseph Cross, Sr. continued to live in Essex County after their father's death and both married there. Samuel married a woman by the name of Anne. Joseph Cross, Sr. married Elizabeth Burk.

Elizabeth Burk's parents were Henry Burk, grandson of John Bourk who immigrated around 1650 to what is now Middlesex County, Virginia and Judith [Clark] Trigg (Rutman, 69, 70, 78-79). Henry Burk and his wife had seven children; four girls and three boys. The children may have been somewhat contentious; especially Tomas. The authorities charged Tomas with assault and battery nine times.

According to *Ancestors of Early Burk(e) Families of Russell County, Virginia*, by Rue Burke Stevenson, published on the Internet, Henry owned a tavern known as Burk's Ordinary. The Ordinary opened in 1734 and was located in the center of Caroline County on one of the oldest roads from Annapolis to Williamsburg. About a mile south of the tavern,



*Map of Essex County, Loretto and Tappahannock*

COURTESY OF WAYNE AND CAROL CROSS

Henry operated a ferry (close to the present site of Burk's Bride) which carried people and cargo over the Mattaponi River. He also farmed, maintained a peach orchard, built a milldam, supervised road building, and participated as a juror in several legal trials.

Joseph Cross, Sr. and Elizabeth [Burk] Cross parented many children. Judy Cross, the eldest, was born in 1756. A younger child, Oliver Cross, was born in 1768.

In the 1750s, Essex County suffered an economic depression. Samuel Cross and Joseph Cross responded differently to this challenge. Samuel decided to remain in Essex County. In 1758, Joseph and his family moved to Hanover County located west of Essex.

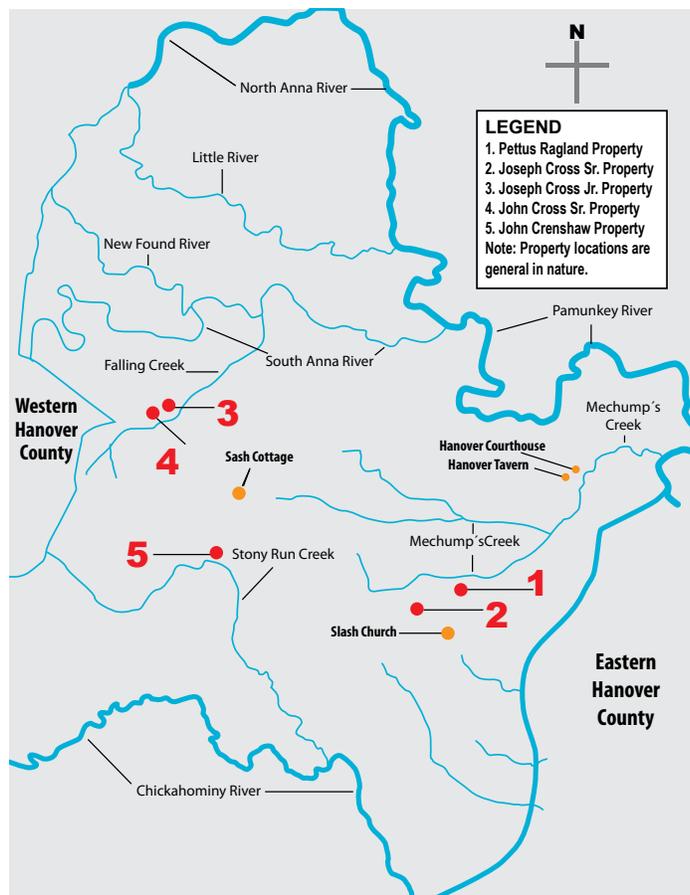
In 1777, (the same year the British marched passed the Old Kennett Meeting Place in the Brandywine), Joseph Cross' father-in-law Henry Burk died. He divided his 26 slaves and substantial real estate holdings among his children and grandchildren.

In his Will, Henry Burk provided that his son Thomas should not receive any of the slaves bequeathed to him if he violated the terms of his security, probably a peace bond that Henry Burk had signed for him. (A peace bond was an order from a court to keep the peace, and functioned much as a protective order functions today). Henry left his daughter Elizabeth [Burk] Cross four Negroes; "Hannah, Milley, Edmund and Amy and their increase...." He appointed his son John Burk, and his son-in-law Joseph Cross, as Executors of his last Will and Testament.

Hanover County was a hotbed of unrest during the American Revolution. Joseph Cross, Sr. showed his support for the Revolution by joining the Virginia militia. Joseph's son Henry—one of Oliver and Judy's brothers—also participated in the Revolution as a member of the militia.

Militiamen were responsible for protecting the Tidewater region from attack by sea. In the fall of 1778, Joseph Cross, Sr. marched to Williamsburg, then to Richneck Plantation on the Warwick River (now Newport News, Virginia) to guard against an anticipated raid by the British. He and his fellow militiamen were stationed at Richneck Plantation for at least two months.

In 1781, General Cornwallis marched up the Carolinas and into Hanover County. Shortly thereafter, George Washington and his troops cornered General Cornwallis at Yorktown. Of the 16,000 American and French troops



Map of Central Hanover County  
COURTESY OF WAYNE AND CAROL CROSS



*Slash Church. Constructed in 1729, it was to become known as the Upper Church of St. Paul's Parish and was situated to better serve the needs of members living in the northwestern part of Hanover County. The church is still attended by Cross relatives; Gladys Smith has been a member for 71 years, as of 2009. Photograph view is across the adjacent cemetery where some of Cross relatives are buried.*

COURTESY OF WAYNE AND CAROL CROSS

participating in the Battle of Yorktown, over 3,000 were Virginia militiamen. It is likely that Joseph Cross, Sr. and his son Henry Cross were present at that event.

For many years prior to the American Revolution, Joseph Cross, Sr. attended St. Paul's Parish Anglican Church (today known as Slash Church), which was connected to the Church of England. Prior to the American Revolution in Virginia, church membership was required and the church taxed people who lived in the parish. The church was responsible for providing social services, taking care of paupers, and caring for others in need of social assistance.

The Reverend Patrick Henry (uncle of Patrick Henry the patriotic orator for Independence) was the rector of St. Paul's. When Patrick Henry died, William Dunlop succeeded him. (The name 'Dunlop' is an older version of the name 'Dunlap'.)

Joseph was elected a vestryman at St. Paul's Parish Church in 1779 and, except when he was fighting the British as a militiaman, attended meetings regularly. In 1784, (three years after Cornwallis surrendered to Washington) Joseph was appointed one of two churchwardens who were responsible for the safekeeping of church funds. Before America's independence from England, the positions of vestryman and churchwarden were both public offices and religious positions. Those who served were always respected members of their communities. (Rutman, 145, 146).

In 1785, St. Paul's vestrymen agreed to conform to "the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church," the non-taxing American successor to the Church of England. Thereafter, Joseph resigned his leadership positions in the church.

In addition to Patrick Henry, a number of famous Americans attended the church. Dolly Payne, a cousin to Patrick Henry, later James Madison's wife, was a youthful member of the church. Henry Clay, born in Hanover County, also attended the church as a young man.

Joseph Cross, Sr. continued to acquire wealth during the Revolutionary War. Tax records reflect that in 1782 he owned 20 slaves, 12 horses, and 30 head of cattle. By 1790, he owned 2,200 acres of land; 1,800 acres in Hanover County and another 400 acres in Georgia.

Joseph wrote his Will in November 1796. He died on March 18, 1797, shortly after John Adams became second President of the United States.

Oliver Cross, born in 1768, was one of the many children born to Joseph and Elizabeth [Burk] Cross. Oliver married Sarah Harris. Oliver and Sarah had a number of children, including Joseph Oliver Cross. However, the marriage was not a good one and it was very difficult, if not impossible, to get a divorce in Virginia during that time (Fischer, 281-286).

When it became clear that Oliver and Sarah [Harris] could not live together, Oliver's brother, along with some of his wife's representatives, got Oliver to meet with them at a tavern in an effort to get Oliver to sign a separation agreement. As they proceeded to discuss the proposed agreement, Oliver decided that he did not understand what was going on and further stated that he wanted a lawyer to draw up the agreement. With that demand, the meeting ended.

