

APPLICATION FOR HISTORICAL MARKER

MEL FOWLER, SCULPTOR
Stubblefield Building
CORNER MAIN & MYRTLE
P. O. BOX 255 PH: (512) 778-6006
LIBERTY HILL, TEXAS 78642

History of S.P. Stubblefield
and
Stubblefield Building

Mr. Stephen P. Stubblefield was the son of Agnes (Ethridge) Stubblefield and William Stubblefield, who were of Welsh descent. He was born in Dallas County, Alabama on August 13, 1824 and grew up in Yazoo County, Mississippi. In June, 1846, he enlisted in the U.S. Army for service in the Mexican War. He fought in Company A, in Jefferson Davis' Regiment in the battles of Monterey and Buena Vista. He was wounded in his right hand in the Battle of Buena Vista and received a pension for his wound. From 1852 to 1863 he served as an overseer on large plantations along the Mississippi River. In 1863, he moved to Columbia County, Arkansas, and in 1870 he moved to Liberty Hill, Texas. The date of his death was 26 Dec. 1902⁽¹⁾ In 1850 he married Eliza Russell, who died two years later in 1852. That same year, he married Sarah Russell, a sister of his first wife and they had 11 children, Claton, Marlin, Fannie Amanda, Zelma, W. Oscar, Elizabeth and Sudie. (The names of the others are unknown.)⁽²⁾

The Stubblefield Building was built by Mr. S.P. Stubblefield in 1871. (Reference section titled "When was structure erected" for documentation) He established a mercantile business in the building which flourished until 1881 when he moved to his farm on the north fork of the San Gabriel River.⁽³⁾

The Stubblefield Building has been used for many different types of business over the years. Documentation of the different businesses that have been conducted in the building is not possible due to lack of records. However, in talking to many of the older residents of Liberty Hill such as Miss Myretta Matthews and Mrs. Anderson and Mr. J.E. Humpries of Burnett, Texas (Husband of one of S.P. Stubblefield's granddaughters) I was able to find out some generalizations on businesses that were conducted in the building at a much later date. The following dates are as accurate as I can determine in the absence of records:

October 27, 1900: (This date is accurate as substantiated by copy of inventory) (Inclosed in this section). Mr. W.O. Stubblefield, son of the builder of the building established a General Store in the building. The store was still owned by his father at that time so he probably rented it from him or his father let him use the premises. The date that this business was terminated in the building is not known.

During the 1920s to 20 June 1954 the building was owned by Leo L. Insall, a person of unsound mind, with guardianship appointed. During this period the building was rented to a number of different people and businesses and generally fell into a state of bad dis-repair. At one time the court ruled that the building was not economically feasible to be repaired. Some of the people and businesses that were in the building during this period were:

FOOTNOTES: ⁽¹⁾ Stubblefield Family History
⁽²⁾ History of Texas, 1893, Williamson and other counties
⁽³⁾ Vol 13, pages 284 and 575, Deed Records, Williamson Co., Tex.

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STRUCTURE CHECKLIST
(Continued)

MOTIVATION FOR ERECTING THE STUBBLEFIELD
BUILDING

In 1845, when the original headright landgrant was made to Henry Field, the area was considered quite dangerous as it was often subject to Indian raids by Comanche, Apache and Tonkawa Indians. As late as 1863, a family (Wofford Johnson, his wife and one daughter) were killed by Indians only two miles from the present location of Liberty Hill. ① The area was primarily ranch land, with a few small farms in the vicinity of Liberty Hill. It was estimated in 1860 that there were 3,500,000 long-horn cattle in Texas, and this area was one of the principal ranching areas. The "DOUBLE FILE TRACE", ancient highway of the Indians and buffalo and cattle drives passed a short distance ^{west} ~~east~~ of Liberty Hill.

When S.P. Stubblefield moved to Liberty Hill in 1870 he must have seen the possibility for establishing a general store and doing a thriving business in the area. The exact date the building was constructed can not be pinpointed; however, the first mention of the building is contained in the Warranty Deed dated November 24, 1871. ② Since Mr. Stubblefield purchased the land January 2, 1871, the building had to be constructed prior to November 1871 and after January 1871. A good guess would be the summer of 1871. ③

One of S.P. Stubblefield's sons, W.Oscar Stubblefield, rented the Stubblefield Building on October 27, 1900 and established another general store in the building. A copy of the original inventory is enclosed in this section of the application. ④

FOOTNOTES:

- ① "INDIAN DEPREDATIONS IN TEXAS" by John W. Wilbarger
- ② Vol. 13, page 284 Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas
- ③ Vol. 13, page 575, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas
- ④ Original Inventory, General Store, W.O. Stubblefield (inclosed)

Some of the people and businesses in the Stubblefield Bldg.

