

Robert Thomas Fleming and Mary Marie Gilliam

Fleming was born 1836 in St. Clair, IL and died 1883 in Grayson Co., TX. Robert was the youngest son of Robert Fleming, Sr., and Mary Gourley.

According to a family history written by Zora Fleming Youree (transcribed to disk by Aulena Searce Gibson):

“Robert Thomas and his brother William came to Fannin Co. (now Grayson Co. TX) about 1853 from St. Clair Co., IL when R. T. was 17. Louisa and her husband Riley Chaffin and Dupuy family were also traveling with them. Brothers George and Fielder came to TX later. Fielder died early and was buried south of the house. Fielder had a son Ike [Isaac Newton Fleming] living in Aurora, MO.”

R. T. married Mary Marie Gilliam on 10 Feb 1859 in Grayson Co., TX. Mary, born in 1840 in MO, was the daughter of John E. Gilliam and Nancy C. Wallace, formerly of Scott Co., MO.

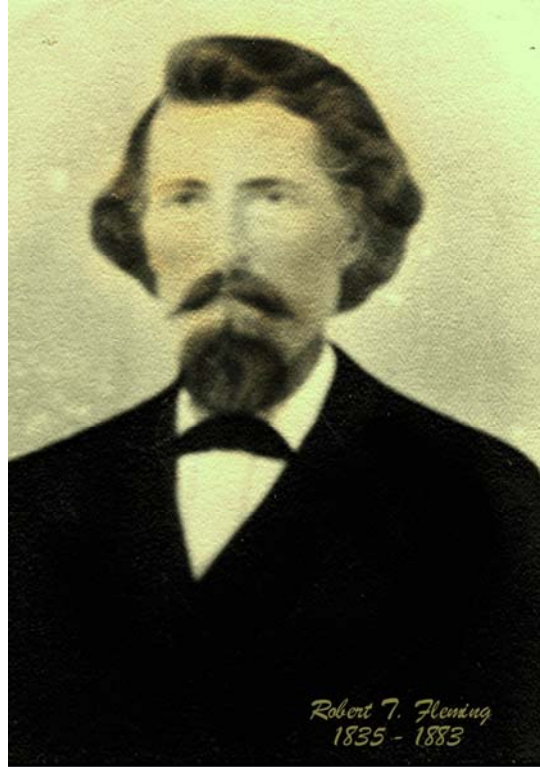


Photo courtesy of Joanne Harrison Heatley

R. T. and Mary had 5 children:

- ♦ William Archie Fleming (1860-1929), who married Lucinda Lee Ramsey 6 Nov 1884 in Grayson Co., TX
- ♦ John Thomas (Tom) Fleming (1862-Unknown), who married M. Fleming
- ♦ Mary Lucinda (Reny) Fleming, (1866-1896), who married Jefferson Davis Dixon
- ♦ Walter Henry Fleming (1867-1945), who married Minnie Bell Johnson 20 Aug 1893 in Bonham, Fannin Co., TX.
- ♦ Lizzie Fleming (1869-1888) who died at age 19, unmarried and without issue

The Flemings were members of the Virginia Methodist Church, which was founded in 1837 by early settlers. According to the Texas Historical Marker posted in front of the sanctuary, the Virginia Methodist Church is the oldest Methodist church in continuous service in North Texas.



According to its history posted on the church website (<http://www.gb-gm-umc.org/virginiapoint/history.html>), a small group of pioneer families came from Virginia to Fort Warren in 1834. They moved northwestward to an area 12 miles from what is now known as Denison. The settlement was called Warren. This area was selected because the land was cheap, the Indians were not too hostile and the nearby fort offered protection and a source of supplies. Land was bought from the few cattlemen who inhabited the area. The settlers began clearing the land and building their homes. The settlement eventually became known as Virginia Point because the surrounding landscape reminded the Virginians of their native homeland.



A church/school was built across Sandy Creek, directly west of the existing church. The structure and the seats were made from hand-hewn logs and the floor was of the earth. The church records reflect that Records show that John B. Denton delivered the first sermon in 1837. Denton was a pioneer circuit preacher, lawyer, and Texas leader.

Note: Denton was killed in an Indian battle in 1841, while serving as chaplain in Brig. Gen. Edward H. Tarrant's Fourth Brigade, TX Militia. Denton County and the city of Denton were named in his honor (www.dentoncounty.com/dentondays).

