

## Margaret Moffette Lea (Wife of General Sam Houston)



Margaret Moffette Lea was born 11 April 1819 in Marion (Perry County), Alabama, one of four daughters born to Temple Lea and Nancy Moffette. She was a granddaughter of George Lea and Lucy Tolbert (Talbert) and a great granddaughter of Captain William (South Hico) Lea of Caswell County, North Carolina. Captain William Lea was a brother of James (Kilgore's Branch) Lea of Caswell County, North Carolina. These two brothers, William and James Lea were among the founding families of Caswell County.

Margaret Mofette Lea was a first cousin to Thomas Lee. Their father's (Temple Lea and Ransom Lea) were brothers. Temple Lea and Ransom Lea moved from Georgia to Alabama. Margaret's genealogical line leads to the Lea family of Virginia. In *Star of Destiny: The Private Life of Sam and Margaret Houston*, Madge Thornall Roberts (Foreword by Ralph B. Campbell) (1993)<sup>1</sup> at pages two and eight the following is found:

Margaret Moffett Lea came from an Alabama family of distinguished men that included soldiers, lawyers, and laymen active in the state government, so it would not seem impossible that she could be introduced to so famous a man as Sam Houston. . . . Margaret carried the name of one of the most distinguished families of the south. Her father,

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<sup>1</sup> "Much is known about Sam Houston's political and military career, but until *Star of Destiny* the influence of his wife and children on his life have been overlooked. Written by the great-great-granddaughter of Sam Houston and Margaret Lea, who draws upon previously unpublished family letters between husband and wife to reveal a deep interdependency between the two. These letters, woven into a dual biography, are astonishing in their emotional honesty, revealing aspects of married life in the 19th century often overlooked by historians."

Temple Lea, was a zealous Baptist clerk and lay minister of the church. Her mother, Nancy Moffette, was descended from a family of Huguenots who fled France and settled in South Carolina. Ancestors on both sides had fought in the American Revolution.



*Margaret Moffett Lea Houston*

*Star of Destiny* at page 233 discusses a letter sent to Sam Houston by Margaret's cousin Columbus Lea:

In March 1853 Houston received a letter from Margaret's cousin, Columbus Lea, informing him that Varilla's husband Robert Royston was not expected to survive (Varilla was a sister of Margaret.)

Page 312 of *Star of Destiny* reveals another letter from Columbus Lea to Margaret Lea:

Sam Houston Jr had joined the Confederate Army on August 13, 1861 without his parents consent and was now a private in Company C, 2nd Texas Infantry...Sam's division was ordered to Mississippi, and Margaret received the news with utter desolation. . . . Margaret received a letter from her cousin, Columbus Lea, who was in Mississippi with Sam. He assured her that Sam was “in robust health” and seemed as likely to bear the fatigues of the campaign as any soldier in it. However, he suggested to Margaret that she “tell the General to secure a lieutenancy for Sam” to save him from the rougher duties of the camp.

Source: Sam Houston's paper's, University of Texas, Columbus Lea to Margaret, April 2 1862.

*Star of Destiny* (295, 296):

While Sam Houston was governor of Texas and fear of seceding was spreading, Sam Houston warned his followers that to do so would lead to war. During these turbulent times, a soldier stationed at Camp Verde near San Antonio visited the Governor's Mansion. His name was Robert E. Lee. It is a strange coincidence of history that a friendship could develop between Lee and the Houston's as it was common knowledge that many

years before he met Margaret, Houston had once courted Mary Custis. She turned down his proposal of marriage, telling him that her heart belonged to a young man at West Point named Lee. Margaret enjoyed the visits of this southern gentleman. There was a branch of her family which spelled its name LEE and Margaret and Robert called each other 'cousin'. A nephew of Robert E. Lee later claimed that they actually were related, but no proof of a relationship exists today.

*Sam Houston's Wife: A Biography of Margaret Lea Houston*, William Seale (1992) at page 198 shows a claim of cousinship between Margaret and Robert E. Lee. This also gave validity to the family lore that the two families were related:

Other kinspeople called at the Governor's Mansion. One day a relative of Margaret's appeared on the front porch announcing himself as a cousin. He was Robert E. Lee of the United States Army and of that Virginia branch of the family that Nancy Lea idly pointed out on the family tree.

*Prominent Women of Texas*, Elizabeth Brooks (1896) at page thirteen provides the following:

Mrs. Houston was born April 11, 1819 and is descended from one of the cultured families of Alabama. She remained under her father's careful instruction until old enough to enter Pleasant Valley Seminary, where her school education was completed, and where she developed the marked literary talent for which she was distinguished in after life. She early evinced the religious tendencies that became more pronounced as she advanced in years, and, at an age when most girls give least thought to the serious side of life, she joined the Baptist Church, of which she was ever a consistent member. Her marriage with General Houston excited in her mind less the pride of honorable alliance than sentiments of responsibility and obligation attaching to the grave trust of her high position. Her example, she felt, should be in incense of her daily offering at the shrine of social progress, and her wifely devotion to precious oil of gladness to lighten the toils of her husband. Pursuing these generous impulses, her household became the nursery of every domestic virtue, and her husband's public cares were daily sweetened by her sympathy and her smiles. She as his constant companion, except during the years of his senatorial Service, when she remained at home, preferring the tender charge of her little children to the pleasures of society at the nation's

