

A Brief History of the
Garrett and Lydia [Massey] Bourland Family

By

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[original manuscript mimeographed]
[current transcription - Elaine M. Gibson]

PREFACE

I have attempted to write a brief history of the Bourland family. I am sure that it contains some inaccuracies, but as a whole, I believe that it is a fairly accurate account. Most of it is written from memory, of stories and events that were told to me thirty-five or forty years ago. I have always been blessed with a good memory, especially for dates and specific events -- "no brag, just fact."

Comments concerning the personality of the Bourland children were, of course, my own opinion. Some one else who knew them might have had a different opinion.

This family history was written in July 1969. By the time it appears in print some of the facts and figures might have changed slightly.

I did not attempt to name or write about the Bourland great grandchildren, great great grandchildren, or great great great grandchildren. Sometime in the future, I hope that some member of the family will write a supplement to this family history, giving information about these younger generations.

2002: It is my attempt to provide the details and continuation of this family history. Added insights, dates, and facts will appear in [] brackets or in footnotes.

Elaine M. Gibson

This is a preliminary copy. It is not the final version: 23 Feb 2002

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE
GARRETT AND LYDIA BOURLAND FAMILY

By Travis L. Massey, grandson

Garrett Bourland was born in the hilly timbered country of northwest Alabama about the year 1848. [Born 30 Aug 1849].

His wife Lydia was born in the same section¹ a year or so later. [Lydia Catherine Massey, daughter of Hezekiah and Margaret Bonds Massey, b. 3 Jan 1851 Franklin Co. AL; d. 1895 TN.]

Garrett was not in the army during The War Between the States, as he was only a teenager at the time. However, he was the man of the family during those years, as his father was away fighting for the Confederacy. [J.W. Bourland, Civil War record.]

I believe that his father was captured during the war and spent some time as a prisoner of the Union Army. [Civil War Record of J.W. Bourland -- See Appendix - II]

Garrett and Lydia were married in the early 1870's and settled down near their parents to farm and rear a family.[wedding date²]

By the early 1880's Garrett and Lydia were the parents of five small children: Doc, Maudie, Andy, Evelena, and Barney. Life was difficult during these Reconstruction years following the Civil War in Alabama, as it was in all sections of the Old South. It was hard to make a living farming the stony hilly soil of that section of Alabama [Belle Green, Alabama³]. Garrett began to look around for a new location for his family. He finally decided on the Tennessee Valley in southwestern Tennessee.⁴

¹ In census records, Massey is counted with the Nelsonville Post Office. In the same section, J.W. Bourland (46), wife Elizabeth (43), Garrett C. (20) and other children. See Appendix I.

² Court house records for Franklin County were destroyed in fire, 1890.

³ Andy Bourland's obituary named Belle Green, Alabama as his place of birth.

⁴ Bourlands had been living in Hardin Co. TN for many years and going back and forth between Hardin Co. TN and Franklin Co. Alabama. {His grandfather was in Hardin Co. at this time.}

The move was made to Tennessee during the early 1880's. Whether they made the trip in a wagon or a two-wheeled cart, I do not know. Neither do I know how long it took to make the trip, but probably several days. Today the trip could be made by automobile in two hours. The family settled at Count's Town, [Counce] near the Tennessee River.

There is no doubt that the Bourlands had found a better farming country than they had left. My wife [Ruth Massey] and I accompanied by my parents [Lee Massey and Belvie Bourland Massey] visited this part of the country in 1947; it is a beautiful section. The old Bourland place was only a short distance from the Pickwick Dam that spans the Tennessee River. The Pickwick Dam was one of a series of dams built by the Tennessee Valley Authority during Franklin Roosevelt's administration. The famous Shiloh Battlefield was only a few miles away. The battle of Shiloh was one of the major battles of the Civil War.

As far as I know, the next few years were fairly uneventful ones for the family. Two more children, Belvie and Mamie, were born during these years, but in 1895 tragedy struck. Lydia Bourland died leaving several small children. Garrett married again a year or so later. I do not have much information about this second wife. I know that her first name was Frank. [Frances....] My mother told me that she was always good to the children but she was not too "sharp."

Although this part of Tennessee [Hardin County] was a better farming section than Alabama, it also had some hazards. Every few years the mighty Tennessee River would go on a rampage. If this happened at the wrong season of the year, crops would be ruined. I do not know how many times this happened to the Bourland family, but the last time was in the late summer of 1901. At this time Garrett Bourland looked at his flooded fields, with all of his crop under water, and said, "This is it, I will never plant another crop in this country. We're going to Texas."