When the parties reconvened, Oliver claimed he still did not understand what was happening. He finally asked his brother whether he ought to sign the agreement, and his brother said he should do so. Without any support from his brother or any members of his family, Oliver finally signed the agreement. He then left for Tennessee.

Years later, after his wife died, Oliver went back to Virginia to reclaim 'his' slaves. Oliver Cross' version of the events surrounding his signature of the separation agreement with his wife is set forth in an answer filed in a lawsuit in the City of Richmond. His written pleadings are somewhat detailed; basically claiming that he was tricked out of his property. We do not know the results of the litigation.

Oliver Cross probably died in 1834. His son Joseph Oliver Cross was administrator of his estate, and sale of his property began on December 20, 1834.

For more information about the history of the Cross family in America, the author recommends a well researched and illustrated book, *The Cross Family and Kin*, by Hugh Wayne and Wanda Carol Cross, privately published, presently available for purchase from the authors (referenced at conclusion of this paper).

## Three Families in Tennessee

In 1806 and shortly after his father died (Thomas Jefferson was President), Elijah Harlan moved to Tennessee. At about the same time Oliver Cross, having left his wife, moved to Leeper's Creek. William Sims, married to Judith Cross (Oliver's sister), purchased land near Mt. Pleasant. They all lived close to each other in Maury County, Tennessee.

### Eliza's First Marriage

As has already been mentioned, Elijah Harlan married Elizabeth Sims in 1811, shortly before the beginning of the War of 1812. Elizabeth's father was William Sims. Elizabeth's mother was Judith [Cross] Sims (daughter of Joseph Cross and Elizabeth Burk).

Elijah and Elizabeth had four children, including Eliza Harlan, born April 16, 1814 in Mt. Pleasant, Maury County, Tennessee. She had little time for idle play as a child for soon she would be a mother. In 1827, Eliza Harlan married her grandmother's nephew Joseph Oliver Cross. Joseph's father was Oliver Cross, brother of Judy [Cross] Sims. Joseph Oliver Cross was 27 years old when he married 13-year-old Eliza. Within a year, she would give birth to her first child.

It is probable that Eliza's elders 'encouraged' Eliza to marry her second cousin. Many Virginians owned an English marriage manual, which commented, "Children are so much the goods, the possessions of their parents that they cannot without a kind of theft, give away themselves without the allowance of those that have the right in them" (Fischer 284).

In addition, in Virginia first or second cousins often married each other. Many an Anglican lady 'changed her condition, but not her name.' The custom probably began when the first immigrants tended to settle in small communities close to others they already knew and when there were few coupling opportunities with others outside those communities. The custom continued in Virginia for many generations and was important to the cohesion of the tidewater elite (Fischer 284).

Joseph Oliver Cross and Eliza parented Sarah Ann, born 1828 when Eliza was 14; James Fleming Cross, born 1830, when Eliza was 16; Jehu Cross, born 1832, when Eliza was 18; Isabella, born 1835, when Eliza was 21; and Elizabeth Cross, born 1838, when Eliza was 24.



*Eliza Harlan Cross. Presentation based on portrait made shortly after Eliza's marriage to Joseph Oliver Cross*

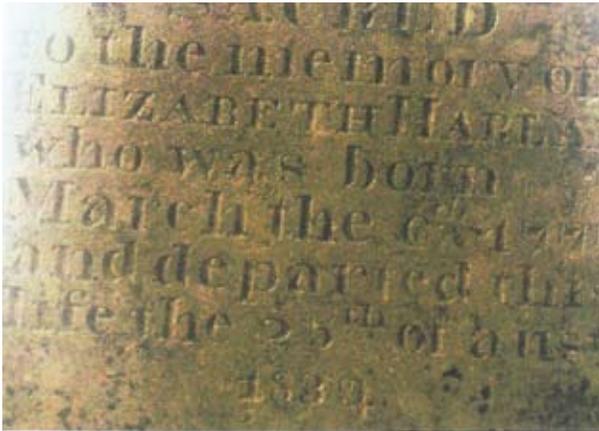
COURTESY OF MOLLY THORNTON

## What's Going On?

The Sims, Cross and Harlan families came together in Tennessee at a time when Tennessee was at the political center of the nation. Andrew Jackson who hailed from Tennessee had recently served two terms as President of the United States. James K. Polk, soon to be President of the United States, had just been elected governor of Tennessee.

In many ways, the economic culture of the nation was undergoing a dramatic transformation. Between 1830 and 1840, for instance, railroad tracks had begun to transform the landscape. The cotton gin committed the South to an agricultural, slave-driven economy, thus beginning to divide the nation into two economic and political communities. The first daguerreotypes began to capture images more accurately than could painters. The telegraph was invented. The first rotary printing press resulted in the mass production of newspapers and the creation of modern journalism. Gas lighting became more popular (being for the first time installed in a hotel).

There remained the ever-present risk of death during childbirth or from disease. The government was not able to assure everyone that drinking water would be safe. The use of vaccines was limited, and epidemics and disease were omnipresent concerns.



*Grave of Elizabeth Sims Tinsley Harlan  
(Eliza's mother)*

COURTESY OF JIM TINSLEY



*Grave of Elizabeth Cross*

COURTESY OF JIM TINSLEY

There were also economic setbacks. In 1837, the nation suffered the worst financial catastrophe in American history prior to the Crash of 1929. The Panic began shortly after President Martin Van Buren took office and rapidly spread to the major financial and commercial centers in the United States (Widmer, 93-107).

At the time, Joseph, Eliza, and their children were living in Mt. Pleasant, Maury County, Tennessee. Eliza's mother, Elizabeth Sims, and her grandmother, Judith Cross, also lived there. Joseph Oliver Cross, farming his property as his parents and grandparents and great-grandparents had done since settling in America, continued to prosper. In 1838, he owned cattle, sheep, real estate, and approximately 25 slaves.

In 1839, an epidemic (perhaps small pox, typhoid fever, or cholera) struck Mt. Pleasant. Joseph Oliver Cross, Eliza's husband, was the first member of the family to die. On the 21st day of August 1839 Elizabeth Sims Harlan, Eliza's mother, wrote her Will. All of Eliza's children were sick. There was no known cure for the mysterious and terrible disease. Finally one of Eliza's daughters, Elizabeth, got sick and quickly died.

Eliza was left with four living children; Sarah Ann Cross, James Fleming Cross, Jehu Cross, and Isabella Cross. She had no husband; no job. Shortly after Joseph Oliver Cross' death, Eliza moved to Eutaw, Alabama, perhaps following her brothers Jehu and William Harlan.

When in Eutaw, Eliza boarded her children with William Tannehill, a wealthy planter. His brother Ninian Tannehill owned the famous Tannehill Ironworks that later produced most of the iron for the Confederacy (Bennett).

## Eliza's Second Marriage

On February 5, 1841, William Tannehill married Eliza; it was the second marriage for both parties. William had a number of children by his first marriage; however, he and Eliza never had any children.

Eliza's grandmother Judith [Cross] Sims died shortly thereafter. Judy left a Will signed by indicating her mark. From probate records, we know that she owned a great deal of property at her death. The administrators of her estate disposed of a considerable amount of personal property, such as one secretary, a sideboard, a table, a clock, a bed, chinaware,



*Sarah Ann Calhoun*

PHOTO COURTESY OF DR. ANNE H. CALHOUN



*Joseph C. Calhoun.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF SHELBY ROGERS

dishes, a pitcher, knife, and bottles. They also sold a mule, a Bay mare, a colt, six sheep, 32 geese, bushels of wheat, horses, plows, more than 150 hogs, one red steer, another red bull, a calf, ten old barrels of plow gear, a grindstone, two axes, a set of kitchen furniture, nine sides of bacon, one lard of soap, four stacks of fodder, one bee hive, and more.

In 1842, Sarah Ann Cross met and married Joseph Carroll Calhoun. Joseph's mother, Rebecca Tannehill (not "Martha," as reported by Alpheus Harlan) was William and Ninian Tannehill's sister.