capital. During these years, as well as before and after them, her home was the almost continuous scene of genial and unassuming hospitality. While residing at Austin, her health visibly failed, and, in consequence, the public enjoyed fewer of her pleasant offices. Her removal to her home at Huntsville, following the retiracy of her husband from public office, would, it was hoped, bring relief with the promised repose. The hope was fallacious, and the gloomiest event of her life, two years later, the death of General Houston, added to her pain the burden of desolation. After this bereavement, Mrs. Houston returned to a former home in Independence, with a view to educating her children at Baylor University, then located at that place. Four years later Mrs. Houston felt herself summoned to new fields of labor. The Yellow Fever, in epidemic form, entered Texas, and to the relief of its victims she devoted herself, with tireless energy and with undaunted and heroic courage. She lived and labored through the fearful scourge, though prostrated by excessive vigils, toils and anxieties. She survived her work only a few weeks, and died December 3, 1867, a true martyr in the cause of humanity. A beautiful life thus came to a fitting end; its morning and meridian gilded by bright skies, its sunset made glorious by the splendor of its own sacrifice.

Mrs. Houston's body lies buried at Independence; that of her husband lies in the Cemetery at Huntsville. The children born of this union are eight in number, four sons and four daughters, here named in the order of their birth: Sam, a physician, married Lucy Anderson, of Williamson County; Nannie E., married J. C. Morrow, of Williamson County; Margaret Lea, married W. L. Williamson of Washington County; Mary W., married J. S. Morrow of Chambers County; Nettie Powers, married Prof. W. L. Bringhurst, of Bryan; Andrew Jackson, married Carrie G. Purnell of Austin, after whose death he married Elizabeth Good, of Dallas; William Roger; and Temple."

In *Sam Houston's Wife: A Biography of Margaret Lea Houston*, William Seale (1992), the author states that:

Sam and Margaret were made for each other. Margaret's life shows a certain kind of life in Texas from the era of the Republic to the close of the Civil War. . . . Margaret was like her father Temple, good senses, gentle nature, scholarly. Her sister Antionette, was headstrong and impulsive, tart tongued. Margaret spent most of her time in her brother Henry's library. She was fifteen when her father, Temple Lea died and

she could not be consoled. Temple Lea was a lay Baptist preacher and a dreamer. His wife Nancy, took care of the business side of their lives. Nancy had invested her inheritance from the Moffettes in Alabama land and developed a cotton Plantation with fifty slaves, while her husband preached over the countryside. Nancy was devoted to Temple, called Margaret's depression as "the glooms." Margaret was baptized at nineteen in Siloam Baptist Church. She went to Judson Female Institute and received vigorous Bible instruction. Religion gave her a sense of purpose. She wrote sentimental poems. There were long periods of asthma and regular sicknesses that plagued her. "Piousness was a family characteristic, most of the Lea's were good Baptists."

William Carey Crane a young Baptist preacher, met Margaret at age twenty and remarked, 'her language indicated high intelligence, grace and virtues.' She was tall with beautiful dark brown hair, full of waves, oval face, violet eyes.

At the age of seventeen years old, Margaret Lea viewed the arrival of the hero of the Battle of San Jacinto, in New Orleans, saying, One day she would meet Sam Houston.

Margaret and Sam Houston met in May of 1839 at a garden party in Mobile. Antionette's party was in honor of Nancy Lea. Nancy had sold her farm, the Cane Brake. Sam Houston, now forty six years old had finished his term as President of the Texas Republic and had traveled to Mobile where he met Martin A. Lea, Margaret's brother and a well known promoter in the city. Lea introduced Houston to William Bledsoe, husband of Antionette. William thought Nancy might want to invest her money in Texas. Sam's appointment with Mrs. Lea was at the garden party of Antionette. Sam met Margaret there in the garden and gave her flattering compliments. Later, he and Margaret walked in the garden. Margaret's fantasy of meeting him came true.

Days to follow the party, Houston regularly met with Nancy over Texas maps. He convinced her that the Republic was the place to invest. William Bledsoe set sail for Texas to see for himself and he was ready to abandon his businesses to go to the Republic.

Nancy began to see that Sam and Margaret were courting and she was distraught. He was an older man and Margaret was twenty. He had an

unsavory reputation, divorced and their were stories of his drinking and scandal. Nancy was unable to drive Houston away from her daughter.

She did invest in Texas land as she approved of his business sense. Margaret informed her mother that Houston had proposed marriage and despite Nancy's objections, she agreed to marry.

Nancy took Margaret back to Marion as Sam Houston wanted to marry her immediately and Nancy thought that improper as he hadn't met her family in Marion. Sam stalled the meeting of the family for several months, only letters were exchanged.

On the 7th of May, Houston finally went to Marion to meet her kin. Martin was with him. He registered at the Lafayette Hotel and went to call at the home on Greensboro St. Margaret's promise to her family was fulfilled and she would marry him.

The wedding took place at Henry and Serena's Greensboro St. home, with flowers from Serena's garden. Martin Lea was best man, two little Moffette cousins, grandchildren of Nancy Leas's brother were flower girls. Mrs. L.J. Goree, wife of President of Judson Institute was matron of honor. Margaret wore white satin dress, escorted by Henry Lea. Rev. Peter Crawford officiated. Guests were intimate with the family. General Houston and Margaret left Marion for Mobile. At a dinner there in Houston's honor, the mayor gave a toast and addressed, Margaret, the daughter of his old friend Temple Lea, as the "Conqueress of the Conqueror."