Garrett's oldest daughter, Maudie and her husband C.W. Pyron, had already moved to Texas. I believe that his oldest son Doc [Hezekiah Theophilus Bourland], was also living in Texas, or had spent some time there. The older children were all grown by this time, and some of them were married. One married daughter, Evelena, her husband Charlie White, and infant daughter Minnie moved to Texas with the family. The trip was made by train.

The family settled near Covington, Texas in Hill County. Garrett lived in the Covington and Itasca area for the rest of his life, except for a short period of time when he lived at Hubbard, in the South part of the country.

Garrett Bourland had some relatives, also named Bourland, who lived in the Itasca section. Some of them still live there, but just what the relationship is to our family, I'm not sure. I remember that he had a younger brother, Uncle Cal Bourland, who lived for many years at Whitney, Texas. We used to see this branch of the family occasionally. Uncle Cal died about 1930.

Garrett was a deeply religious man. He was a member of the Freewill Baptist Church. This church believed in washing each others feet, and often had a "foot washing" in connection with Church services. This church gradually passed out of existence in the Itasca section and Garrett joined the Methodist Church.

At one time, after the move to Texas, Garrett become deeply interested in the Holiness Church, and was considering joining that group. He sat up late at night reading the Church literature. He was agreeing with everything he read until he came to the part about it being a sin to use tobacco. At that point, he laid the literature aside, and announced that he thought that they were a little off on that belief. This ended his association with the Holiness Church.

Garrett Bourland suffered a stroke when he was sixty-five years of age and was practically helpless the rest of his life. His second wife had already passed on, so his children who lived in the Itasca section took turns taking care of him. Of course, nursing homes were unheard of at that time. I was a baby during part of the time my parents were responsible for him. My mother said that he would look at me, almost in tears, and say, "I know that child has the biggest head I ever saw."

Death came to Garrett Bourland in 1916 [20 Nov] when he was sixty-eight years old.⁵

⁵ Buried in Itasca Cemetery, Itasca Texas.

The Bourland Children

1. Hezekiah Theophilus "Doc" Bourland
2. Maudie Bourland
3. William Andrew "Andy" Bourland
4. Evelena Bourland
5. Barney Clarence Bourland
6. Belvie Bourland
7. Mamie Bourland

1. Hezekiah Theophilus Bourland

[b. 19 Sep 1873 AL d. 20 Feb 1936 TX]

Hezekiah Theophilus Bourland was the first born of the Bourland children. I do not know who gave him the name "Doc" but I certainly think it was a good idea.

Uncle Doc did not marry until he was about forty years old. He went back to Tennessee to find his bride. He married Fannie Robert[s] and brought her back to Texas. Two years later, she died during childbirth and their infant daughter was born dead. [Both are buried together in Itasca Cemetery.] He never remarried.

Uncle Doc retired at an early age and rented his farms, as he was financially independent.

Uncle Doc usually judged a woman just like he did a mule, by the amount of farm work she could do. He often remarked about some neighbor having such a good wife, because she could stay up with him all day chopping cotton.

After he retired, he made one or two trips each year back to Tennessee. He seemed to have more of an attachment for the old home than any of the other children.

As a boy, I spent many hours with Uncle Doc and his sister, Aunt Maudie Pyron. He lived in her home during the last years of his life, as he was a victim of a stroke, just as his father had been. During these visits he and Aunt Maudie talked freely of the days of their youth, and the old home in Tennessee. I have often wished that I had taken some notes, but I never wrote anything down.

Uncle Doc died in 1936 at the age of sixty-two. He left his property to his surviving brothers and sisters.

2. Maudie E. Bourland

[b. 13 Dec 1874 AL d. 26 Apr 1946 TX]

Maudie was the second child born to the Bourland family, and the oldest girl. She married Charles Wesley Pyron.

The younger generation of the family who never had the opportunity to know Aunt Maudie missed a real treat. She was a wonderful person. She could talk to a child, teenager, or adult with equal ease. She seldom ever left her home but was always encouraging everyone to come to see her. I never visited her, even as a child, when she did not stop whatever she was doing and sit down and talk to me. She was a good wife and mother, who lived for her family.