During the Civil War, Ninian Tannehill owned the Tannehill Iron Works that produced approximately 22 tons of iron for the Confederacy States

of America. Today, members of the public who are interested can visit Tannehill Ironworks Historic State Park located near Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Also during the Civil War, the Confederate government appointed Joseph C. Calhoun to supervise the city of Mobile. According to family history, he participated in the surrender of the city to Union forces in 1865.

Joseph's brother, James M. Calhoun, served as Mayor of Atlanta, Georgia, from 1862 to 1865. On September 2, 1864, James surrendered Atlanta to General William T. Sherman, first asking Sherman to show mercy for the sick and elderly. General Sherman responded in writing and then by burning most of the city to the ground.

Joseph's cousin was the famous John C. Calhoun, former Congressman, Secretary of War, Secretary of State, Vice-President of the United States (under two Presidents), and United States Senator. As President John Tyler's Secretary of State, Calhoun championed in 1845 the admission of Texas into the Union.

In 1846, the United States went to war with Mexico over the issue of the Texas border. Pleasant Tannehill, William's

son, persuaded Eliza's second child, James Fleming Cross, a young man of 17 years, to join the Eutaw Rangers, a unit organized in support of the Mexican War.

One of the members of the Eutaw Rangers was Charles A. Hoppin, a lawyer and former Mayor of Mobile, Alabama. Hoppin later helped shape the borders of the State of Texas by promoting the organization of El Paso County as a Texas County in the spring of 1850, before the 31<sup>st</sup> Congress of the United States adopted the Compromise of 1850 which resulted in the State's admission to the Union. Senator John C. Calhoun fought doggedly against the Compromise. Less than 30 days before his death, he gave through a proxy the last speech of his life, urging defeat of the proposal.<sup>2</sup>

On January 29, 1847, all of the produce from William Tannehill's plantation was loaded on the steamer Tuscaloosa. The ship left the wharf at Mobile, Alabama, at about eight o'clock that evening on its way to Tuscaloosa. As she proceeded up the Black Warrior River, two of the Tuscaloosa's boilers exploded killing William Tannehill, many members of the crew, and numerous passengers. A newspaper reported the incident as follows:

The steamer Tuscaloosa left the wharf at Mobile, Alabama, about 8 o'clock on Thursday evening, January 29, 1847, on her way to Tuscaloosa city, the capital of Alabama; and when she had proceeded ten miles up the river two of her boilers bursted, by which accident a number of her passengers and crew were killed and wounded. The explosion completely tore up the boiler-deck, and shattered the after-part of the boat below deck considerably. Immediately after the explosion, the steamer drifted near the shore and grounded, her stern projecting towards the centre of the river. A line was made fast on shore, and an attempt was made by pulling in the stern, to effect a landing for the passengers, but the boat was fixed too firmly in the bed of the river to be moved in this manner. The ladies were then lowered by a rope to the lower deck, and from thence were sent ashore in the yawl. All of them escaped unhurt.

Those of the male passengers who were uninjured saved themselves, and many of the wounded likewise, by constructing a raft of loose planks, on which they reached the shore in safety; but when they arrived at the bank they found it impossible to obtain a dry footing, as the river had overflowed its customary bounds to the depth of several inches, which, as the weather was exceedingly cold, made the landing (if it might be called so) very uncomfortable. In this state of things the male passengers climbed trees, where they remained spectators of the burning wreck for about three hours, when the steamer James Hewitt hove in sight and on coming near the wreck, sent her yawl to the assistance of the survivors, who were all taken on board and conveyed back to Mobile. The dead body of Liet. Inge, one of the passengers of the Tuscaloosa, was also taken up by the James Hewitt.

LIST OF KILLED—Wm. Tanneyhill, C. Childs, and P.F. Beasley, of Eutaw; W.R. Hassell, of Greensborough; B. Partier, second clerk; Thomas Clark, first mate; Arthur McCoy, second engineer; Abraham Flynn, volunteer for the U.S. Army in Mexico, from Green Co., Ala., and several colored deck hands.

BADLY WOUNDED—Capt. E. P. Oliver, not expected to recover; George Kirk, first clerk, and acting Captain of the Tuscaloosa; Col. Wm. Armistead, and Capt. Asa White, of Eutaw. The last named gentleman was badly scalded.

In less than eight years, Eliza Harlan Cross Tannehill had lost a mother, a grandmother, a daughter, and two husbands.

2. Although it is unlikely that she knew him, Eliza had a distant cousin, Andrew Jackson Harlan (#1761), who served in the House of Representatives at that time. He was the last surviving member of the 31<sup>st</sup> Congress when he died in 1907.

Alone but responsible for supporting three children (in 1842 her 14 year old daughter Sarah Ann had married Joseph Carroll Calhoun), she moved with her brothers Jehu Harlan (2872) and William Sims Harlan (2873) to Noxubee County, Mississippi. There she met Samuel Meriwether Dunlap.

## The Dunlap Family in America

**S**am Dunlap was a second generation American. Samuel married Martha Bonds in 1825. The marriage lasted about 18 years, but ended in 1843 when she died. By 1847, Dunlap had been a widower for three or four years and he was a successful merchant.

Sam's father was James Dunlap (born 1759 in Ireland; died 1843 in Eutaw, Alabama), who migrated from Scotland or Ireland to America and thereafter settled in the Abbeville District of South Carolina. He married Mary (the author believes "McNeely") about the time George Washington became President of the United States. James and Mary parented several children while in South Carolina: Joseph, born 1789; Robert, born after 1790; Sarah (Sallie), born 1795; Samuel Meriwether Dunlap, born 1798; John, born 1799; William, born 1801; James Riley, born 1803; Mary S., born about 1807; and Elizabeth (Eliza), born about 1813.

James and his family moved to Greene County, Alabama, in 1818. In 1826, he obtained two land grants from the General Land Office of the United States, both signed by President John Quincy Adams providing him land in what is now Clinton and Eutaw, Greene County, Alabama. There he and his wife worked and raised their nine children.

When James moved to Alabama, numerous Indian tribes lived in the area, including Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Alabama (a Muskogee Indian tribe), inhabiting land close to his home. In 1830 President Andrew Jackson began the removal of most of these tribes to Oklahoma and by 1847 they no longer posed a serious threat to the safety of the Anglo-American inhabitants of the region.

## The Texas Migration

In 1849 two of Eliza's aunts, Frances [Sims] Daniel and Nancy [Sims] Harlan moved from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, to Texas. Both women had lost their husbands. They traveled with Frances' eight children and with slaves and relatives, making a group of 31 travelers. They camped on what is presently the Southern Methodist University (SMU) campus. In time, with monies left to her by her deceased husband, Frances purchased a total of 2,100 acres in what is now University Park and North Dallas.

Texas was then a part of the American frontier and in the Dallas area Indian tribes, especially the Comanche continued to pose an ever-present threat to the new arrivals. The United States had just waged a war with



*Presbyterian Church and graveyard in Clinton, Alabama. Cross and Dunlap families worshiped here before and after the Civil War*

Mexico that established the Rio Grande River as the boundary between the two countries. Dallas was a small town with only 200 or 300 inhabitants and supporting only three or four stores. Most of the newcomers were farmers, with perhaps as many as 2,000 new immigrants living in the outlying rural areas.

Around 1850 P.C. Sims purchased land from Archibald Greathouse in what is now Ellis County, Texas. Eliza's first cousin Nicholas P. Sims arrived in the Dallas area shortly before his Aunt Frances' death and constructed a log cabin for his residence. He built a mill in the Greathouse Community in 1851. His sister Lucy, married to Judge Ezekial M. Brack, lived nearby.

Today Frances [Sims] Daniel Nancy [Sims] Harlan and many of their relatives and descendants are buried in the Daniel Cemetery located near Frances' original campsite and the Southern Methodist University campus.