The Houston's left for Galveston to the Houston's farm, Cedar Point. Nancy Lea followed, renting a house in Galveston. Margaret had been fighting a fever and the yellow fever had already been found in Galveston. This began many years of illnesses for Margaret along with the birth of eight children, that kept her at home most of the time and not involved in Houston's political life.

The Houston's moved their residence to Huntsville, Texas around 1846. Huntsville became to prosper as a town of growing importance, the "Athens of Texas." Margaret Houston's scholarly interests were an exception to the local way of life in Huntsville.

Margaret later moved her children to Independence where her mother lived so that the children could attend Baylor University. Margaret spent most of her time with her Bible and religious interests. She was determined to have Sam Houston baptized which took several years to accomplish. Sam Houston died in 1863 at the Steamboat House in Huntsville.

Nancy died in 1867, probably of effects of yellow fever. The younger children went to live with their oldest sister Nannie."

Margaret Lea Houston is buried in Independence, Texas next to her mother Nancy Moffett. Sign at the grave site reads, "HOUSTON-LEA FAMILY Cemetery, when the widow of Sam Houston died of yellow fever during the epidemic of 1867, the danger of contagion made it impossible to carry her to Huntsville for burial beside her husband. She lies here, with her mother, Mrs. Nancy Lea, near the sites of their last homes and the old church they both loved. 1965"

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Father: Temple Lea b: 9 NOV 1773 in Hancock County, Georgia  
Mother: Nancy Moffett b: 1 MAY 1780 in Spartanburg, South Carolina

Information for Temple Lea from Report of Ben L. Rose at page 158:

Temple Lea of Clarke County, Georgia and Perry County, Alabama

Temple Lea, son of George Lea, and father of Margaret Lea, was born Nov. 9, 1773 in Orange County, North Carolina and moved with his parents to Wilkes County, Georgia around 1784. His name appears on a 1793 militia muster roll of Washington County, Georgia. as 'Temple Lee, Sgt', along with the names of his brother Ransom and his father George. Temple Lea was twenty years old at that time and not married. On Oct. 8, 1797 he was married in Hancock County, Georgia. to Nancy Moffett, daughter of Henry Moffett and his wife, Margaret. Temple and Nancy had seven children, four of them born in Georgia and three of them born in Alabama ten years later. Their children were: Gabriel who died at age two; Henry Clinton who married Serena C. Rootes; Martin A. whose Wife's name was Apphia; Varilla W. who married Robert R. Royston; Margaret Moffett who married

Gen. Sam Houston; Vernal B. who married first Mary Royston and second Catherine Davies; and Emily Antoinette(Nettie) who married first William M. Bledsoe, second Charles Power and third Rev. W.H. Robert.

When Temple Lea registered for the 1805 Georgia Land Lottery, he gave Greene as his county of residence. In that lottery he drew a prize on the first of two drawings. In 1808 we find Temple in Clarke County, Georgia where he witnessed the will of John Malone, where in 1811 he was on a grand jury and where on Feb. 11, 1812 he was appointed a justice of the peace in the 217th Georgia Militia District. That district was in the vicinity of the present town of White Hall, Georgia and since a J.P. was required To live in the area of his appointment, we know that Temple lived thereabout. As a Justice of the Peace the records show that he married at least one couple in 1812.

Like his father, Temple Lea was active in the Baptist Church, and in 1815 and 1816 he was a lay messenger from the Freeman's Creek Baptist Church of Clarke County, to meetings of the Ocmulgee Association. On Jan. 5, 1818 a court of Clarke County appoint him guardian of Robertus Royston, orphan of Robert Royston. This lad later married Temple's daughter, Varilla. The same court that appointed Temple as guardian of Robertus Royston also appointed him to a jury of five men to divide the property of Samuel S. Hunter, dec'd.

When the Federal government made available Indian land in Alabama, Temple Lea and his family in 1818 joined the popular migration and moved from Georgia to Alabama. He settled in what was the Dallas county of the Territory of Alabama. Perry County, Alabama was formed, mostly from Dallas County, when Alabama became a state in 1819. The Temple Lea family took up residence east of the Cahaba river in the general vicinity of the present town of Marion, Alabama, though the town of Marion was not formed until 1822.

A few months after the Lea family arrived in Alabama Temple's wife, Nancy, gave birth to a daughter, on April 11, 1819, whom they named Margaret, the name of Nancy's mother and also of Nancy's sister who had married Green Lea, brother of Temple.

Because many of the records between 1818 and 1829 were lost, knowledge of Temple Lee's activities are limited. Temple Lea, along with his son, Henry C. Lea, are listed as one of thirty-eight men, 'prominent in the

religious, educational and political life of Perry County during the first half of the 19th century.'

Temple joined and became quite active in nearby Concord Baptist Church. In A HISTORY OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF BAPTISTS IN ALABAMA, 1840 by Rev. Hosea Holcomb, writes, 'Temple Lea who had gone to rest prepared for the people of God, was many years an efficient member, a Deacon able in discipline; a man of great intelligence, of sterling worth, and an humble follower of Jesus. He was strictly benevolent; his soul was alive in the missionary cause; he was looked up to as an able instructor in the affairs of the Lord's house; he wrote and published an 'essay on church government', and at last died in full assurance of faith.

Temple and Nancy Lea were among the founders of the Siloam Baptist Church which was formed in Marion in 1822, and Temple was sent as a lay messenger from that church to the organizing meeting of the Alabama Baptist State Convention at Salem Church near Greensboro, Alabama in 1823. The following year he was also a delegate. In 1827 he was listed on the Board of Manages as Treasurer and in 1829 he was on the committee on nominations.