According to the church history, in 1844, soldiers passing through the area asked to spend the night in the building because one of them was very ill. The man died and was buried near the church. This is believed to be the first burial in the Virginia Point Cemetery. When it was learned that the man died from small pox, the settlers burned the structure from fear of an epidemic. Church services were then held in member's homes until the Illinois School was built. This log structure was located about three miles west of the original church building.

In 1860, a location was selected for the construction of a new church building. Andy B. Youree and his wife, Athalia, sold two acres of land to the church trustees for the sum of \$1. The building committee consisted of E.H. Holland, H.A. Henry, B.F. Williams, John Gilliam, J.D. Pritchett, Andy B. Youree and Rev. S. J. Spotts. Rev. Spotts was one of the first pastors of the new church.

The church was built of lumber from a sawmill in Jefferson, Texas. R.T. Fleming and Riley Chaffin hauled the lumber by ox-teams. The oak logs used in the foundation were from the largest oak trees available in the Red River bottom.



The Virginia Point Cemetery is adjacent to the church. Many early settlers, including Robert T. Fleming and Mary Gilliam Fleming Pierce are buried there.

Peter Turner, a local carpenter, supervised the construction and was assisted by members of the church. Mr. Turner also built a pulpit and straight back pews of pinewood. The pulpit and a few of the pews are still in use.



The church has a single aisle down the middle, with wooden pews on both sides.

The church history also notes that that building is still used for services today. Minor changes have been made through the years for human comfort and structural up-keep. An annex building was added next to the church in 1963. In 1965, the church was honored with a Texas Historical Marker for being the oldest church in Fannin County. Most recently, Marie Youree donated stained glass windows in remembrance of her husband, Bill Youree, who died in 1994. He was the great grandson of William Newton Youree and Anna E. Pritchett.

On 1 Mar 1862 in Bonham, TX, Robert Fleming and Riley Chaffin enlisted as privates in the Company E, 34th Cavalry of Texas (also known as 2nd Regiment Texas Partisan Rangers and Alexander's Regiment Texas Cavalry). According to Confederate muster records obtained by Aulena Searce Gibson, Robert was enlisted by Captain J. R. Russell for 3 years.

Figure: Confederate 34 Cav. Texas Company Muster Roll

(Confederate.) 34 Cav. Texas.		(Confederate.) 34 Cav. Texas.	
<i>* Robert T. Fleming</i> Pvt., Co. E, 2 Reg't Texas Partisan Rangers.		<i>R. T. Fleming</i> Pvt., Co. E, { Alexander's Regiment, Dismounted Cavalry.	
Appears on Company Muster Roll of the organization named above, for <i>Feb. 28 to June 30</i> , 1863.		Appears on Company Muster Roll of the organization named above, for <i>Jan. & Feb.</i> , 1864.	
Enlisted: When <i>Mar. 1</i> , 1862.		Joined for duty and enrolled: When <i>Mar. 1</i> , 1862.	
Where <i>Bonham</i> .		Where <i>Bonham, Texas</i> .	
By whom <i>Capt. J. R. Russell</i> .		By whom <i>Capt. J. R. Russell</i> .	
Period <i>3 years</i> .		Period <i>3 years</i> .	
Last paid: By whom <i>Capt. Baughman</i> .		Last paid: By whom <i>Capt. Evans</i> .	
To what time <i>Feb. 28</i> , 1863.		To what time <i>Aug. 31</i> , 1863.	
Present or absent <i>Present</i> .		Remarks:	
Remarks:		Remarks:	
<i>* Name appears in column of names present as R. T. Fleming.</i>		Remarks:	
<small>The 34th Regiment Texas Cavalry (also known as the 2d Regiment Texas Partisan Rangers and as Alexander's Regiment Texas Cavalry) was organized April 17, 1862, and re-organized June 27, 1862.</small>		<small>The 34th Regiment Texas Cavalry (also known as the 2d Regiment Texas Partisan Rangers and as Alexander's Regiment Texas Cavalry) was organized April 17, 1862, and re-organized June 27, 1862.</small>	
Book mark:		Book mark:	
<i>N. H. Bozarth</i> <small>Copyist.</small>		<i>N. H. Bozarth</i> <small>Copyist.</small>	

In 1864, the 34th Cavalry of Texas engaged Union forces at Yellow Bayou, Bayou de Glaze, Norwood's Plantation (Old Oaks) near New Orleans, LA. Robert was wounded in a battle. In her narrative about the R. T. Fleming family history, Zora Fleming Youree wrote: "Our Grandfather Fleming was wounded in a battle in the Civil War near Mansfield LA, having on a heavy homespun shirt being so strong the musket ball and shirt went into the lung." According to Zora, the weight of the fabric kept the musket ball from penetrating his lung, allowing him to pull out the bullet along with the fabric.

