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## THE JACKSONS OF BRAZORIA COUNTY: THE LIFE, THE MYTH AND THE IMPACT OF A PLANTATION FAMILY

by *Alisa V. Petrovich*

From ghost stories to gossip, the Jacksons have generated interest throughout East Texas. Ranked one of the richest plantation owners in Texas in the United States census of 1850 and 1860, Major Abner Jackson left a legacy of wealth and myth.<sup>1</sup> The history of the family and exploits of Abner Jackson and his children provide an important perspective in assessing this legend. The paper will examine the stories surrounding the Jacksons and then view the historical facts about their lives and deeds.

Brazoria County stories hold that Major Abner Jackson ranked as the richest plantation owner in Texas and the most successful planter in the Southern United States. While neither of these ideas reflect an accurate assessment, they suggest a factual story. A successful planter, Major Jackson possessed the most slaves in Texas. He obtained wealth, built grand buildings, and planned a navigation company that produced easier transportation. Too, he owned the first steam-powered sugar mill in Texas. While Abner Jackson did not qualify for the titles of the richest or the most thriving planter in the South, his story exemplified an American success story and provided fertile soil for the Southern plantation myth.

In 1838, twenty-eight year-old Major Abner Jackson arrived in Brazoria County from South Carolina.<sup>2</sup> He appeared during the depression of the 1830s, and by using barter and credit he achieved moderate success with his planting business during the era of the Texas Republic.<sup>3</sup> He purchased a land tract originally deeded to Jared E. Groce and Stephen F. Austin, and earned a sizeable profit on his crops.<sup>4</sup> With his initial success, Jackson established the Retrieve Plantation.<sup>5</sup> This plantation soon supported a booming cotton and cane business. By 1849, Jackson planted 200 acres of sugar cane and could afford to build a sturdy brick sugar house.<sup>6</sup> In part, Abner Jackson fulfilled one portion of the myth: he was fast becoming a rich man. Major Jackson enjoyed his success with his second wife, Margaret, his daughter, Arsenath, and his sons John, George, Andrew, and Abner Junior.<sup>7</sup> In twenty years, the Jackson family's wealth grew sizably.

Although the Jacksons did not appear on lists of the wealthiest families in the Southern United States, they became more affluent during the sugar production crisis of the 1850s. Sugar cane yields declined for several reasons: market prices were low; the hurricane of 1854 leveled many fields in Texas and Louisiana; a terrible drought caused crop failure; and the winters of the 1850s were extremely cold, especially the winter of 1855-1856, that killed much seed cane. Most of these problems did not affect the Jacksons. Low prices did not injure the Jackson family because of their high level of production (296 hogsheads of sugar per growing season as compared to the Texas average of fifty hogsheads of sugar per growing season).<sup>8</sup> The hurricane

did not damage the Jackson's crops except at Retrieve Plantation.<sup>9</sup> Because the Jackson plantations stretched along both the Brazos River and Oyster Creek, they could irrigate more successfully than could other planters. The cold winter of 1855-1856 did not spare the Jackson family, but they quickly recouped their losses by purchasing fresh seed cane from out-of-state.<sup>10</sup> Despite the setbacks of the 1850s, the Jacksons built their fortune and increased their stature.

Linked to the Jackson success was the status of being a major slave owner. One reason for this dubious status concerned Major Jackson's many holdings. He shared partial ownership of Retrieve Plantation with General James Hamilton, and by 1858 Jackson had purchased Darrington Plantation after the death of its owner, Sterling McNeel.<sup>11</sup> These were bigger sugar plantations and had outstanding records of production. To farm so much land, Jackson utilized a large slave work force. According to the census of 1860, Abner Jackson had the second largest slave holdings (285 people) in Texas, as compared to David Mills (313 people).<sup>12</sup> General Hamilton owned 213 slaves in conjunction with Jackson, for a total of 498 souls.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, despite the set-backs of the 1850s, Abner Jackson became the owner of more slaves than anyone else in Texas.<sup>14</sup>