Temple Lea's leadership was as notable in civic affairs as it was in church affairs. He was one of the first Justices of the court of Perry County. His name appears on the records of the April term 1920 and a year later he is listed as Chief Justice of the Court.

Nancy's father, Henry Moffett, had also moved to Alabama from Georgia, died in 1829 leaving his property to his four children and wife; Gabriel; Nancy Lea (Temple's wife); Margaret Lea (wife of Temple's brother Green) and Jincy Moffett Eiland (widow of Asa Eiland). A few years before in 1821, Temple Lea had witnessed the will of Asa Eiland.

The Alabama census of 1830 lists Temple's family in Perry County.

On July 15, 1833 at age of 59, Temple Lea wrote his will and died Jan. 28, 1834. His daughter Margaret, being an emotional fifteen year old at the time, was especially distraught over her father's death.

Temple Lea was apparently an astute business man and provided well for his family. Shortly before his death he sold 313 acres of land in Perry County

for \$2,500. In his will, which was probated in Perry County, Alabama on Aug. 22, 1834, he bequested by name eighteen slaves to his wife and children and mentioned also, 'stocks, animals, household furnishings, other property and the balance of Negroes, as well as monies due to me.' A few years after his death his heirs sold 400 acres of land in Perry County for \$5, 200.

Temple's widow, Nancy, continued to live in Marion until the fall of 1839 when she moved to Texas where she had, on the advice of Sam Houston, invested in land. She settled in Galveston and was there on May 9th, 1840 when her daughter Margaret was married in Marion, Alabama to Gen. Sam Houston. Later, Nancy built a home in Independence, Texas, where she lived before she died on Feb. 1, 1864. She is buried in Independence, Texas.

We note that none of Temple's children were named after any member of his family while several of them were named after the Moffett family. It is possible that Temple was not particularly close to his parents and siblings. He was the second son, and second sons are often non-conformists. Ransom was the oldest son and he and his father appear to have been close for we find records of numerous business contacts between them. Green was the youngest child and was probably favored. One deed speaks of George's son as 'my loving son Green Lea.' Nancy also may not have liked Temple's family. (Speculation by Rose)

Temple is described in William Seale's book as a Baptist Pastor. No record has been found to support this and that he was neither an ordained minister nor a licensed preacher, but was a layman. He is listed as a Deacon in Baptist records."

Note from Pat Lee: Temple Lea and his brother Green Lea are mentioned in the probate of William Strong Jr. This Strong family is the line of Thomas Lee's wife Elizabeth C. Strong.

Administration of the will of William Jr Strong was found at the Athens Regional Library in Clark County, Georgia in 1999 by Pat and Darell Lee. Microfilm, County Records Inventory Book 1807-1817. The will records contained over fifty pages and took ten years to settle the estate. The executor was Sherwood Strong, brother of William Jr Strong. The estate must have contained a large plantation, as records of many slaves are included. Mentioned near the end of the record are the names of Temple Lea

and Green Lea. These are presumed to be the son's of George Lea from the family of Thomas Lee. Temple and Green were in Clark County in this era and Green was married there.

If this is correct then, the Strong family and the Lea/Lee family must have know each other from Georgia to Alabama. Thomas and Elizabeth Strong may have known each other earlier in their lives before they married in Alabama. They were both born in Georgia.

This is only a record of proceedings. The original will was not found.

"page 362 WILLIAM STRONG JR. Proceedings on the Estate of William Strong Jr. September the 3td 1810. The Last will & Testament of William Strong Junr. dec'd was executed in open court proven and ordered to be recorded and Letters Testamentary and Warrant of appraisement was granted to William M. Stokes, Sherwood Strong and John Cock, the Executors in and by said Will named appointed who was sworn to act according to Law.

November the 5th 1810 William M. Stokes, Sherwood Strong and Jack F. Cock came forward and made a list of the following Inventory of appraisement. page 363, Inventory of appraisement of the Estate of William Strong Jun. Dec'd"

(documents contain many pages of inventory and notes being paid out by the executors each year.)

On the return for 1812 is listed "One note on Temple Lea \$17.50  
No. 8 by cash paid William M. Strong \$12.50  
No. 15 by cash paid Temple Lea \$25.67  
No. 21 by cash paid Green Lea \$ 3.50"

From Patty Smoot: From ALABAMA RECORDS-PERRY CO. VOL 182, pg. 65, compiled by K.P. Jones and Pauline Jones Gandrud,

"Will Book A, pg. 57, Temple Lea. Will dated 15 July 1833, probated 22 August 1834. Son Vernal B. Lea; daughter Margaret M. Lea; Daughter Antoinette Emily Lea; wife Nancy; son in law R.R. Royston and wife Varilla executrix. Witnesses Thomas Lockhart,

C.W. Lee, Minerva Lockhart" Note from Pat: C.W. Lee was most Likely the nephew of Temple. Temple's brother Green, had married Nancy Moffett's

sister. They had son Columbus W. Lea, who was a noted politician, lawyer in Alabama."

At the Texas Archives in Austin, Texas, Pat Lee located a death notice for Temple Lea. THE SELMA FREE PRESS issue 2-6-1834, from

MISC. ALABAMA NEWSPAPER ABSTRACTS, by Kelsey Mihail Heritage Books Inc. 1995, page 109 "Departed this life on the evening of the 28th June at his residence in Perry County, Temple Lea, in the 60th year of his age. Upwards forty years member of Baptist Church."