According to a Roll of Prisoners dated 21 May 1864, R. T. was captured by Union forces near Yellow Bayou, LA on May 18, 1864. The Union forces were under the command of Brig. General Jos. A. Mower. He remained a prisoner of war until 22 Jul 1864 when he was exchanged at Red River Landing. (Record obtained by Aulena Scearce Gibson.)

Figure: Roll of Prisoners of War at New Orleans, LA

(Confederate.)		(Confederate.)	
F		F	
T		T	
<p><i>R. T. Fleming</i> Capt Alex's Texas Regt</p>		<p><i>R. T. Fleming</i> Capt Alex's Tex Regt</p>	
<p>Appears on a Roll of Prisoners of War at New Orleans, La. Roll dated Office of Commissary of Prisoners, Dept. of the Gulf, New Orleans, La., July 7, 1864.</p>		<p>Appears on a Roll of Prisoners of War transferred from New Orleans, La., and exchanged at Red River Landing, July 22, 1864. Roll dated Office Commissary of Prisoners, Dept. of the Gulf, N. Orleans, La., July 31, 1864.</p>	
<p>Where captured <i>Near Yellow Bayou</i> When captured <i>May 18</i>, 1864. Remarks :</p>		<p>Where captured <i>Yellow Bayou</i> When captured <i>May 18</i>, 1864. Remarks :</p>	
<p>Number of roll: 48; sheet <i>10</i> (639b) <i>A. Locke</i> Copyist</p>		<p>Number of roll: 54; sheet <i>10</i> (639b) <i>A. Locke</i> Copyist</p>	

After his release in 1864, R. T. returned home to his family at Virginia Point, TX in ill health due to his musket wound, which had not fully healed. Zora Fleming Youree wrote: “The doctors told him if he's go to a warm climate during winter maybe he'd get over it so Papa [William Archie Fleming] equipped a wagon with bed and camping equipment and went to San Marcos, Texas being a month on the road and stayed 3 months to no avail. His half sister Aunt Sarah [Dupuy] Outhouse lived there.”

Sarah Elizabeth Dupuy, born 1 Apr 1845 in St. Clair Co., IL, was the daughter of William Dupuy, Mary Fleming's second husband and R. T.'s stepfather. Research shows that Sarah Dupuy married Jefferson Davis Outhouse about 1860.



Sarah Outhouse with daughters and granddaughter

Sarah Outhouse photos courtesy
of Weldon Fleming



Sarah Outhouse with child unknown

Robert stayed with Sarah Outhouse for three months but never fully recovered and returned home to Virginia Point. He died of complications of his war injury in 1883 at age 47.

R. T. is buried in the Virginia Point Cemetery, adjacent to the Virginia Point Methodist Church in Grayson Co., TX.

According to Aulena Searce Gibson family research, descendants of R. T applied for and received a headstone for his grave at Virginia Point Cemetery and it was erected in the fall of 1976.

The inscription on his marker reads: “R T Fleming PVT CO E 34 Texas Cav Confederate States Army 1836-1883.”



After Robert’s death, on 17 Oct 1886 Mary married George W. Pierce. In an Affidavit of Heirship, filed 19 Mar 1974 in Grayson Co., TX by Bob W. Fleming, great grandson of R. T. Fleming: “He [R. T.] died intestate, sometime prior to the year 1885. After his death, the said Mary M. Fleming married G. W. Pierce, also known as George Pierce.”



Mary died 14 Jul 1907 and is buried in the Virginia Point Cemetery.

The inscription on her marker reads: “Grandmother Mary Fleming Pierce 1840-1907”.

Descendants of Robert Thomas Fleming

Robert Thomas Fleming
b. 1836
d. 1883

Mary Marie Gilliam
b. 1840
m. 1859
d. 1907

William Archie Fleming
b. 1860
d. 1928

John Thomas Fleming
b. 1862

Mary Lucinda Fleming
b. 1866
d. 1896

Walter Henry Fleming
b. 1867
d. 1945

Lizzie Fleming
b. 1869
d. 1888

Martha Elizabeth Fleming
b. 1875