Jackson did everything with a grand flourish, from being one of the leading sugar producers in Texas to owning the most slaves in the state. His mansion constituted one of his most impressive achievements. In 1842, Major Jackson began construction on what would soon be considered one of the finest plantations in Texas – Lake Place. His temporary house on the lake could not be considered elaborate; the house consisted of elm and ash logs and contained but four rooms. Construction on the brick-and-cement mansion ended in 1851.<sup>15</sup> It had a beautiful northern view of the lake and boasted twelve rooms and a large gallery on the second floor. Romanesque columns and elaborate windows appointed the \$25,000 home. Jackson also constructed a brick sugar house, brick slave quarters, an orchard, a garden with brick walk ways, and a \$10,000 man-made island in the center of the lake.<sup>16</sup> Boats skimmed the lake, and the family possessed at least one steam powered vessel, the "Lady Anne."<sup>17</sup> The Lake House was surrounded by 70,000 acres and county residents considered it the center of the plantation culture of Brazoria County.<sup>18</sup> Like most of Abner Jackson's projects, the Lake House proved grand and expensive.

Jackson's success became the staple topic of polite society. Retrieve, Darrington, and Lake Jackson plantations produced 622 bales of cotton and 586 hogsheads of sugar per year.<sup>19</sup> By 1859, Jackson's plantations yielded 20,000 bushels of corn while the average production in Texas rendered 7,000 bushels. His real property totaled \$84,415 and his personal property, excluding slaves, totaled \$88,360. He also owned livestock valued at \$46,770 and 2,550 acres of improved land in what is today the city of Lake Jackson.<sup>20</sup> Like other plantations, horses powered the Jackson mill. In 1855, the Major began conversions for steam power. In 1858, he had the only steam-powered mill in Texas.<sup>21</sup> Jackson's fame for wealth and success, however, did not outshine his family's ability to elicit stories.

Apart from the yarns concerning Jackson's success, local myth also spotlighted the Jackson children by noting that Abner lavished money on his

children indiscriminately. For example, Abner Jackson's children went East to obtain their education. Two sons went to Norwich University, a military school in Vermont.<sup>22</sup> One son went to school in Kentucky, the other son studied in Georgia. Arsenath, his only daughter, attended school in Columbia, Tennessee.<sup>23</sup> Brazorians probably viewed spending money on a daughter's college education as frivolous. Other than education, the Jackson children's treatment appears unremarkable.

The personalities of the Jackson children also are a matter of local myth. While Arsenath, Andrew, and Abner Junior appeared to perpetrate childish pranks, George and John had more serious charges lodged against them. Stories paint George as an improvident gambler and an often-married ladies' man, but his will does not mention a wife and county records indicate that he did not wed.<sup>24</sup> Still, he enjoyed gambling, especially in restaurants and on river boats. Frequent indictments on the charge of gaming in public attest to George's love of games of chance.<sup>25</sup> George always pled guilty, paid a fine (often as much as \$1000), and promised to behave.<sup>26</sup> John's case differed. Stories depict the eldest Jackson son as a vicious slave master and a gunslinging thief. Brazoria County Criminal Cases prove that the State of Texas indicted John for the murder of a slave and for threatening to kill another slave.<sup>27</sup> The State of Texas also charged John with horse stealing, assault, and gambling.<sup>28</sup> Add to these charges that John whipped his brother George publicly in 1866, and a man of violent temper and passion emerges.

All the Jacksons, except Arsenath, died young.<sup>29</sup> In 1858, their mother, Margaret Jackson, passed away, as did the Major in 1861.<sup>30</sup> The four Jackson sons served in the Confederate army. Abner Junior and Andrew perished during the war.<sup>31</sup> John fought with the Eight Texas Cavalry for a time, then returned home to handle the estate of his deceased father.<sup>32</sup> Local myth attests that George murdered John in 1867 and the guilt-ridden George died of tuberculosis in Galveston in 1871.<sup>33</sup>

The myths of the Jacksons focus on two aspects of the family: their slaves and the murder of John Jackson. The four main stories about the Jackson family are the cruel treatment of the slaves, how slaves dug the lake (or a portion of it), the vengeful ghost of a slave, and John Jackson's specter. All the myths can be explained in part by fact and in part by the impression that the tragedies made on local inhabitants.

One portion of the myth concerns Abner Jackson's sadistic cruelty to his slaves. Jackson's partner, General Hamilton, may have helped fuel the story. Upon arriving in Brazoria, Hamilton expressed shock at what he considered the scanty clothing given to the slaves at Retrieve Plantation. He wrote "In this dreadful cold weather, they have received a flimsy negro cloth and a scanty pattern at that."<sup>34</sup> Four days later, he modified his charges against Jackson's cruelty because he observed that the Jackson slaves had the same, if not better, clothing as did most slaves in Texas.<sup>35</sup> Another source for the tale might be Abner Jackson's eldest child, John. As discussed earlier, the State of Texas indicted John for the murder of a slave and for threatening to kill another.<sup>36</sup>

After sentencing him to pay a fine, the court released him.<sup>37</sup> Owning a large number of slaves, Major Jackson probably witnessed some cruel treatment of them. Yet official records at the Brazoria County Court House do not reveal indictments against him for the mistreatment of his slaves. In reality, the story of cruelty concerns John and not Abner Jackson.