## Eliza's Third Marriage

In 1848, Eliza married Samuel Meriwether Dunlap. At the time, she had three children: James, Jehu, and Isabella (Elizabeth having died in 1839 and Sarah Ann having married Joseph C. Calhoun in 1842). However, in 1850, while living in Chickasaw County, Mississippi, Isabella Cross, the youngest of Eliza's remaining children, died of 'consumption,' probably pneumonia or tuberculosis.

In 1852 Eliza's second child, James Fleming Cross, married Margaret Rose Dunlap. Margaret Rose Dunlap was the daughter of Sam's younger brother John (1799-1856) and Elizabeth (last name unknown, perhaps 'Baskin'). John and Elizabeth had six children. Margaret Rose Dunlap (1831-1871) was their fourth child.

John died in 1856 and his wife Elizabeth died in 1869. At some time after John's death, James F. Cross and his wife Margaret Rose Dunlap moved into the Dunlap home (constructed in 1840) in Clinton, Alabama, where they began to raise a family.

After the Civil War, Alabama's economy was destroyed and Sam Dunlap's business failed. Nicholas P. Sims wrote Sam and Eliza, encouraging the couple to relocate in Texas. In 1868, hoping to begin a new life, Sam and Eliza moved to Waxahachie, Texas, where the soil was rich and cotton remained king.

Shortly after their move, Margaret Rose [Dunlap] Cross gave birth to



*John Dunlap's grave.*



*John Dunlap's Home, Clinton Alabama*

a son, Oliver Harlan Cross. A letter from Margaret to Eliza written three months after her son's birth, described family events at the time. It survives and is attached (See, *A Look at a Letter*).

Eliza's step-daughter, Patsy Ellen Dunlap (Sam's daughter by his first wife, Martha Bond) also moved to the area. In 1875, she married Dr. R.P. Sweatt, a prominent member of the Ellis County community.



*Photo taken in 1870. Bottom row L-R Mrs. Samuel M. Dunlap Jr., Eliza Harlan Cross Tannehill Dunlap, Mrs. Oscar Dunlap. Top row, Samuel M. Dunlap Jr., Oscar Dunlap, Samuel Dunlap Sr.; Samuel Jr. and Oscar are the sons of Samuel Sr. and Eliza Dunlap*

COURTESY OF DR. ANNE H. CALHOUN

## Eliza's Fourth Marriage



*Eliza Harlan Dunlap, 1874 (Age 60)*

PHOTO COURTESY OF MOLLY THORNTON

In 1872 Eliza's third husband Samuel Meriwether Dunlap died. Five years later, on December 12, 1877, Eliza married her first cousin, Nicholas P. Sims.

Earlier that same year, President Rutherford B. Hayes appointed Eliza's second cousin, John Marshall Harlan, to the United States Supreme Court. In the closest Presidential election in American history before Bush-Gore, Hayes obtained the Presidency while losing the popular vote. Harlan helped Hayes obtain his party's nomination and was duly rewarded (Morris, 79-80, 82).

Harlan was the first Supreme Court justice to have a law degree. He served on the Supreme Court the remainder of his life. His opinions were frequently inconsistent with the views of his fellow justices. His critics accused him of being inconsistent ("Let it be said that I am right rather than consistent," he said) and opportunistic. In *The Republic according to John Marshall Harlan*, Linda Prszybyszewski argues that Harlan's judicial opinions



*Samuel Meriwether Dunlap's Grave*

can be best understood by studying his family's values.

Harlan is best known for his solitary dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), the case that validated segregation (the 'separate but equal' doctrine). Justice Harlan wrote:

Our Constitution is color-blind and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens. In respect of civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law...in my opinion, the judgment this day rendered will, in time, prove to be quite as pernicious as the decision made by this tribunal in the Dred Scott case...The present decision, it may well be apprehended, will not only stimulate aggressions, more or less brutal and irritating, upon the admitted rights of colored citizens, but will encourage the belief that it is possible, by means of state enactments, to defeat the beneficent purposes which the people of the United States had in view when they adopted the recent amendments of the Constitution. (*Supreme Court, Plessy*).



*Estelle Cross Miller (1895)*



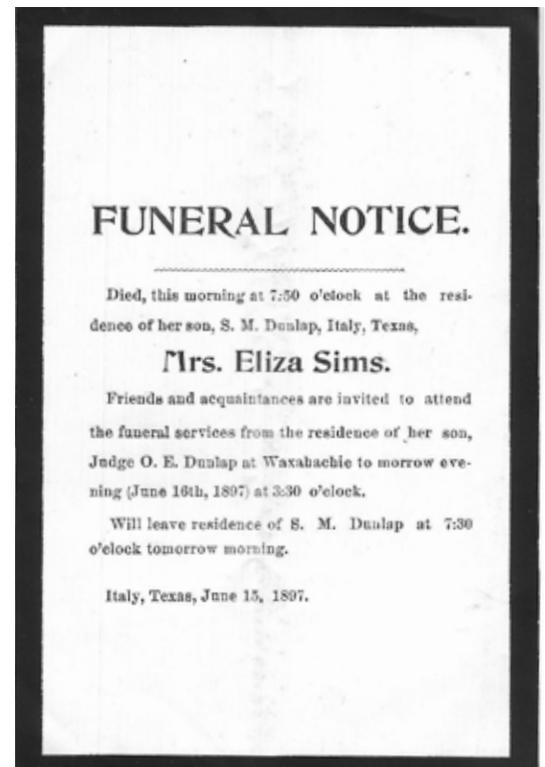
*James Miller & Harlan Cross Miller*

In effect, Harlan's dissent became the majority opinion 58 years later in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), one of the most important United States Supreme Court decisions in the last 250 years. (Supreme Court, Brown).

After she married Nicholas P. Sims, Eliza still had 20 more years of life during which time a number of significant life events occurred. In the late 1880's or early 1890's, Estelle Cross (a daughter of James Fleming Cross and Margaret Rose Dunlap) moved to Waxahachie. In 1896, she married James Houston Miller, and they parented Harlan Cross Miller, James Miller, and Edward Miller.

Harlan Cross Miller never married, but in 1941 she obtained a PhD in mathematics from the University of Texas before women first began to attend college in significant numbers. Later in life, she headed the Department of Mathematics at Texas Women's University. Trammel Crow, a prominent Dallas businessman and descendant of Frances Daniel (but not George Harlan or any other Harlan), named his son Harlan Crow in honor of Dr. Harlan Cross Miller.

In 1894, Eliza's grandson Oliver Harlan Cross moved to McGregor, Texas, and a year or two later went to Waco. After moving, Harlan



*Funeral notice*

PHOTO COURTESY OF MOLLY THORNTON

frequently visited his grandmother. Shortly before her death, Eliza gave her grandson Oliver Harlan Cross her portrait, painted when she was very young and probably at the time of her marriage to her first husband Joseph Oliver Cross (see cover page).

In 1896, another grandson, Ed Cross, moved to Italy, Texas. In 1906 Eliza's son Samuel Dunlap, Jr., then President of the First National Bank of Italy, Texas, loaned Ed Cross money to open his own grocery store.

On June 15, 1897, 20 years after she married Nicholas P. Sims, Eliza Harlan-Cross-Tannehill-Dunlap-Sims died at the home of her son Sam Dunlap, Jr.'s in Italy, Texas. She was 83 years old. Funeral services were held the following day at the residence of another son, Judge O.E. Dunlap.

An obituary reported as follows:

In the death of Mrs. Sims, which occurred at the home of her son, S.M. Dunlap, in Italy, last Tuesday, one of our pioneer characters was removed from earth. She was born 83 years ago in Mt. Pleasant, Tenn., and when quite young married Mr. Cross. After his death, she married Mr. Tannehill, who lost his life in a steamboat explosion on one of the Alabama rivers. She afterwards married Mr. Dunlap, who came to this county just after the war and settled at Bluff Grove. Judge O.E. Dunlap, of this city, S.M. Dunlap, of Italy, and another son who died young were born of this union. After the death of Mr. Dunlap, she was married to Mr. N.P. Sims. This aged couple have passed their latest years together with the families of their children, and coupled with their lives in an account that they were lovers in their early days, growing up together in Middle Tennessee.

