



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Felix Robert Mann

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Felix Robert Mann

Felix Robert Mann was a native Tennessean who served in the Union army during and after the War. He originally came to Tarrant County in the mid-1850's with his parents and lived here at various times until about 1870. Before his death in San Angelo in 1925, he became one of the best-known cattlemen and businessmen in West Texas.

Felix Mann was born in Smith County, Tennessee on October 23, 1846. He was the eldest child of Timothy Walter Mann (1824-1905) and his wife, Elizabeth Ann Glover (1827-1907), both of whom came to Texas and lived for several years in northeast Tarrant County. The later moved west and lie buried at San Angelo in Tom Green County.

Felix was three years old when the census taker visited their home in Smith County, Tennessee; it was described as north of the Cumberland River and east of the Caney Fork River. Timothy Mann owned a farm worth six hundred dollars. Several of the other Mann family members in the area were slaveowners, but Timothy Mann was not.

Sources published early in the twentieth century say Timothy Mann brought his family to Grayson County, Texas in 1855, where he stayed a short time before moving to northeast Tarrant County. He is mentioned in an estate settlement in Tarrant County in 1860. Felix's father appears in the 1865 tax list of Tarrant County with property in three different surveys in northeast Tarrant County. T. W. Mann registered to vote here on August 1, 1867 in Precinct 3 and said he had been here twelve years.

Felix Mann registered to vote in Tarrant County on November 24, 1869. He lived in Precinct 3, where he said he had lived for the past two years.

The Mann family appears in the 1870 census of Tarrant County in Precinct 4. Felix appears as a single man of twenty-three years, living with his parents and younger siblings. His father owned real estate, but Felix did not. Felix did, however, own four hundred dollars worth of personal property.

Family sources at ancestry.com say Mr. Mann was married in Menard County, Texas on June 23, 1875 to Fannie Fern Sheen. Her death certificate says she was born January 8, 1856. Family sources say she was born in Parker County, Texas to John Sheen (1816-1887) and Mary Davis (1817-1900), both of whom died in Menard County, Texas and lie buried there in Pioneer Rest Cemetery. Both Mr. and Mrs. Sheen were born in the British Isles and came to America after their marriage.

Felix and Fannie Mann and their three children appear in the 1880 census of Precinct 1 of Menard County, Texas. Also in their household were two hired men...W. H. McQueen who was working as a butcher, and Stephen Wells, who was a laborer.

Mr. Mann's entry in the 1880 agricultural census of Menard County gives no hint to his later great success as a rancher. In that year he owned a ranch which consisted of twenty-five acres of cultivated land, one hundred fifty acres of permanent pasture, and one hundred twenty-five acres of woodlands. His entire ranch was worth one thousand dollars, while his farming implements were valued at seventy-five dollars. His livestock herd was valued at three hundred sixty dollars. He estimated that all his farm production in 1879 was valued at six hundred dollars. He had three acres in a mown hayfield. He owned three mules, nine milk cows, and six cattle of other classes. Nine calves had been dropped on his place in the past year, and he had sold twelve living cattle. Six cattle had died, strayed, or been otherwise lost. He had produced one hundred pounds of butter in the past year. He owned fifteen hogs. His two-acre patch of sweet potatoes had produced two hundred bushels, which had a value of fifty cents per bushel.

Felix Mann of Precinct 1, Menard County, Texas told the 1890 military census taker that he had served in Co. K, 5th California Infantry from May 9, 1865 until May 9, 1868. He said he had been shot through the hand and foot, but he did not remember the dates. His name appears on a U. S. Army roll stating that he was discharged at Fort Harker, at Ellsworth, Kansas on May 9, 1868.

The census taker in 1900 found the family living in Precinct 1 of Tom Green County, Texas. All six of their living children were with the family. Three young men were also boarding with the family and were working for Mr. Mann.

On May 9, 1905, Mr. Mann filed an application for a federal pension based upon his Union service. It was supplemented in 1908 due to his age. His pension record confirms his 1925 death at San Angelo, Texas.

In 1910 the Manns were still living in Tom Green County. Three of their unmarried children were living with them... Clay, Fanny M., and Ona B. Mann. Their household also included a seventy-one-year-old German-born house servant named Clem Shackly.

In 1920 Felix R Mann headed a large extended family who lived at 2303 West 23rd Street in San Angelo. He was still working in a real estate office. Along with Mr. and Mrs. Mann, the family included their single son, Robert; their daughter, Ona, and her husband Rhoades Runkles; G. M. Mann, his wife Maddie, and their daughter Carcille?