Aunt Maudie experienced tragedy during her lifetime. Three of her six children died, one in infancy, and two of them after they became adults. In spite of all her trouble, she always maintained a wholesome outlook on life. She died in 1946 at the age of seventy-one.

3. William Andrew Bourland

[b 28 Feb 1880 AL d. 2 Sep 1931 AK]

William Andrew Bourland married Barr[i]ett [Victoria] Hardin.[b. 6 Dec 1882 TN; d. 26 Sep 1957 TX] She was also a native of Tennessee.

Uncle Andy was often referred to "as the best looking one of the Bourlands." He was a handsome man and a great favorite of the children in the family.

Uncle Andy spent part of his adult life as a farmer near Itasca, but he also lived in several different sections of Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. He lived an interesting life, engaging in several different lines of work. During World War I he volunteered for service, although he would never have been called, due to his age and family responsibilities. He was also a Peace Officer at various times during his life.

At the time of his death in 1931, he was serving as a Police Captain in Ft. Smith, Arkansas. He was shot and killed by three men who had robbed a filling station. He was described by his fellow members of the Police Force as being a fearless lawman.

Uncle Andy's youngest son, Douglas Bourland and I were visiting him at the time of his death. I shall never forget the night he was killed; it was a sad experience for a teenage boy who knew nothing of death by violence. From that day until this, I have been strong for law and order.

Uncle Andy was buried in the National Cemetery at Ft. Smith. He was the first one of the Bourland children to die.

4. Evelena Bourland

[b. 13 Aug 1883 d. 24 May 1952 TX]

Evelena Bourland married Charley White in Tennessee before the family moved to Texas.

I never heard anyone call Aunt Evelena by her real name. All of her brothers and sisters called her Ev and her nieces and nephews called her Aunt Lena.

Aunt Lena was a large, big framed woman who had a good sense of humor. She was always saying funny things and was fun to be around. She used many amusing expressions that became a part of her vocabulary. Although she was usually happy and gay, there was another side of her personality. At times she was sad, and often worried about her family. She had a deep love for her children and brothers and sisters. She borrowed a lot of trouble about things that never happened, but it was just her nature.

Aunt Lena died in 1952 at the age of sixty-nine.

5. Barney Clarence Bourland

[b. 20 Aug 1884 d. 17 Sep 1948 TX]

Barney Clarence Bourland married Letha Bolton, a Texan [from Franklin Co. Alabama]. Uncle Barney was a good businessman and was financially successful in farming, the cottonseed business, and real estate. In the early 1920's he started buying and selling land in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, a subtropical irrigated section in the southern tip of Texas. About 1936 he moved to that section settling in Edinburg and latter moving to McAllen, however, he always spent his summers in Itasca. During the years that followed, he continued to buy and sell property, and at the time of his death had considerable holding in that area.

Uncle Barney and Aunt Letha had the misfortune of losing all three of their children at an early age.

Uncle Barney, like his father, was deeply religious. He was a good citizen who freely donated his time and resources to worthwhile religious and charitable organizations.

Uncle Barney died in 1948 at the age of 64.

6. Belvie Bourland

[b. 1 Nov 1888 TN d.15 Oct 1962 TX]

Belvie Bourland married Lee Massey [6 Jan 1909] who was born and reared in Alabama but came to Texas in 1903.⁶ She was the next to youngest Bourland child.

Mother loved people and enjoyed being with them. She also enjoyed doing nice things for people, and was always doing favors for friends and relatives.

She was very sensitive about her age, and said that she quit having birthdays at age forty. About three years before her death, she and Dad had a fiftieth wedding anniversary coming up. I tried to get them to observe it with an "Open House" or some other suitable event. Dad was willing but she would have no part of it. She said that she did not want anyone to know that she was old enough to have been married for fifth years.

Although Mother told me some things concerning the Bourland family, she was always too interested in the present to spend much time talking about the past.

Mother died in 1962, just fifteen days before her seventy-fourth birthday.

7. Mamie Bourland

[b. 1890 d. 1972]

Mamie Bourland married Walter Linn, a native of Texas. She was the youngest Bourland child and the only one who is still living.

⁶ Lee Massey was Belvie Bourland's first cousin. His father, Andrew Jackson Massey was brother to Lydia Massey Bourland, Belvie's mother.

Aunt Mamie and Uncle Walter operated a bakery in several Texas towns before settling at Clifton, where they lived for many years. A grocery store was eventually added to the bakery.