Akin to the indictment for cruelty to slaves is the story about the vengeful black ghost that haunts the ruins of Lake Place's sugar mill.<sup>38</sup> To date, no scholar has explored the reality behind the legend. Sometime before January 18, 1848, a fatal accident took place at the Lake Place sugar mill. The incident involved the crushing of a black slave, and a letter from the publisher and inventor, Thomas H. Borden, to James F. Perry, mentions the tragedy. Borden claimed that his new invention "[would] prevent [the mill] from choking consequently it will never break neither will it grind up niggers as the old Methods are liable to do as in the case of Maj. Jackson and a number of such cases in La."<sup>39</sup> County court records do not mention the incident, but one can assume that county residents memorialized the slave's violent death through the legend of the vengeful ghost.

Another prevalent myth in Lake Jackson is that slaves created the lake due to the whim of Abner Jackson. One can easily discern the truth in this case: slaves and oxen actually dug one mile of canal in an attempt to link the Brazos River and Oyster Creek.<sup>40</sup> Also, this slave activity did not occur because of a whim. Shipping to and from Lake Place and Retrieve plantations occurred along Oyster Creek. The proposed canal would have served many plantations along the creek, as well as Brazos River traffic. The Brazos Canal Company lacked the money to compete with its rival, the Galveston and Brazos Navigation Company, so work on the canal ceased.<sup>41</sup> The memory of slave labor making a waterway also might have come from the improvements effected on Oyster Creek.<sup>42</sup> Deep enough for sidewheelers, the creek was narrow, thus slaves toiled to widen the creek and remove the snags.<sup>43</sup> After the Civil War steamboats stopped using the route, but the memory of slave digging efforts remained garbled and pervasive in local myth.

By far the most famous myth of Brazoria County concerns the alleged murder of John C. Jackson by his younger brother, George W. Jackson, on December 16, 1867.<sup>44</sup> The story has three versions: George cut off John's head and threw it in the lake; John fell backward down the Lake House's grand staircase after George shot him; and George shot John six times in the chest in front of Lake House.

The ghost story comes in two versions. One version states that George Jackson fired six shots into John's chest in front of the Lake House because John tied up his inheritance and insulted him.<sup>45</sup> Still angry over John's words, George decapitated his brother with a machete and threw the head into the lake.<sup>46</sup> The story explains that the ghost walks around the old plantation grounds searching for its lost head.<sup>47</sup> The other version places the fatal confrontation on the stairs of the Lake House. When George shot John, John's body thudded down fifteen steps.<sup>48</sup> People claim to hear the thumping, as well as "a soft plopping noise like raindrops pattering against a windowpane ..." (blood hitting the bottom step).<sup>49</sup> Myth also asserts that the State of Texas

indicted George for murder but decided not prosecute him because John was mean and disliked.<sup>50</sup>

The basis for the myth is a book published in 1936 by Abner J. Strobel, the step-nephew of Abner Jackson. In the book, Strobel relates "the story of the tragedy in this family, so as to forever set at rest the garbled version of the affair ... [because] I am the only living person who saw the killing and who is familiar with the events that led up to it."<sup>51</sup> He gives the following report: John claimed all of Abner Jackson's estate and refused to share a portion of the inheritance with George.<sup>52</sup> When George came begging for money in 1866, John publicly horsewhipped him.<sup>53</sup> In 1867, George petitioned the court for some of the inheritance and obtained 6,700 acres, 150 head of cattle, and some mules and horses as his portion.<sup>54</sup> On December 8, 1868, George and John met in front of the Lake House.<sup>55</sup> John threatened to whip George again, and George pulled out his revolver and shot John six times in the chest.<sup>56</sup> Thus died John C. Jackson, and both Abner Strobel and local legend hold that "John Jackson got what he deserved."<sup>57</sup> While Strobel's account unintentionally helped fuel the story of the Jackson murder, reality is not only different but also poses questions concerning George's guilt.