An excellent account of Mr. Mann's life was printed in 1895 in the Historical and Biographical Record of the Cattle Industry and the Cattlemen of Texas, by James Cox. It was published by Woodward and Tiernan Printing Company of St. Louis, Missouri: *"To the majority of citizens of Menard County and to every inhabitant of the town of Menardville, the name of Felix Mann is synonymous with liberality, progress, and generosity. He is looked upon as having done more for his county and town than any one man, and is universally regarded as the young man's friend. His wealth and standing have always been used to give employment to those who desired it, in that part of the State. To show the regard in which he is held, it is said that if a stockman having cattle to sell is approached by a buyer and offered a price for his herd, he invariably remarks, "Oh, well, I will wait and see Felix Mann and then I'll talk to you."*

His father was a native of Tennessee, and, while he lived there, followed the universal pursuit of the State, viz. farming. He moved to Texas in 1855 and settled in Grayson County, near Sherman, where he resumed farming and carried it on for a short time, but soon went from Grayson to Tarrant County, locating at a point about twenty miles northeast of Fort Worth. He erected a steam mill here and engaged in stock raising on a small scale, and remained in Tarrant County until 1870, when he returned again to Grayson and resided there until 1884, then moved to Menard County, to be near his son. His marriage to Elizabeth Glover occurred in Tennessee, and five children were born to them, Felix our subject being the oldest. Both parents are still living in Menard County.

Felix Mann was born in Smith County, Tennessee in 1846, on the 23d day of October. He came with his parents to Texas in 1855, and lived with them until he had reached his seventeenth year. He celebrated this advanced age by running away from home and going to New Mexico, where he joined the California Volunteers, a military organization similar to the Texas Rangers, formed for the purpose of suppressing the Indians and other depredators. He followed this life for three years, and during that time had many exciting engagements with the Indians, the hottest of which occurred in 1867, on the Arkansas River. At this time he was under General Harney, and in the engagement that took place there were sixty whites against 300 savages. After the battle the results showed five whites killed, eight wounded, and fifty dead Indians.

On the expiration of his military service he went to Kansas and was living there during the cholera epidemic of 1867 when the town of Ellsworth was almost depopulated. In the following year, 1868, he made an extended visit to his father in Grayson County, Texas and in 1870 went to Menard County, where he commenced the career he has followed up with such pronounced and prominent success. On his arrival in this county his capital consisted of a horse and saddle, and about \$140 in cash. He was employed first by his cousin, William Mann, at \$25 per month as a cowboy. After working at this salary for a time he furnished his own horse and was employed at the advanced salary of \$60 per month. He worked faithfully and saved his wages, and it was not long before he purchased a half interest in his cousin's cattle and took charge of the entire ranch and herds. In 1871 he purchased his cousin's share outright, and then began to buy and

drive beeves for the New Orleans markets. This he followed for three years, shipping from Harrisburg. During this time also, he was supplying the packing houses at Calvert and Columbus with their beef cattle. For the four years that he was engaged in this business he purchased over \$80,000 worth of cattle and made a clear profit of \$25,000. He had done so well in the cattle business that in 1875 he sold out his entire ranch stock in Menard County and decided to retire from active work, but afterward changed his mind and is still engaged in the cattle industry. On his ranch he was never molested by the Indians, with the exception of one raid when they stole eighty-six head of his best horses.

His marriage took place in 1875, when he wedded Miss Fannie Sheen, of Menard County, and is now the father of six children: Nora, Clay, Walter, Arthur, May, and Ona. Two children beside the foregoing are deceased. The home in which he lives and which is made happy and brightened by the presence of his wife and children was among the first constructed in Menardville. The lumber for this house was hauled from San Antonio, a distance of 150 miles, and cost \$65 per thousand, delivered.

Mr. Mann's ranch is about 12,000 acres in extent. He is a large feeder and breeder of cattle and prefers the Hereford for stock purposes. He was one of the most active promoters of the present irrigation plant which surrounds Menardville, and which makes it possible for the farmers of that country to produce more prolific crops than any other part of the State. This irrigation plant waters about 4,000 acres, and the land is sub-divided into small farms, while the course of the main canal is so thickly studded with cottages that it was the appearance of a thriving village for miles. Two bales of cotton and three tons of hay to the acre are ordinarily produced on this irrigated land. It is particularly interesting to Mr. Mann to contrast the present state of that country with its condition when he first came to Menard County with old John Chisum. At that time there was not a house between the present townsite of Menardville and Camp Colorado, a distance of sixty-five miles, while the nearest railroad was at Austin, Texas."

Felix's wife, Fannie Fern Mann died at her residence at 2303 Chadbourne Street in San Angelo of apoplexy and chronic nephritis at 7 p.m. on December 17, 1920. She was buried in December 20 in Fairmount Cemetery in San Angelo.

Mr. Mann died of nephritis at 1:30 p.m. on October 14, 1925 at his home at 2303 North Chadbourne in San Angelo, Texas. He was buried on October 16 in Fairmount Cemetery.