The funeral took place yesterday evening from the home of her son to Waxahachie, and in the burial of the woman, some points of whose remarkable history are here mentioned, all the community sympathize with the family, and especially with the aged husband who waits patiently to join her on the other shore.

Another obituary in the Waxahachie Enterprise reported on Friday, June 18, 1897:

An Elderly Lady Passes Away...

Mrs. Eliza Sims, wife of N.P. Sims, died June 25, at the residence of her son, S.M. Dunlap, at Italy, Texas. Her funeral took place on the 26<sup>th</sup> from the residence of her son, Judge O.E. Dunlap, of this city. Mr. C. McPherson conducted the funeral service at the residence. His touching, eloquent and appropriate remarks were listened to by a large crowd of sorrowing friends and relatives.

Mrs. Sims maiden name was Eliza Harlan. She was born in Mt. Pleasant, Maury County, Tenn., April 26<sup>th</sup> 1814. Early in life she was married to Joseph Cross. Two sons of this marriage are living. The oldest, J.F. Cross, of Eutaw, Alabama, came to the bedside of his mother during her illness. He is the father of Mrs. J.H. Miller, of this city. She afterwards married S.M. Dunlap and two sons of this marriage survive, O.E. Dunlap of Waxahachie, and S.M. Dunlap, of Italy. Mrs. R.P. Sweatt and J.F. Dunlap being step-children and Mrs. Anson Rainey, step-grandchild.

Mrs. Sims possessed, in a marked degree, a strong, vigorous and cultivated mind. She was a close, constant reader, and from her books she received much pleasure and comfort. She possessed an affectionate disposition.

Being ever-ready to grant pardon before it was asked. She recognized that this world was the place of the nativity; that it is ruled and governed by a Supreme Being, who stands around and above us, overlooking our

conduct and course in life; that is was her duty to be ever ready to give back that life which had been given her.

Mr. N.P. Sims, her husband, who survives her, is an old but vigorous man. He was born August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1806, and is therefore nearly 91 years old. She was married to Mr. Sims in December, 1877.

Several of the old family Negroes attended the funeral.”

## Eliza's children and grandchildren

Eliza had five children by her first husband, Joseph Oliver Cross, three of whom survived to adulthood, married, and themselves had children.

Sarah Ann (1828-1893) married Joseph Carroll Calhoun (son of William Calhoun and Rebecca Tannehill) on September 6, 1842, in Eutaw, Alabama. Shortly thereafter the couple moved to Mobile, Alabama, where they parented William Joseph (Billy) Calhoun, born 1843; Amanda Abbeville Calhoun, born 1845; Ella Ann Calhoun, born 1847; James Butler (Jim) Calhoun, born 1849; Isabella Cross Calhoun, born 1852, John Carroll Calhoun, born 1854, Frank Howard Calhoun, born 1857, Alline Sheldon Calhoun, born 1861; and Lida Rebecca Calhoun, born 1863. Ella Ann married a Harlan, one William H. Harlan (#7248) (Harlan, 645). Sarah Ann and Joseph—along with three children who died in childhood (Isabella, John and Frank)—are buried in the old Magnolia Cemetery in Mobile.

James Fleming Cross (1830-1917) married a his first wife Margaret Rose Dunlap in 1852 and they parented John Baskin Cross, born 1854; Walter J. Cross, born 1855; Estelle Cross, born 1858; Alice Cross, born 1860; Ewell F. Cross, born 1863; Ed Cross, born 1866; Oliver Harlan Cross, born 1868; and James F. Cross, born 1870. Margaret Rose Dunlap died March 21, 1871, allegedly poisoned by drinking contaminated well water.

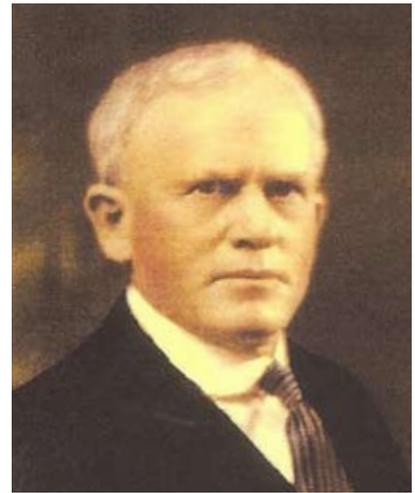
During the Civil War, James Fleming Cross served as a First Lieutenant in the 11<sup>th</sup> Alabama Regiment, Company C. He participated in the Seven Pines Battle, the Battles of Manassas No. 2 (Bull Run) and Sharpsburg (the Battle of Antietam). After the War, he continued to work the land he had inherited from his father-in-law John Dunlap.

After graduating from the University of Alabama in 1891 and studying law, Eliza's grandson Oliver Harlan Cross moved to Waco, Texas. In 1896 he was elected to the Texas legislature. He served as District Attorney for McLennan County from 1902 to 1906. During that time, one of his assistants was Pat Neff, later Governor of Texas and President of Baylor University. Finally, in 1928 Cross was elected to the United States Congress where he served four terms, voluntarily retiring in 1936.

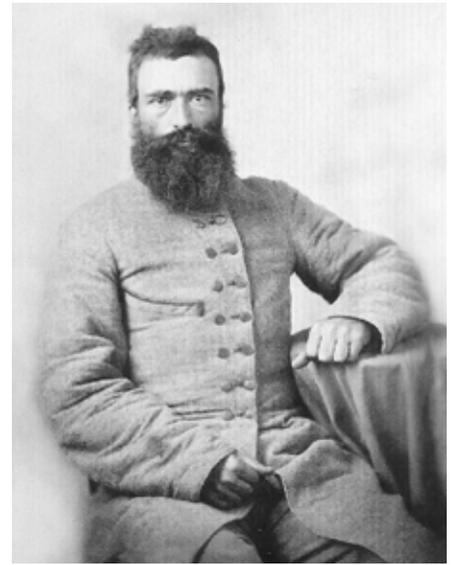
In the 1920's Oliver Harlan Cross joined with his cousin Ellis County Judge Oscar E. Dunlap in publicly opposing the Ku Klux Klan. Judge Dunlap's uncle was John Dunlap, Harlan Cross' maternal grandfather. Cross' speech in 1922 on behalf of the McLennan County Citizen's League attacking the Klan was reprinted *verbatim*



*Judge Oscar E. Dunlap*



*Hon. Oliver Harlan Cross*



*James Fleming Cross*



*Mary Elizabeth [Goodloe] Cross*

on the front page of the Waco newspaper.

Why did both Oscar Dunlap and Oliver Harlan Cross oppose the Klan in the 1920's? Perhaps because Dunlap and Cross were both lawyers and read their mother's and grandmother's (same person) second cousin's legal opinions. John Marshall Harlan was as an Associate Justice on the United States Supreme Court and was an advocated equal justice for minorities in an era when equal justice for minorities was not a popular cause.

After his first wife's death, James married Mary Elizabeth Goodloe. James and his second wife parented Mattie Leora Cross, born 1873 (died 1875); French Goodloe Cross, born 1876; Fleming Long Cross, born 1878; Mary Kemp Cross, born 1880; Cora Cross, born 1882; and Kate H. Cross, born 1885.

Jehu Cross (1823-1911) married Sarah Shotwell in 1852 (the same year that James married Margaret Rose Dunlap). He and Sarah parented John Oliver Cross, born 1853; Clem Clay Cross, born 1855; Ida Bell Cross, born 1857; Thomas Calvert Cross, born 1859 (died 1882); Roberta Cross, born 1862; Annie Elizabeth Cross, born 1864; Reuben Shotwell Cross, born 1869; Mary Brownlee Cross, born 1871;

Eugene Cross, born 1874; and Ulpian E. Cross, born 1880.

Jehu (1832-1911) served four years in the Confederate Army. In August of 1861, he joined the Southern Guards, a Cavalry unit that later became part of the Jeff Davis Legion under the command of General J.E.B. Stuart. Perhaps ironically, General Stuart was shot and killed in Virginia on property owned by one of Jehu's distant cousins, a descendant of Joseph Cross, Sr. (Atkinson, 194).