Father: George Lea b: 16 JAN 1738/39 in Spotsylvania, King and Queen County, Virginia

Mother: Lucy Talbert b: 26 JUL 1739

Information for George Lea from Ben L. Rose book, REPORT OF RESEARCH ON THE LEA FAMILY OF VIRGINIA AND NORTH CAROLINA, page. 94.

George Lea of Caswell County, North Carolina and Wilkes County Georgia.

"George Lea, son of Capt. William Lea and grandfather of Margaret Lea, was born Jan. 16, 1739, probably in Spotsylvania County, Virginia, and moved with his parents to North Carolina around 1753. He married Lucy Talbert and they had nine children: Frances, called Frank; Sara who married a Mr. Black; Roda who married William Miles; Ransom married Cathey; Eunice who married Nathaniel Deane; Temple Lea married Nancy Moffett; Green who married Margaret Moffett; Judy; and Letty.

The George Lea family lived for a time in Orange County, North Carolina, where George served in 1770 as a executor of the will of James Talbert and in 1781 as an executor of the will of Thomas McNeill. Thomas McNeill's son, John, married George's sister, Anness, and James Talbert was probably the brother of George's wife, Lucy.

In the decade after the Revolution when cheap land became available in Georgia, George Lea joined what was almost a stampede from the Carolinas into Georgia and settled with his wife and family in Wilkes County around 1784. He received several grants of land in Wilkes County, one in 1785 for 200 acres and one in 1787 for 180 acres and another in 1788 for 379 acres.

Becoming involved in the affairs of the county, he was appointed to a grand jury in 1788.

George and Lucy also became involved in church affairs and were instrumental in forming the PHILLIPS MILL BAPTIST CHURCH, becoming charter members when it was organized in May 1785. Two years later George was ordained a deacon in the church and also served as trustee. On Dec. 9, 1786 his Daughters, Rhoda and Eunice, joined the Philips Mill Baptist church, but a few years later, in 1701, the records show that George, Lucy and Rhoda were dismissed to 'The Combined Society'. George was a messenger from the Buck Creek Baptist church of Watery Fork to the 1792 meeting of the Georgia Association.

It is not clear when George and Lucy Lea became Baptists. The Leas of Orange County, North Carolina, had established, around 1760, Lea's Chapel, not far from where George's parents lived. This chapel was with the Church of England.

In 1793 George's name appeared on a militia roll of Washington County, Georgia. He and his family lived in that part of Washington County that became Hancock County in 1794, and in the Hancock County records there are numerous deeds between 1794 and 1815 involving George, his wife and their three sons; Temple, Ransom and Green. When a town called Montpelier was formed in Hancock County in 1799, George was one of the commissioners. He was still in Hancock County in 1805, when he registered for the first Georgia Land Lottery to distribute Creek Indian land released by the treaty of Fort Wilkinson. After his wife's death in 1813, George moved to nearby Jasper county where his daughter Rhoda and her husband, William Miles, lived, and was there when he registered for the 1820 Land Lottery. An Indian Depredations claim document shows him there in September 1821. In this claim, originally entered in 1795, George claimed that two years earlier Creek Indians had stolen, 'three horse creatures' from him. The record does not show whether he ever received the \$321.25 he claimed the 'horse creatures' were worth.

George Lea died Jan. 15, 1825 at the age of 86.

George Lea was not named in the will of his father William in 1802. He did not name George an executor of his will, yet he gave George a full portion of the estate, the fact that Capt. Lea did not mention George in the codicil

written in 1803, and the fact that George did not participate in the settlement of Capt. Lea's estate after his death in 1804--all these facts indicate that George Lea, son of Capt. Wm. Lee, was not in Person or Caswell County, North Carolina when these events transpired. We believe he had moved to Georgia before 1785. "

Some dates and information provided by Nan McVeigh from LDS records for children of George and Lucy.

Some names and dates for family of George Lea and Lucy Talbert come from, THE PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE OF SAM HOUSTON, Vol.: 1839-1845, Edited by Madge Thornall Roberts, Un. of North Texas Press, Denton, Texas, found by Patty Smoot

Original names of children appear in the SCRUGGS GENEALOGY, LEA BIBLE, by Ethel Hastings Scruggs Dunklin, 1912 LaPlante & Dunklin Printing County, New York, page. 207-8. Pat & Darell Lee viewed this book in the Virginia State Library in 1999.

Found by Pat Lee in 2004 at the Texas State Library, Genealogy Collection, Austin, Texas; is OGELTHORPE COUNTY GEORGIA DEED BOOKS A-E 1794-1809 and DEED BOOK D-1800-1806 compiled by Michael M. Farmer, 1999, Farmer Genealogy County, Dallas, Texas;

page 122, "GEORGE LEA signed as wit: Nov. 6, 1789 for Henry Karn and Ann of Green County, Georgia to Archibald Simpson of Wilkes County"

page 238, "Aug 12, 1790 GEORGE LEA to Benjamin Hubbert both of Wilkes County, for L15 on Hardens Creek, 187 acres on Branch the natural boundary of Whatley, along old line to branch which is dividing line between Hubbert and Whatley and up branch, part of 379 acres granted to LEA, Jan 12, 1788. signed GEORGE LEA"