The story-tellers base their tale on the assumption that George killed John. Yet two curiosities exist. If witnesses saw the murder, why did George plead "not guilty?"<sup>58</sup> Also, knowing that eyewitnesses could testify against him, why did not George, who had \$5000 in cash to post bail, hire a lawyer?<sup>59</sup> Instead of accepting any legal counsel, George attested that his innocence would help him in his defense and thus he represented himself at the trial.<sup>60</sup> George's plea is also interesting. He might have chosen a plea of "self-defense," because John attacked George in public a few years earlier and John's mean temper was common knowledge.<sup>61</sup> Strobel claims that John had threatened George with another whipping, thus a plea of "self-defense" would be logical, especially if eyewitnesses were available. The other problem concerns the trial. The inconclusive evidence produced at the trial provided a deadlock.<sup>62</sup> If the State of Texas had eyewitnesses and George, untrained at law, defended himself, why could not the jury deliver a verdict? Perhaps the notion of eyewitnesses is an expression of myth, too, like John's decapitation. Or did George really kill John?

The trial did not end due to the deadlock. The sheriff attempted to collect a new jury six times and could not assemble the proper amount of people.<sup>63</sup> Modern scholarship concludes that the court freed George due to an inability to find jurors. The Brazoria County Clerk's office stated that they generally believed that locals who depended on the Jackson family refused to be on the jury, and thus the court quietly dropped the case.<sup>64</sup> However, more careful examination of the court minutes disproves these opinions. The state indicted George for playing cards in a public place on the first Monday in January 1871.<sup>65</sup> What is significant about this is that on the next page "The State of Texas versus George W. Jackson, Indictment for Murder" appears again, under the same case number as the gambling charge.<sup>66</sup> Because the sheriff could not locate a jury, the court ordered that Fort Bend County hold the trial because it

had "the nearest court house to this."<sup>67</sup> The minutes of the court list the witnesses for and against George. State witnesses included four men, the defense counted two men, and the record does not distinguish what type of testimony they offered.<sup>68</sup> The trial occurred on the third Monday in March 1871.<sup>69</sup> Whether George murdered John is a question that is debatable.

From the riches of Abner Jackson to the ghost of John Jackson, local myth earmarks the Jackson family of Brazoria County. These stories have a basis in fact, although they skew the truth because people prefer to view Abner Jackson as the richest man in the South rather than one of the wealthiest men in Texas, or to believe that slaves dug the entire lake rather than that slaves and oxen widened some part of Oyster Creek. While historical facts do not always negate the essence of myth, reality is often as interesting as fantasy. Facts prove that Abner Jackson became an American success story, that his children went to the East for their education, and that they died young. Facts, too, demonstrate that John murdered a slave and mistreated other workers, one slave died in a gruesome accident, and that someone killed John Jackson. While legends concerning the Jackson family can be dispelled using historical data and careful analysis, one intriguing question remains. Did George really murder John on a bleak December afternoon in 1867? Unfortunately, the evidence stands mute. In this instance, myth has swallowed reality.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>"Schedule 2 – Slave Inhabitants in the County of Brazoria, Texas" *Seventh Census of the United States of America, 1850*, and "Schedule 4 – Production and Agriculture" *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860*. Also, "Schedule 2 – Slave Inhabitants in the County of Brazoria, Texas" *Eighth Census of the United States of America, 1860*.

<sup>2</sup>Allen A. Platter, "Education, Society, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County, Texas" (University of Houston, Ph.D Dissertation, 1961), p. 89; and Abner J. Strobel, *The Old Plantations and Their Owners of Brazoria County, Texas* (Houston, 1936), p. 42.

<sup>3</sup>Platter, "Education, Society," p. 89; and Strobel, "The Old Plantations," p. 42.

<sup>4</sup>Platter, "Education, Society," p. 89; and Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 42.

<sup>5</sup>Platter, "Education, Society," p. 89.

<sup>6</sup>S.M. Williams Papers. Rosenberg Library, Galveston Texas, Tables V, VI, pp. 17, 18. Abner Jackson to S.M. Williams, April 3, 1849.

<sup>7</sup>The 1850 Census listed Abner Jackson as a planter; his income was \$13,215. However, it also listed Retrieve Plantation as Jackson's only holding. At the time, he owned both Lake Jackson Plantation and Darrington. How this error occurred cannot be discerned. *Seventh Census of the United States*, October 14, 1850, p. 218, Roll number 908.