Eliza's grandson Reuben Shotwell Cross (1869-1898) married Annie Caroline Hollingsworth. Annie's ancestor Henry Hollingsworth was a Quaker and in 1678 witnessed the marriage in Ireland of George Harlan and Elizabeth Duck. Henry migrated to America with George and Elizabeth and was a leader in the Brandywine area—especially in church affairs.

Sam Dunlap and Eliza parented Oscar Elijah Dunlap, born in 1849; William R. Dunlap, born in 1851; Samuel Joseph McNeely Dunlap, born in 1853; Samuel Meriwether Dunlap, Jr., born in 1857; and Robert Dunlap, born 1860.

Oscar (1845-1925) married Ella Virginia McDuffie in 1896 and they parented Oscar and Estelle. Oscar died in an automobile accident and Estelle never married.

William R. Dunlap never married. Samuel Joseph McNeely Dunlap only lived two years. Samuel Meriwether Dunlap, Jr. (1857-1924) married twice; first to Mary Ella Carothers, and then to Alice Smith. He had one daughter born of the first marriage, Edna, who married K.G. Stroud in 1904. She died childless in 1910.

## Eliza and two libraries

When Sam and Eliza came to Texas, their son Oscar was a young boy. Since there were few, if any, public schools at the time and his parents could not afford a private school, he was reportedly 'home schooled.'

After reaching adulthood, Oscar farmed until 1878 when he was elected Justice of the Peace. He moved to Waxahachie in 1880 and obtained a law license and in 1882 he was elected County Judge. Four years later he was elected President of the Citizens National Bank of Waxahachie; in 1907; and he served as President of the Texas Bankers Association. During World War I, Judge Dunlap served as Chairman of the Texas State Council on Defense. After the war, he served as President of the Good Roads Association.

In 1911, Oscar Dunlap befriended a young man by the name of Ely Green, the son of a White lawyer and a Black woman. Judge Dunlap employed Ely as chauffeur and handyman and provided him with a place to live in the servant's house behind the Dunlap home. (As this article is being written, the home including the servant's quarters is occupied and remains in good condition). Ely stayed with the family approximately ten years and became a significant member of the family. He later wrote a book about his experiences with the Dunlaps and dedicated the book to Oscar Dunlap, stating: "I now dedicate this book to that great humanitarian and lover of mankind, of Texas, which he loved with all of his heart which was as big as Texas itself—Judge O.E. Dunlap of Waxahachie." (Green).

In 1896, Oscar Dunlap, Samuel M. Dunlap, Jr., and Eliza Sims encouraged Nicholas P. Sims to Will his fortune for the creation of a library for Waxahachie. Nicholas P. Sims wrote his Will on September 1, 1896 and, due to his advanced age signed it with 'his mark.' In the Will, he created a trust for the creation of the Nicholas P. Sims Library. His stepsons Oscar Dunlap and Samuel M. Dunlap, Jr. joined in the creation of the library, donating both money and books. The Nicholas P. Sims Library formally opened on April 5, 1905.

Samuel Meriwether Dunlap, Jr. established the Samuel M. Dunlap Memorial Library in Italy, Texas, many years later. In establishing the Nicholas P. Sims Library in Waxahachie, his stepfather, his mother, and his brother may have inspired him to create a library 17 miles to the south in Italy, Texas.

His young daughter Edna may have also inspired him to create the library. While passing near some land that contained a cotton gin and blacksmith shop, she commented to her father that the land would make a good location someday for a library. When Edna died, Sam bought the land and, when he died in 1924, he provided in his Will a gift of sufficient monies to construct the S.M. Dunlap Memorial Library.

Eliza Sims died June 15, 1897; and Nicholas P. Sims died May 24, 1902.



*Oscar E. Dunlap,  
(1849-1925)*



*Ella V. Dunlap, (1855 - 1933)  
(Oscar's Wife)*



*Edna Dunlap, (1892-1910)  
(S. M. Dunlap, Jr's Daughter)*



## Tribute

Born during the War of 1812, Eliza Harlan-Tannehill-Dunlap-Sims lived through the Mexican War, the Civil War, and Reconstruction. She was born into a famous American family and her children contributed to the history of this nation.

Eliza lived during a time when healthcare was limited and life was often short. During her lifetime, she witnessed the death of not only her mother and father, but also the deaths of three husbands, three children, six grandchildren, and a daughter-in-law. She probably mourned her three husband's deaths, but she most certainly also feared for her future and the future of her children. In those times, good job opportunities for women outside the home were rare and limited.

In spite of many challenges, Eliza provided for her children. Although it is difficult to know when she herself had time to study, she read books and nurtured and 'home schooled' her children. Most of Eliza's children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, succeeded in their chosen careers; some were outstanding leaders.

In addition, Eliza's legacy survives in the form of two libraries. The Nicholas P. Sims Library in Waxahachie, Texas, and the Samuel M. Dunlap Memorial Library in Italy, Texas. These two public, but privately endowed libraries, have served the residents of Ellis County since their creation and continue to do so today.

Clinton F. Cross  
P.O. 5533  
El Paso, TX 79955  
[Ccross39@aol.com](mailto:Ccross39@aol.com)

## Sources

Clinton F. Cross has attempted to provide citations for most of the material quoted in this paper. He has placed copies of such material (i.e., the pleadings in Oliver Cross' lawsuit to recover 'his' slaves) in the Appendix housed at the Nicholas P. Sims Library.

Clinton F. Cross is a graduate of Pomona College, Claremont, California, and the University of Texas School of Law, Austin, Texas. He is a descendant of Joseph Oliver Cross, James Fleming Cross, Oliver Harlan Cross, and Mary Cross. His mother had possession of a portrait of Eliza—probably painted shortly on or after Eliza's marriage to Joseph Oliver Cross—however, it was unfortunately lost during a move.

### Books

Atkinson, Dorothy Frances, *Yellow Tavern and Beyond*, Heritage Books, Inc., Westminster, MD, 2006.

Bennett, James R., *Tannehill and the Growth of the Alabama Iron Industry*, McNaughton & Gunn, Inc., Saline, MI, 1999.

Cross, Hugh *Wayne and Carol, The Cross Family and Kin*, privately printed, 1770 Farmland Road, Merced, CA, 9534-8621; available for distribution as long as supplies last. Contact the publishers for more information at their mailing address or on the Internet at [Cross@fireZwire.com](mailto:Cross@fireZwire.com).

Fisher, David Hackett, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY, 1989.

Green, Ely, *Too Black, Too White*, University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, MA, 1970.

Greenver, Hockett, Verbal, and Stevenson, *Some Descendants of John Burk (1656-1669) Middlesex County, VA*, Iberian Publishing Company, Atlanta, GA, 1999.

Harlan, Alpheus, *History and Genealogy of the Harlan Family*, Gateway Press, Inc., Baltimore, MD, 1914.

King, C.J., *Four Marys and a Jessie: The Story of the Lincoln Women*, Friends of Hildene, Inc., P.O. Box 377, Manchester, VT, 05254.

Morris, Roy, Jr., *Fraud of the Century*, Simon and Schuster, New York, NY, 2003.

Norman, Darlene Johnson, *The Descendants of Jehu Harlan, (1746-1806)*, privately published on the occasion of Harlan family reunion, Chester County, PA, 2002.

Perdue, Jim M., *I Remember Atticus*, The State Bar of Texas, Austin, TX, 2004.

Przybyszewski, Linda, *The Republic according to John Marshall Harlan*, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill & London, 1999.

Remini, Robert, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, Penguin Books, New York, NY, 1990.

Rutman, Darrett B. and Anita H., *A Place in Time, Middlesex County, Virginia 1650-1750*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York-London, 1984. The book makes reference to the Henry Burk's parents and the culture of Middlesex County, Virginia in the Seventeenth Century.

Widmer, Ted, *Martin Van Buren, Henry Holt and Company*, New York, NY, 2005.

### Articles

Harlan, M. Douglass. *The Harlans of Spring Hill*, privately published on the occasion of the 250<sup>th</sup> reunion of the Harlan Family in West Virginia, 1998.