An extensive obituary appeared on the front page of the Dallas Morning News on October 15, 1925: *"Death Claims Felix Mann, 79. Was One of Patriarchs of Cattle Industry in Texas. San Angelo, Texas, Oct. 15—Death early Wednesday afternoon claimed one of the patriarchs of the cattle business in Texas—Felix Mann, 79 years old, for a quarter century a resident of San Angelo and for fifty-five years identified with the industry. The pioneer Indian fighter and trail driver and Union veteran of the Civil War had been actively engaged in the live stock commission business with his son, Walter Mann, until fatally stricken a few days ago. Since coming here from Menard County in 1900, he had handled an average of 10,000 to 15,000 head of livestock annually.*

Burial will be made here when relatives arrive. Surviving are three sons, Walter Mann of San Angelo, Clay and Arthur Mann of Los Angeles, and three daughters, Mrs. E.K. Tillman of Fort

Worth, Mrs. May Farley of Brawley, Cal., and Mrs. Rhodes Runkles of San Angelo. All are children by Mr. Mann's first wife, who died here in December, 1920. Two years ago Mr. Mann married Mrs. Jewel Dee Vaughn of this city, from whom he was separated at the time of this death.

A picturesque figure, Mr. Mann had a colorful career. Born in Smith County, Tennessee, he moved with his parents to Texas in 1855, settling in Tarrant County when Birdville was the county seat and Fort Worth was an army post. The father, a miller, opposed secession and prevailed upon his son when 18 years old, in April, 1864, to go to New Mexico. There Felix Mann enlisted in the Union army mainly for adventure and because he was a good horseman and a crack shot and was offered a bonus. He did scout duty in Western States and after the war closed was among soldiers who guarded the builders of the Union Pacific Railroad.

Mr. Mann had many brushes with the Sioux and Cheyennes and was with Gen. Harvey at Medicine Lodge in 1867, when peace was signed with the Indians. Fifteen thousand red men, some of whom had participated in the massacre of Custer's band, were at the parley.

Returning home, Mr. Mann found his father penniless and frequently victimized by guerillas. Mr. Mann went on several cattle drives from Texas to Kansas, often trailing 15,000 animals. Joining a brother in Coleman County, he later moved to Menard County, and then to Kimball County. He embarked on the cattle business when there were only three other ranches in the county and not a settlement.

Mr. Mann ranched in Menard County thirty years before moving here in 1900."

The following is a complete list of the eight Mann children. It was composed from Texas vital statistics records, headstones, census records, printed biographical material, and family material placed at ancestry.com.

Nora Mann was born July 3, 1876. She was married to Edward K. Tillman, with whom she lived in 1930 in Fort Worth. He worked as a livestock agent for the railroad. She died at 8:30 a. m. on October 18, 1966 at the Autumn Leaf Lodge in Fort Worth, Texas. Her last permanent home was at Rt. 3, Box 319 at Grapevine, Tarrant County, Texas. She was buried in Greenwood Memorial Park in Fort Worth.

Timothy Clay Mann was born February 17, 1878. He was married to Ruby Mason Smith about 1919. He died at Rest Haven Rest Home in San Angelo at 5:08 p.m. on July 12, 1956. He was a retired commission salesman. He was buried two days later in Fairmount Cemetery. His last permanent address was 2416 Abilene Street in San Angelo.

Felix Arthur Mann was born October 3, 1882. He worked for many years in the real estate business. He died at his residence in the Cactus Hotel in San Angelo at 2:30 a.m. on April 20, 1941. He was buried on April 23 in Fairmount Cemetery.

The two Mann children who died young lie buried inside an ornate iron fence in Menard, Menard County in Pioneer Rest Cemetery. They were Callie Mann (June 1, 1884-December 18, 1890) and Birdie Mann (May 4, 1886-January 21, 1891).

J. Walter Mann was born April 2, 1879. He worked for many years in the commission business selling livestock and ranches. He died at 11:45 a.m. on October 1, 1935 at the R.S. and W. Clinic in San Angelo. His last permanent address was 309 South Jackson Street in San Angelo. He was buried in Fairmount Cemetery. Rhodes R. Runkles of San Angelo was the informant.

Mardge Mae Mann was born May 13, 1889. She was married to a Mr. Frawley and was living in Brawley, California when her father died. She died at 8:15 a. m. on January 29, 1966 at her home in the Paramount Hotel at 220 Main Street in Ranger, Eastland County, Texas. She was buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Ranger, Texas.

Ona Mann was born July 29, 1892. She married Rhodes Robert Runkles (1891-1970). She died February 13, 1990 at Marfa in Presidio County, Texas, and was buried in Fairmount Cemetery in San Angelo.