Aunt Mamie was the business woman of the family and worked full time in the operation of the business.

Aunt Mamie and Uncle Walter moved to Waco after retirement. Uncle Walter died in June 1969 and Aunt Mamie has continued to reside in Waco.

There is only one of the original Bourland children in-laws still living, Lee Massey (Belvie Bourland's husband) of Elsa, Texas. He is eighty-nine years old.

The Bourland children, a "close knit" group, shared each other's troubles and successes. They enjoyed being together and visited frequently.

The family's life span extended from the last quarter of the nineteenth century until the present time in the twentieth century, almost one hundred years. They were all born and reared in rural America, but the younger ones lived to see the passing of rural America and the emergence of urban America, with its many changes in our way of life.

The Bourland children, a typical American family, experienced an average amount of joy and sorrow in their lives. They were hard working, God fearing, honest people --the kind that made this country great. All of them wanted a better life for their children than they had had for themselves.

The Bourland Grandchildren

There were twenty-one Bourland grandchildren. Fourteen of them lived to be adults, six died in infancy, and one in childhood. Five died after they were adults, and nine are still living at the present.

The Bourland grandchildren and their parents are as follows: [1969]

Doc Bourland⁷ m. Fannie Roberts

1. Baby girl - deceased - not named

Maudie Bourland m. Wesley Pyron

1. Elsie Pyron Young, (oldest grandchild) died in 1929
2. Jennie Pyron Alverson (oldest living grandchild) retired - lives in Itasca.
3. Charles Pyron - died in 1916
4. Marcus Homer Pyron - died in infancy
5. Decie Pyron Davis - lives at Pearland, Texas
6. Daisy Pyron Underwood - retired - lives in Itasca.

Andy Bourland⁸ m. Barriett Hardin

1. [William] Harvey Bourland m. Ida Driver - retired - lives at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
2. Baby boy (twin) deceased, not named.
3. Baby boy (twin) deceased, not named.
4. [James] Clyde Bourland, died in 1963.
5. [John] Douglas Bourland, retired farmer, lives at Edcouch, Texas.
6. [Katie] Maydelle Bourland Herron, died in 1965.

Evelena Bourland m. Charley White

1. Minnie White Beard [m. Ira Beard] retired - lives in Itasca.
2. Veda White Bailey - died in 1965
3. Mamie White Odom - lives at Dallas, works for JC Penny Co.

Barney Bourland⁹ m. Letha Bolton¹⁰

1. May Belle Bourland - died in infancy
2. Elmer Bourland - died in 1925 (age eleven)
3. Baby girl - deceased - not named (youngest grandchild)

Belvie Bourland m. Lee Massey

⁷ Hezekiah Theophilus Bourland, named for his maternal grandfather.

⁸ William Andrew Bourland

⁹ Barney Clarence Bourland

¹⁰ Letha Bolton's family was from the same area of Alabama. She is buried in Alabama near the Masseys.

1. Travis L. Massey - lives at Elsa, Texas - Principal Edcouch Elementary School.

Mamie Bourland m. Walter Linn

1. Lurline Linn Downing - lives at Sacramento, California, teaches school.

According to my count there were forty-four great grandchildren with only two deceased. I would not attempt to count the number of great great grandchildren, as some of the Bourland grandchildren are not great grandparents - six generations of the Bourland family. Again I do not know how many are in the sixth generation. I know of about eight but I am sure there are more.

Appendix I

1870 Census Alabama Franklin Co. Nelsonville PO p. 541

Name	Age	Place of birth
J.W Bourland	46	Alabama
Elizabeth	43	Alabama
Garrett C	20	Alabama
Martha C.	18	Alabama
Luiza C	16	Mississippi
William C	13	Mississippi
Mary E	11	Mississippi
Carroll (M)	9	Mississippi
Amanda A	7	Alabama

1870 Census Alabama Franklin Co. Nelsonville PO p. 540

Massey, Hezekiah	47	North Carolina
Margaret	42	Alabama
Lydia C.	19	Ala
William F	17	Ala
Andrew Jackson	17	Ala
David C	15	Ala
Margaret O	13	"
Nathan F	11	"
Hezekiah H	9	"
Saffronia A	7	"
Bejamin F	3	"

1870 Census Alabama Franklin Co. Nelsonville PO

Bourland, J. H.	23	Ala
Cynthia	24	Ala

Appendix II

Civil War Records:

Borland J. W. Co. B 46 Mississippi Infantry. Private Private
Confederate
Co. B, Senatobia Invincibles

The regiment was organized at Oxford, May 14, 1862. By order of General Beauregard, commanding at Corinth, they moved to Grenada June 12, and there

received orders to proceed to Richmond. July 25 General Lee wrote to the President that it was his intention, as soon as the Forty-second Regiment, lately arrived in Richmond, could be withdrawn from the city, to assign it to Whiting's Brigade.