Herasimchuk, Cathy. *Hearsay, The Confrontation Clause, & The Trial of Sir Walter Raleigh*, The Texas Prosecutor, (Volume 29, Number 5), Texas District and County Attorneys Association, Austin, TX, September/November, 1999.

Stevenson, Rue Burke, *Ancestors of Early Burk(e) Families of Russell County, Virginia*, published on the Internet.

### Websites

[www.dallaspioneer.org](http://www.dallaspioneer.org)

[www.harlanfamilyinamerica.org](http://www.harlanfamilyinamerica.org)

[www.michalfarmer.com](http://www.michalfarmer.com)

### Supreme Court Cases

*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537; 16 S.Ct. 1138; 41 L. Ed. 256 (1896)

*Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483; 74 S. Ct. 686; 98 L. Ed. 873, (1954)

## Individuals

The following individuals plus many others provided information for this article about the Harlan, Sims, Cross, and Dunlap families:

### A. HARLAN FAMILY

#### C.J. King

2791 Turkey Mt. Road  
Jamaica, VT 05343-9751

[joking@sover.net](mailto:joking@sover.net)

C.J. King writes for the Harlan Record, published by the Harlan Family in America.

#### Ruth Harlan Lamb

4305 S. Bryant Court  
Independence, MO 65055

[Harlamb@aol.com](mailto:Harlamb@aol.com)

Ruth is secretary of the Harlan Family in America.

#### Darlene Johnson Norman

3620 N. Calhoun Road  
Brookfield, WI 53005-5236

[DarNorman@aol.com](mailto:DarNorman@aol.com)

Darlene is married to one of Jehu Harlan's (#212) descendants.

### B. BURK (E) FAMILY

#### Jourdan Burke

[jmburke@bellsouth.net](mailto:jmburke@bellsouth.net)

Jourdan is descended from Elizabeth Burk's brother John Burke (who added the "e" to Burk).

### C. CALHOUN FAMILY

#### Anne H. Calhoun, M.D.

155 Covey Hill Lane  
Greenville, SC 29615

[ahcalhoun@gmail.com](mailto:ahcalhoun@gmail.com)

Anne Calhoun is a descendant of Joseph Carroll Calhoun and Sara Ann [Cross] Calhoun, and their youngest child Lida Rebecca [Calhoun] McLeod.

### D. CROSS FAMILY

#### Anne Geddy Cross

11544 Hanover Courthouse Road  
Hanover, VA 23069

[EPinewood@aol.com](mailto:EPinewood@aol.com)

Anne lives near Joseph Cross, Sr.'s former home in Hanover, and is knowledgeable about the early history of the family.

#### Hugh Wayne Cross

1770 Farmland Road  
Merced, CA 95340-8621

[cross@fire2wire.com](mailto:cross@fire2wire.com)

Hugh is descended from Oliver Cross, son of Joseph Cross, Sr. He and his wife Carol have published a thoroughly researched and illustrated book *The Cross Family and Kin* on the genealogical history of the Cross family in America. The number of copies is limited, but it is presently (2013) available from Wayne and Carol at a reasonable price.

#### Mark H. Cross

1604 Caminito Monica  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

[Mcross7@aol.com](mailto:Mcross7@aol.com)

Mark is descended from Henry Cross, oldest son of Joseph Cross, Sr. In portions of this article relating to the history of the Cross family, Clinton F. Cross relied heavily on research and earlier writings by Mark H. Cross.

#### Harold Spradley

14339 Lost Meadow Lane  
Houston, TX 77079

[lhspradley@earthlink.net](mailto:lhspradley@earthlink.net)

Harold Spradley is descended from Joseph Oliver Cross and Eliza Harlan. Their son Jehu (Hugh) Cross married Sarah Shotwell. Jehu and Sarah's son Reuben married Annie Caroline Hollingsworth. Their daughter Dorothy married Lewis Spradley.

#### Jim Tinsley

1025 Riverside Dr.  
Stuart, FL 4996

Jim Tinsley is descended from Joseph Oliver Cross and

Eliza Harlan and their son Jehu (Hugh) Cross, who married Sarah Shotwell. Jehu and Sarah's daughter Ida Belle Cross married Basil Manley Phifer; and their daughter Annie Belle Phifer married Charles Homer Tinsley, Sr.

### E. DUNLAP FAMILY

**Kay Boyd**

1405 S. Meadows

Austin, TX 78758

[Mkdb1405@aol.com](mailto:Mkdb1405@aol.com)

Kay Boyd is descended from James and Mary Dunlap and their first child, Joseph who was the oldest sibling of nine children born to James and Mary (including Samuel, number four; and John, number five).

### F. SIMS FAMILY

**Michal M. Farmer**

P.O. Box 140880

Dallas, TX 75214

[michalfarmer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:michalfarmer@sbcglobal.net)

Michal Farmer has carefully researched the genealogy of the William Sims and Judy [Cross] Sims family. Go to Michal's website (listed above) and click on "William Sims" to access this family history.

The aforementioned individuals all provided assistance in drafting this paper. Annette Powell assisted in editing the final draft of this paper. Clinton F. Cross accepts full responsibility for any and all content errors.

## Appendix

Clinton F. Cross has provided the Nicholas P. Sims Library with an Appendix to this paper which contains additional information about the Harlan, Sims, Cross and Dunlap families.

The following letter and comments by Harold Spradley (descendant of Eliza [Harlan] Cross and her husband Joseph Oliver Cross and their son Jehu Cross) are provided to illustrate the kind of material contained in this Appendix:

### The Letter

[To Mrs. Eliza Dunlap, Dallas, P.O., Dallas City, Texas; from Margaret Rose Cross; Sunday morning, October 11, 1868].

Dear Ma, I imagine by this time you have concluded that I do not intend writing anymore but I think I have a good excuse to make at least a reasonable one. In the first place we have been sick all summer since June. There has not been a week passed without some one of us being sick and sometimes two or three at once. Estelle came very near dying once and Eulie twice, in fact we thought he was dying. I never have spent such a summer in my life, sickness everywhere.

We have another boy three months old. He was born the 13<sup>th</sup> of July. He is the largest child we ever had, weighs now 30 lbs. We have named him Oliver Harlan, call him Harlan.

We have just returned from Noxubee. Uncle Jehu and Aunt Mary and families were pretty well, having slight chills occasionally. Uncle Jehu's health is better than it was some time back. He is as cheerful and lively as I ever saw him. He was very much pleased with Johnnie's appearance. He said he knew he was a good boy and he wanted to keep him and send him to school. We felt that we could not spare him from home all the time but left him with him to stay a few weeks.

Aunt Priscilla is as active and energetic as ever. She has got her a cooking stove. Got their kitchen burnt down a few week's ago. They think it caught on fire from their old cook woman smoking a pipe. They cook now in the room joining the dining room.

Aunt Mary is doing very well, has paid out of debt entirely, excepting Uncle J. and will make enough to pay him up this year, and have enough left to live on.

Hunter is very attentive to business and I think deserves a great deal of credit for doing so, I think, though he has an idea of going into business himself next year.

Sallie and husband are living up near Krooksville this year but will move down to Aunt Mary's next year. I think they and Hunter want their part of the land. Sallie has one child running about, named Willie. They all seemed so delighted to see us. Uncle J. says he and Flem and Hu are all of the family that are near enough to visit now, and he wanted them to visit every year. They promised to visit us next summer.

We went to see Hu on our round, they are having chills occasionally. He has not fully determined yet what he will do next year. He rather thinks he will remain at the same place. Stayed here night before last—on his way to Marion to see the owner of the place. I am in hope they will trade. Corn is very low over there and he would have to sacrifice a good deal to move now. Corn crops generally are turning out better than people expected. Uncle J. and Hunter are making pretty good crops. Hunter's something better than Uncle J's. He says he will clear about a thousand dollars this year after all expenses are paid.