page 292, deed book p. 466 "Dec. 31, 1790, GEORGE LEA AND LUCY HIS WIFE to John Lindsay all of Wilkes County, for L150, 200 acres on Little River near Phillips Mill, adj. E.D. by Saml Whaley, S.W. by Isacc Williams to Jones, N. by Simpson, granted to LEA, 12, Oct. 1785 signed by GEORGE LEA, LUCY LEA"

page 439, "Nov. 20, 1793 to Thomas Norris of Wilkes County for L150, 200

acres in Wilkes County, on Little River Waters near Phillips Old Mill, adj N. by Hugh Jones and GEORGE LEA.....W. by Thorton, granted to GEORGE LEA, 10, Jan. 1787"

page 469, "Dec. 27, 1794, Lucy Whatley widow of Samuel Whatley, planter, Thomas Hobs and Phineous Whatley, yeoman, who are heirs of above,.....on s. side by John Querans Cree 200 acres, W. by TALBOT, E, by said John Querns on Hardens Creek. The 200 acres granted to GEORGE LEA 12, Jan. 1788. Sold by deed by said GEORGE to above named Lucy. signed, Lucy X Whalley, Aug. 27, 1796 before JOHN LEA, J.P."

page 535, "Jan. 17, 1798 Abraham Vanmetre of Barkley County, Virginia, to Phillip Wilhite of Wilkes County Georgia for L200, 200 acres in Wilkes County, in Little River Waters near Phillip Mill....N. by Simpson, being granted to GEORGE LEA 20 Oct. 1785"

page 300, "Jan 31, 1793, John Lindsay and Clarisy his wife to Abraham Vanmetre both of Wilkes, for L150, 200 acres on Little River near Phillips Mill, adj. S.E by Sam Whatley, S.W. by Isaac Williams, N.W. by Jones, N. by Simpson granted to GEORGE LEA 12 Oct. 1785"

page 301, "Fe. 7 1792, Isaac Williams to Jesse Wall, L126, 200 acres in Wilkes County, on Little River..... by Hugh Jones and GEORGE LEA, by Whatley, S. by Jess Talbot, W. by Thorton granted to GEORGE LEA, 10 Jan 1787."

The next two deeds are listed here but I am not sure which William Lea or Thomas Lea they belong to:

page 350 Aug 14, 1793 Wm Lea Sr to Thomas Lea both of Wilkes, L10, 131 acres. N.E. by surveyed land originally run in name of Wm Lea Sr. Also L10 to said Thomas Lea, part to said Thomas Lea, originally granted to Wm Lea adj. 131 acres. signed WM LEA"

page 376, "Thomas Lee of Wilkes County \$30 to Moses Lee, a Negro girl named Hannah, 17 Jan. 1795, signed Thomas Lee"

Patty Smoot has the following information on George Lea:

"20th February 1792. George Lea of Washington County to Asa Atkins of

Wilkes County, George Lea and Lucy Lea, his wife for the sum of one hundred and twenty five pounds, sterling for a tract of land on Buck Creek Containing five hundred and fifty acres, being originally granted to Sanders Walker the 3rd March 1785." from LAND DEED GENEALOGY OF HANCOCK CO., GEORGIA by Southern Historical Press, 1997 Greenville, South Carolina page 10"

"Time Line:

1770 Orange County, North Carolina- served as executor of will of James Talbert

1781 Caswell County, North Carolina- served as executor of will of Thomas McNeill

abt. 1784- Moved to Wilkes County, Georgia

1785 Land Grant in Wilkes County, Georgia for 200 acres

1785 Wilkes County Georgia tax list

1785 Rev. Silas Merder organized the Phillips Mill Baptist Church, at their home.

May 1785 Charter member of Phillips Mill Baptist Church in Wilkes County, Georgia when it was organized.

Dec. 9, 1786 Daughters Rhoda and 'Unice' joined the Phillips Mill Church in Wilkes County, Georgia

1787 Ordained a deacon in the Phillips Mill Baptist Church and also served as trustee.

1787 Land Grant in Wilkes County, Georgia for 180 acres

1788 Land Grant in Wilkes County, Georgia for 379 acres

1788 Served on Grand Jury in Wilkes County, Georgia

Sept 1791 Church records of Phillips Mill Baptist Church show that

George, Lucy and Rhoda were dismissed in order to join  
'The Combined Society'

1792 Sold 150 acres on Buck Greek, Washington County; Georgia to  
son, Ransom

1795 Taxpayers list for Hancock County, Georgia

1805 Registers for Georgia Land Lottery and gives county of residence  
as Hancock

Sources Given:

Orange County, North Carolina Will Book A, p 112, microfilm in NC  
Archives C.073.80001

Earl Records of Georgia Vol 2, Wilkes County, p. 25

Records of Phillips Mill Baptist Church, Wilkes County, Georgia 1785-1909

Index to Headrights & Bounty Grants of Georgia, 1756-1909 p378,380

1805 Georgia Land Lottery by Robert D. Davis, p 186

"Records of Washington County, GA" section : Militia Muster Rolls-1793;  
Muster Roll, 2nd Co. 1st Batt. 2nd Reg.:

McKenzie, John Capt  
Miles, Jeremiah, Ens.  
McKenzie, Randall, Sgt.  
Lee, Temple, Sgt  
Miles, John  
Lee, Ransom  
Miles, William  
Lee, George

Note: Ransom Lea's wife is a McKinzie. Notice two McKenzie names are  
listed.