<sup>8</sup>William R. Johnson, "A Short History of the Sugar Industry In Texas," *Publication of the Texas Gulf Coast Historical Association*, 5 (January, 1969), pp. 14-15. See also P.A. Champonier, *Statement of the Sugar Crops Made in Louisiana in 1852-1853* (New Orleans, n.d.); and James A. Creighton, *A Narrative History of Brazoria County* (Waco, 1975), p. 205.

<sup>9</sup>Johnson, "A Short History," p. 28.

<sup>10</sup>Johnson, "A Short History," p. 28. In 1852, Brazoria County produced 7,357 hogsheads of sugar and this figure was reduced to 5,150 hogsheads by 1858. However, the Jacksons were able to produce an impressive portion of this figure. Creighton, *A Narrative History*, p. 205.

<sup>11</sup>Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, pp. 45-46. Platter suggests that the Jacksons concentrated their effort at these two plantations, and grew cotton and staples in Lake Jackson; Platter,

"Education, Society," p. 91. For an interesting biography of General James Hamilton, see James Day, ed., *The Texas Almanac, 1857-1873* (Waco, 1967), pp. 462-64.

<sup>12</sup>"Schedule 2 – Slave Inhabitants" *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860*.

<sup>13</sup>Schedule 2 – *The Eighth Census of the United States, 1860*; and Ralph Wooster, "Notes and Documents on Texas' Largest Slave Holders," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 65 (1961), pp. 74-75fn. The average slave holding in Texas constituted thirty-eight individuals.

<sup>14</sup>"Schedule 2 – Slave Inhabitants" *Seventh Census of the United States*.

<sup>15</sup>Recent archaeological excavation has examined the ruins of Lake Place and its surrounding buildings, which can be viewed off County Road 2004 in Lake Jackson, Texas. While only the foundations of the house remain, the sugar boilers and the fireplace of the mill are extant.

<sup>16</sup>Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 28. Also found in Creighton, *A Narrative History*, p. 218. Creighton notes that peaches, plums, pears, quince, grapes, and strawberries grew in the gardens and were available to slaves.

<sup>17</sup>Brazoria County Courthouse Probate Records. December 1867, Estate of John C. Jackson, #867.

<sup>18</sup>Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 43.

<sup>19</sup>"Schedule 4 – Agriculture" and "Schedule 2 – Slave Inhabitants," *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860*.

<sup>20</sup>The average holding in Texas was between \$5000-10,000. Wooster, "Notes and Documents," p. 75 fn9.

<sup>21</sup>Williams Papers, Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas, Tables V, VI, 17, 18. Abner Jackson to S.M. Williams, April 3, 1849.

<sup>22</sup>Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 43. He adds that Abner Jackson sent his children to different schools because he did not want them to band together and try to run the school, and also to give them varying perspectives on differing areas of the United States.

<sup>23</sup>Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 29.

<sup>24</sup>George's will can be found in the County Courthouse, Probate file # 923.

<sup>25</sup>See Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Cases, *Index to Criminal Cases*, Volume A, for the numerous example of these charges.

<sup>26</sup>Brazoria County Court House, *Index to Criminal Cases*, volume A.

<sup>27</sup>Brazoria County Courthouse, *Index to Criminal Cases*, volume A, files 517 and 543.

<sup>28</sup>Brazoria County Court House, *Index to Criminal Cases*. See Volume A for the many file numbers.

<sup>29</sup>Arsenath Jackson married J. Fulton Groce, son of the wealthy Leonard W. Groce of Liendo in Waller County, on June 21, 1855. *Marriage Records of Brazoria County from 1829 to 1870* (Lake Jackson, 1982), p. 29, license number 254.

<sup>30</sup>Brazoria County Courthouse Probate Records #764 and #765.

<sup>31</sup>Brazoria County Probate Records #780, #854.

<sup>32</sup>Platter, "Education, Society," p. 95.

<sup>33</sup>Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, pp. 44-45; Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Records, case #633 and #739; and Brazoria County Probate file #923.

<sup>34</sup>A. Holbrook, "Life on Antebellum Slave Plantations," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 76(1972), p. 374, quoting Ballinger Papers, James Hamilton to J.M. Bass, February 6, 1856.

<sup>35</sup>Holbrook, "Life on Antebellum Slave Plantations," p. 374.