The regiment, over 1,000 strong, arrived at Richmond July 3, and was in camp of instruction near the city until November 15, 1862, when Major Feehey, and four companies, were sent to Fredericksburg, where they were on duty guarding the river fords for three days and nights alone, except for one battery and a small body of artillery, against the advance of Burnside's Army, which crossed and made a desperate attempt to carry the heights after Lee had come up and occupied them in December, November 22 they returned to Richmond. The regiment meanwhile had been assigned to the new Mississippi Brigade formed under the command of General Joseph R. Davis. December 13 they were ordered to Goldsboro, N. C., in which region they did some campaigning until ordered early in the spring to southeast Virginia, where they took part in the siege of Suffolk by General Longstreet, an affair of skirmishers and heavy artillery mainly. June 2, 1863, the regiment was ordered to Richmond, and within a week they were at Fredericksburg, where the brigade was assigned to Heth's Division of A. P. Hill's Corps.

July 1, 1863, with the main body of Lee's Army beyond South Mountain, Heth's Division, under command of General Davis, was ordered to Gettysburg, where the presence of Federal troops was reported. The brigades of Davis and Orcher were sent in advance, and within a mile of Gettysburg encountered the enemy in strength, also advancing. A line of battle was formed, with the Forty-second on the right. The fight was for possession of the hills west of Gettysburg, which General Lee occupied on the second and third. Davis' Brigade met with desperate resistance and the loss was very heavy. Of the nine field officers present, only two escaped unhurt. Lieutenant-Colonel Moseley and Major Feeney were severely wounded. The Forty-second took 150 prisoners. In the battle of the third, the brigade took part in the famous charge up the slope of Cemetery hill, on the left of Pickett's division. The whole division, under Pettigrew, moved steadily on, closing up the ranks as they were thinned by the storm of shot and shell, and gained the stone wall behind which the opposing infantry was posted. But there the brigade was stopped and almost destroyed. The casualties of the Forty-second were reported as 32 killed, 170 wounded, A considerable number, including the severely wounded, were made prisoners. The final statements show 62 killed and mortally wounded at Gettysburg; 13 died as prisoners not long after the battle.

The regiment was engaged in the battle of Bristoe Station, October 14, 1863, and lost 6 killed and 25 wounded, the main part of the casualties of the brigade. The regiment went into battle in the Wilderness May 5, 1864, and shared the gallant record of the brigade under Colonel Stone that day and the next. On this bloody field Colonel Feeney was killed and Lieutenant Colonel Nelson and Adjutant Carr wounded. The regiment was in battle near Sportsylvania Courthouse May 10 and 12, and at Hanover Junction May 23, with a total loss in these May battles of 15 killed, 95 wounded and 9 missing. They were in battle at Cold Harbor June 2 and 3, and in June took position on the Petersburg lines.

August 18, 19, A. P. Hill attacked the Federals at Reams' Station, on the Weldon Railroad, with the brigades of Davis and Walker under Heth, the brigades of Colquitt, Clingman and Mahone, under Mahone, and three batteries, under Colonel Pegram, and captured 2,100 prisoners, 12 flags, 9 cannon. The other brigades were at night ordered back inside the lines, and Davis and Walker left to hold the advantage gained. In this battle the regiment served with honor and lost 8 killed and wounded. In the battle of Jones' Farm, October 2, 3, the loss was 8 wounded and missing, and they were again engaged at Hatcher's Run late in October, 1864. In the latter part of February, 1865, Col. A. M. Nelson was in command of the brigade and General Davis of the division. Colonel Nelson was yet in command of the brigade when the Petersburg line was broken April 2, 1865, and he was captured, with most of his command. The colors of the Forty-second were captured by Corporal Charles W. Dolloff, Eleventh Vermont, of Getty's Division. The Vermont Brigade claimed the honor of being the first to break the line of gray. Captain Tilden was credited with the capture of 2 cannon, 11 officers and 62 men of the Forty-second.