"PHILLIPS MILL BAPTIST CHURCH WILKES COUNTY GEORGIA

1785-1822, Historical Commission Southern Baptist Convention Nashville, Tennessee. microfilm No. 1111

'Phillips Mill Baptist Church, Wilkes County; Georgia was organized on June 10, 1785 at George Lea's home. The early church members present were: GEORGE LEA, ....Jesse Tolbert, ...LUCY LEA, .....

'Within the early church minutes, a list of members ca 1785 is given as follows:

LUCY LEA, SUSANNA TALBERT, ASA ATKINS, RHODA LEA,  
(edited for family interest only)

"After the Revolution when cheap land became available in Georgia, George Lea joined what was almost a stampede from the Carolinas into Georgia, and settled with his family."

Father: William Lea b: ABT 1715 in England

Mother: Frances

Information for William Lea from Ben. L. Rose, REPORT OF RESEARCH ON THE LEAS FAMILY IN VIRGINIA & NORTH CAROLINA BEFORE 1800, pg. 64

William Lea of Orange, Caswell & Person Counties, North Carolina

"William Lea, son of John Lea of King & Queen County, Virginia and great grandfather of Margaret Lea, was born in England around 1715 and came to Virginia with his parents around 1720. Being over fourteen years of age when they were orphaned by the death of their mother, William and his sister, Betty, were allowed by the law to choose their guardian and they chose their step-father Thomas Crethers. A month later, however, William changed his mind and chose as his guardian Zachary Taylor, who was the grandfather of U. S. President Zachary Taylor. (Note: Familysearch.org gives William's mother's name as Ann Taylor, with her father as James Taylor. It may be that Ann is from this Taylor family that belongs to Zachary Taylor.)

In the settlement of his father's estate William received one hundred acres of land in Spotsylvania County, Virginia on which he settled. There he married and began to raise a family. His wife's first name was Frances. William

tended his farm and apparently served as constable in Spotsylvania county for a time, but in 1752 he sold his land to Thomas White and moved to North Carolina. Two years later, Thomas White deeded a part of the same land to the church wardens and on it the Pamunkey Chapel of St. George's Parish was built.

William surveyed land on South Hico Creek in Orange County, North Carolina in 1753 and there he settled his family. In 1755 he was appointed a captain in the local militia and after that was referred to as 'Capt. Lea.' The Orange county militia was called out by Governor Tryon in 1768 and again in 1771 to suppress 'the regulars', and it is possible that Capt. Lea participated in these engagements which took place in Orange county not far from his home. However, Capt. Lea's name does not appear on any list of officers or soldiers from North Carolina who participated in the Revolution. In 1776 he would have been over 60 years of age and may have been considered too old for such duty.

Capt. Lea was a respected citizen of the community and was quite active in local politics. In addition to the usual services as overseer of the road and various jury duties, he was for a long time Trustee or Treasurer of the county and was probably for a number of years a Justice of the Peace.

Capt. Lea and his wife, Frances, had five children: Frances who married James Hendrix; George who married Lucy Tolbert; Eunice who married Alexander Rose; Anness who married first John McNeill and second James Cochran, and Elizabeth whom we believe married James Lea.

Capt. Lea added to his original land grant of 332 acres on south Hico Creek, several tracts until he owned, at one time, almost a thousand acres. The inventory of his estate after his death listed two slaves.

Before he wrote his will in 1802, his wife Frances had died for she is not mentioned in the will. The will directed that his estate be divided into five parts, one for each of his five children. He noted in the will that his daughter, Frances, who was dead at that time, had left children who would receive her portion. At the December 1803 court of person county, Capt. Lea's son in law, James Cochran, alleged that his father in law 'had lost the reason of his natural power and is non compos mentis'. The court arranged for a jury to ascertain the truth of the allegation, but Capt. Lea died before the jury could be assembled. An inventory of his property was presented to the court in

June 1804 by his son in law Alexander Rose. Capt. William Lea is probably buried in an unmarked Grave in Lea's Chapel churchyard in Person County, N.C.

Lea's Chapel, which was about a mile from Capt. Lea's farm, and also the village of Leasburg, which was three miles from his farm, were both named for the Leas of which there was a large company in Orange, Caswell and Person counties in the latter half of the 18th century.

Capt. Lea's sister, Betty, probably married Thomas White of Spotsylvania County, Virginia and remained there. Capt Lea's brother James, moved to Orange County, N.C. not long after William died, and apparently settled on Kilgore's branch of North Hico Creek. "

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Compiled by: Latham Mark Phelps--April 2007

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Margaret Moffette Lea, my 3rd cousin was a descendant of Capt. William Lea of South Hyco, brother of James Lea "Kilgores Branch", early settlers in Caswell County, N.C. She married General Sam Houston and should be considered a "Notable" person related to the history of Caswell County. The Lea family and their descendants remained prominent citizens in other states such as Georgia, Alabama, and Texas and continued to be an influential family wherever they lived.

Latham Mark Phelps-April 2007

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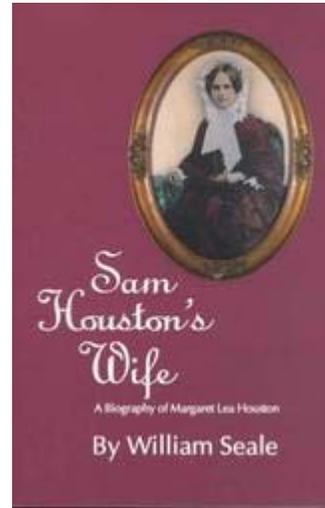
*Sam Houston's Wife: A Biography of Margaret Lea Houston*, William Seale (1992).