<sup>36</sup>Brazoria County Courthouse, *Index to Criminal Cases* volume A, 10 File number 517, pages to minutes 2425, 2659, and 2779, and file number 543, pages to minutes 2519 and 2536.

<sup>37</sup>Brazoria County Courthouse, *Index to Criminal Cases* volume A, 10 File number 517, pages to minutes 2425, 2659, and 2779, and file number 543, pages to minutes 2519 and 2536.

<sup>38</sup>This story can be found in Bertha McKee Dobie, "The Ghosts of Lake Jackson," in *Follow the Drinkin' Gou'd*, edited by Frank Dobie (Austin, 1928).

<sup>39</sup>Perry Papers, T.H. Borden to James F. Perry January 18, 1848.

<sup>40</sup>James F. Perry Papers, Peach Point Plantation, Brazoria County Texas. General Hamilton to James Perry February 2, 1845. Agreement: James Perry, William G. Hill, E.M. Hill, Abner Jackson November 13, 1845. Abner Jackson to James Perry April 15, 1847.

<sup>41</sup>By 1856, the Galveston Company had dug an intercostal waterway between Galveston Bay and the Brazos. Taken from Perry Papers, "Report to Stockholders of the Galveston and Brazos Canal Company," April 1, 1856.

<sup>42</sup>In 1856, the state granted \$3,833 to improve the creek between the intercostal canal and Retrieve from the \$315,000 total budget for Texas river-and-harbor improvements. Taken from Charles S. Potts, "Transportation in Texas," from *Readings in Texas History*, edited by Eugene C. Baker (Dallas, 1929), pp. 542-43.

<sup>43</sup>Pamela Puryear and Nath Winfield, *Sandbars and Sternwheelers: Steam Navigation on the Brazos* (College Station, 1976), p. 2.

<sup>44</sup>Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Records, file number 633, pages to minutes 2750, 2804, 2805, 2857, 2872, 2894, 2926, 2949, and 2999.

<sup>45</sup>Catherine M. Foster, *Ghosts Along the Brazos* (Waco, 1977), pp. 72-73.

<sup>46</sup>Foster, *Ghosts*, p. 73.

<sup>47</sup>Foster, *Ghosts*, p. 74.

<sup>48</sup>Foster, *Ghosts*, p. 73.

<sup>49</sup>Foster, *Ghosts*, p. 73.

<sup>50</sup>Foster, *Ghosts*, p. 75.

<sup>51</sup>Strobel, *The Old Plantations*. p. 44.

<sup>52</sup>Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 44. Abner Jackson either never wrote a will or his will was never probated because it cannot be found in the probate records of the Brazoria County Courthouse. Local legend assumes that John destroyed the will and thus was able to seize the inheritance for himself. This claim is unsubstantiated.

<sup>53</sup>Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 44.

<sup>54</sup>Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 44. Strobel is verified by Probate case number 781.

<sup>55</sup>Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 44. Strobel is incorrect. Criminal court records demonstrate that John was killed on December 16, 1867 (case number 867).

<sup>56</sup>Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 44.

<sup>57</sup>Foster, *Ghosts*, p. 77.

<sup>58</sup>This information can be found in Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Case #923 page to minutes 2750.

<sup>59</sup>Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Case #923 page to minutes 2750.

<sup>60</sup>Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Case #923 page to minutes 2750.

<sup>61</sup>For proof, examine his murder of the black slaves, charges of brawling, stealing, gambling, and threats to commit murder.

<sup>62</sup>Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Cases, file number 633, page to minutes 2805.

<sup>63</sup>Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Cases, pages to minutes 2857, 2872, 2873, 2949, and 2999.

<sup>64</sup>Oral interview with D. Bailey at Brazoria County Courthouse, 03/19/92.

<sup>65</sup>Brazoria County Court House Criminal Cases, case number 734, page to minutes 3053.

<sup>66</sup>Brazoria County Court House Criminal Cases, case number 734, page to minutes 3053.

<sup>67</sup>Brazoria County Court House Criminal Cases, case number 734, page to minutes 3054.

<sup>68</sup>Brazoria County Court House Criminal Cases, case number 734, page to minutes 3054. A note states that no stenographer was present for any of George's hearings or his trial by judicial order.

<sup>69</sup>Brazoria County Court House Criminal Cases, case number 734, page to minutes 3054. Unfortunately, the Fort Bend County Courthouse's Criminal Records do not contain further information and George died November 15, 1871, in Galveston (Brazoria County Courthouse Probate record number 923).