Ma has been sick a great deal this summer. Nothing serious only chills. She has a fine crop. Aunt Eliza was quite sick last week, is better now. Albert Sears has lost his wife (Mellis McMillan she was) died with dropsy, left a young babe just one week old. Little Billy Pettigrew who taught school in Eutaw a great many years ago, stayed with us last night—I wouldn't have known him, he is married and living in amborthes with him, they are beautiful girls.

The neighborhood is building a church and schoolhouse combined down at the farm place where our old schoolhouse was. We are determined to try to keep a good school here. May Webb has written on for a teacher for us, says he knows him and recommends him highly. Mrs. George and Mrs. Steve Cook have bought out Mrs. Stafford. They will be our nearest neighbors now. I like them very much.

Bell Webster has lost little Sallie, died in Shelby City, she was on a visit to her father-in-law. She died with congestion of the brain. Amanda Brown's health is very bad.

We are making a very good crop, doing as well as anyone in the country I reckon.

Amanda and Ella sent me their photographs not long since. If I have an opportunity I want to have the children's taken this winter and send them to you.

Flem speaks of taking Johnnie and Walter and Estella to Mobile this winter.

You ought to see our big baby, everybody says he is just like me; Uncle J. praised him mightily. Eddie is the prettiest child we have, has beautiful black eyes and pretty curly hair.

Old Aunt Patsy Dunlap of Soola died two weeks ago.



*Photo of Oliver Harlan Cross with his grandchildren Harlan Cross and Clinton Cross at his home in Waco, Texas, 1951*

Ma and Aunt Eliza send their love to you. Flem joins me in love to you and the children. The children all send their best, best love to Grandma.

Write often. From your affectionate Daughter, M.R. Cross.

## A Look at the Letter

Whenever one is suddenly dropped into a strange ballpark, it is certainly true that “you can’t tell the players without a program”. In this case, the strange ball game is a letter from approximately 150 years ago, written from a lady in Greene County, Alabama, to her mother-in-law in Texas, and most of the players are glimpsed only briefly by first name reference (and those might be nicknames). With a bit of genealogical background and some library work, I will try to provide a program.

## Background

First of all, the authoress of the letter is Margaret Rose Cross, née Dunlap, daughter of John Dunlap and wife of James Fleming (“Flem”) Cross, the son of Eliza Harlan Cross. Eliza had been born in Mt. Pleasant, Maury County, Tennessee, where she married Joseph Oliver Cross (at age 13) and bore five children prior to Joseph Oliver’s death in an epidemic in 1839. The youngest child, a daughter, also died in the same epidemic, leaving her four children to take care of.

Eliza had two younger brothers: Jehu and William Sims Harlan, who had moved from Mt. Pleasant, Tennessee, to Pickensville, Aabama, prior to the 1840 US Census.

It is my opinion that Jehu Harlan was instrumental in getting Eliza to move to Alabama where she married a widowed planter, William Tannehill of Greene County, in February, 1841.

Her elder three children found Alabama spouses. Daughter Sarah Ann Cross married William Tannehill’s nephew, Joseph Carroll Calhoun in September, 1842. Son James Fleming Cross married Margaret Rose Dunlap, of Eutaw, Greene County, Alabama in October, 1852. Son Jehu (‘Hu’) Cross married Sarah Edith Shotwell of Pickensville, Pickens County, Alabama, also in October, 1852.

Eliza and William Tannehill had no children. William was killed in the tragic explosion of a steamboat while carrying the plantation’s entire cotton crop to market in Mobile in January, 1847. This left Eliza a widow for the second time and, as the plantation had been left to Tannehill’s children from his first marriage, she was without income.

By that time, her brothers had moved to Noxubee County, Mississippi, about 40 miles northwest of Eutaw, Alabama. There November 16, 1848, she married Samuel Meriwether Dunlap, an uncle of Margaret Rose and the following year, November, 1849, she bore Oscar Elijah Dunlap; the first of four sons. They had moved north of Noxubee County, to Chickasaw County, where Isabelle, Eliza’s youngest remaining child by Joseph Oliver Cross died of “consumption” in June, 1850 and was buried in the cemetery in Sparta, Mississippi.

Samuel Dunlap was 16 years older than Eliza and following the Civil War was almost bankrupt. In 1868 they were encouraged by Eliza's cousin, Nick P. Sims, to move to Texas; it was shortly after this move that Margaret Rose Cross wrote this letter to Eliza.

## Analysis of The Letter

Margaret began the letter with apologies over her lapse in writing. She then describes her summer of activities with household sickness of her daughter Estelle (b. July, 1860) and son "Eulie", (Ewell, b. May 28, 1866). She had also given birth to a son that summer, Oliver Harlan Cross (b. July 13, 1868).

Margaret then described family members seen during a trip to Noxubee County, Mississippi. She mentions Uncle Jehu (Jehu Harlan, Eliza's brother) and Aunt Mary (Mary Ann Harlan, née Hunter, widow of William Sims Harlan, Eliza's younger brother, who died June 6, 1865). She describes Jehu Harlan's interest in Johnie's appearance, meaning her own son, John Baskin Cross (b. July 26, 1854, age 14 at the time of the letter).

'Aunt Priscilla' refers to Jehu Harlan's wife, Priscilla Tamer Harlan, née Hunter, and elder sister of Mary Ann Hunter Harlan – a case where brothers married a pair of sisters. The name 'Hunter' refers to William Hunter Harlan (b. July 29, 1845, eldest child of William Sims Harlan and Mary Ann.)

I assume that the payments of debts refer to money owed following the death of Mary's husband, William. 'Sallie' is the nickname of Sarah E. Harlan (b. 1849 to William and Mary), and was married to John P. Willis (Noxubee County marriage records) on June 27, 1866.

The name 'Krooksville' would appear to be a mistranscription of 'Brooksville,' a town in the northern part of Noxubee County.

Both Hunter and Sallie had young, growing families to support, and are described as anxious to have their parts of land inheritance from their father's estate. (By the 1870 census, the Willis family was shown to be living in the house adjacent to Mary.)

'Uncle J(ehu)' expressed the desire for mutual visits between his family and those of Fleming and "Hu" (Jehu Cross), Eliza's two sons, as they were the only family living nearby. Eliza had moved to Texas, and her daughter Sarah Ann was living in Mobile. In terms of family relations, it must be mentioned that William Hunter Harlan, Eliza's nephew, is married to Ella Ann Calhoun (b. November 10, 1847), daughter of Sarah Ann Cross Calhoun, and Eliza's granddaughter. [First cousins once removed.]

Margaret mentions a visit with Jehu Cross but does not say where he was living, only that the land was owned by someone in Marion, Alabama.

'Ma' would appear to refer to Margaret's own mother, Elizabeth Dunlap, who was still living in Greene County until her death the following year on October 11, 1869.

Following is a discussion of various neighbors in Eutaw and Greene County that would have been known to Eliza. Albert Sears and wife Mellis McMillan, Billy Pettigrew, May Webb, Mrs. George, Mrs. Cook, Mrs. Stafford, Bell Webster, and Amanda Brown are all mentioned but have no family relationships to the Cross or Harlan families.

Finally, the letter has a wrap-up of the Cross family: 'Amanda' is Amanda Abbeville Calhoun, (b. April 14, 1845), another grand-daughter of Eliza's by Sarah Ann, and sister of Ella Ann Calhoun Harlan. It is likely that Fleming's proposed visit to Mobile with children 'Johnie' (John Baskin), Walter (b. 1856), and Estelle (b. July, 1860), would be to visit with his sister Sarah Ann and the Calhoun family. Margaret again mentions her baby, Oliver Harlan, and his brother Eddy (b. July 12, 1863). 'Aunt Patsy' Dunlap was probably the wife of one of Margaret's uncles, and the name 'Aunt Eliza' is from her mother's family.

Attached are copies of various records of marriages, cemetery data, and census pages used to access some of the data presented. Final note: Jehu Harlan's wife, Priscilla died May 6, 1876; and on January 3, 1878 he married his sister-in-law, Mary Ann. The 1880 census shows that they have also taken in a niece, Nettie Hunter.

Compiled by Harold Spradley, great-great-grandson of Eliza by Jehu Cross, Reuben Shotwell Cross, and Dorothy Clair Cross.