*Star of Destiny: The Private Life of Sam and Margaret Houston*, Madge Thornall Roberts (Foreword by Ralph B. Campbell) (1993).

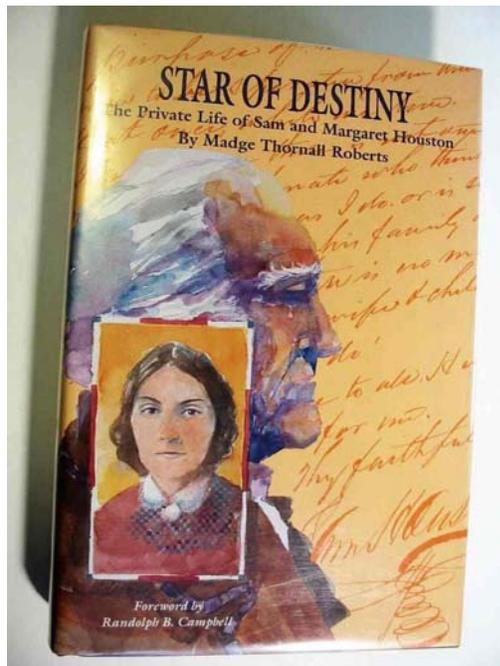
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Sam Houston



Sam Houston's Wife



Star of Destiny

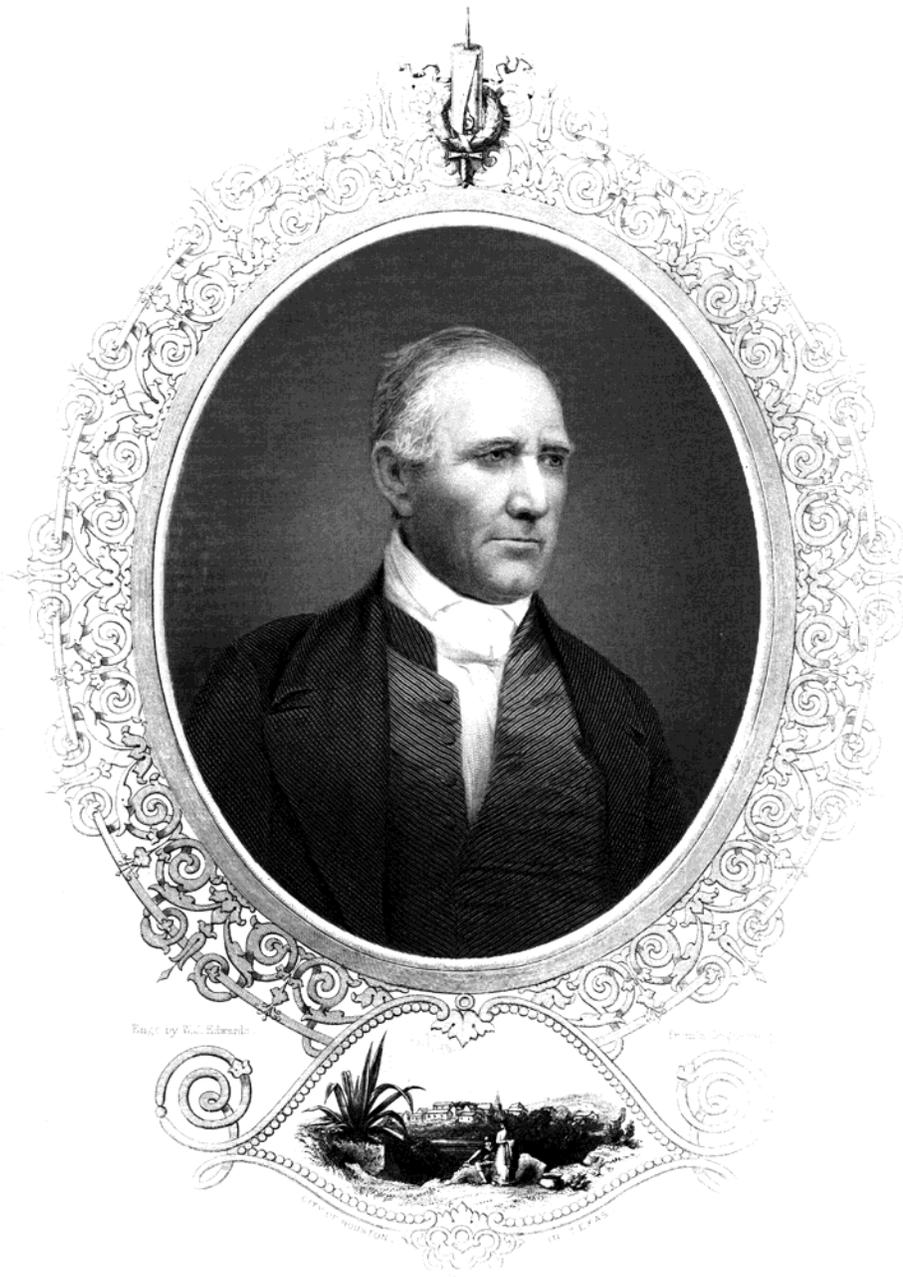


Sam Houston Memorial Museum

Houston Children



Margaret Lea Houston (daughter)



*Sam Houston*

**Sam Houston**

Margaret Lea Houston (daughter)