Nov 17, 1900 : Mrs. Phillips, daughter of W. Oscar Stubblefield was born in the building.

In the 1920s and the 1930s : Mrs. Grace Olive Smith operated a dairy store.

: Mrs. Frank (Marthyle) Ford operated a chicken and egg store.

: Dr. Ross had his office upstairs on the second floor.

: Mr. Willis operated a Grist-mill on the first floor.

: The McCoy Printing Company was in operation.

: Mrs. Anderson, lived upstairs as a young bride in 1935.

In the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s : A newspaper office was in operation for a short period.

: A Real estate office was open for a short period of time.

: A cafe was open.

: A dress shop.

: During many of the businesses, the upstairs was used for living quarters.

1970 : Leslie Allman built the new section of the building, in back of the old structure and attached to the rear wall of the old structure. The exterior staircase was removed at this time and an interior staircase constructed in the new portion of the building. The new section was one story frame construction with a tin roof.

At a time unknown, the entire structure was covered completely with plaster. While it cannot be established when the building was plastered over the exterior walls, it was probably sometime between 1900 and 1920. This period was established by talking to old-time residents of Liberty Hill. The mortar used in the original construction was composed of caliche, sand and ashes and it had probably deteriorated to such a degree that the easiest way to repair the structure was to plaster the exterior. It was first painted white, then a garish rose color then overpainted with white again.

At a time unknown, the fireplace was cemented up and removed. Fortunately the chimney was not destroyed.

At a time unknown, probably when the red brick building next door (presently occupied by a barber shop) was constructed, a small window on the first floor of the original building was cemented up.

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF OWNERS OF THE LAND ON WHICH THE STUBBLEFIELD BUILDING IS LOCATED

The Stubblefield building is located on land that was originally a head-right land grant from the Republic of Texas, issued by President Anson Jones. The land grant extended from the south branch of the San Gabriel river and included the present town of Liberty Hill in Williamson County. It consisted of one third of a league of land which was presented to HENRY FIELD, the first owner, on 31 July 1845. ①

On 15 June 1850, Henry Field lost the land for non-payment of taxes. The land was sold at public auction for the amount of delinquent taxes plus the court costs which amounted to \$ 4:60. This was the amount that TAYLOR SMITH paid to acquire the land. ②

On 12 May 1860 Taylor Smith sold a part of the land including the present site of the Stubblefield building to M.D. STRICKLINGE for the sum of \$ 60:00. Mr. Smith affixed his "X" mark, which was witnessed by the County Clerk. ③

March 8, 1861, Taylor Smith sold a part of his land to G.W. BARNES for \$ 40:00. ④

On 14 July 1862, Mr. Barnes sold this portion of land to S.D. LACY for \$ 250:00. ⑤

On December 1, 1865, Mr. & Mrs. Lacy sold the land to S.S. JACKSON for \$ 250:00. ⑥

On September 28, 1868, Mr. & Mrs. S.S. Jackson sold the land to Mary E. Kirkpatrick for \$ 375:00. ⑦

On January 2, 1871, John and Mary E. Kirkpatrick sold the property to Mr. S.P. Stubblefield for the amount of \$ 2,250:00. ⑧

The first mention of the Stubblefield building is in the warranty deed filed April 2, 1872 and dated November 24, 1871 when S.P and S.A. Stubblefield obtained a promissory note from M.A and R.A. Renick in the amount of \$ 1,500:00. The present Stubblefield building is referred to as the "Rock Store House on said lot". in two separate paragraphs. ⑨

FOOTNOTES:

①	Volume 142,	page 359,	Deed Records,	Williamson County,	Texas.
②	"	4,	" 238,	" " "	" " "
③	"	8,	" 266,	" " "	" " "
④	"	8,	" 423,	" " "	" " "
⑤	"	10,	" 263,	" " "	" " "
⑥	"	10,	" 149,	" " "	" " "
⑦	"	11,	" 30,	" " "	" " "
⑧	"	115,	" 360,	" " "	" " "
⑨	"	13,	" 575,	" " "	" " "

On November 25, 1913, Mr. John Munro and Mr. R.C. Simmons appeared before Mr. C.F. Vann, Notary Public and swore that they were well acquainted with S.P. Stubblefield who passed away on December 26, 1902 and Mrs. S.A. Stubblefield who died on August 24, 1906, leaving the following heirs: S.C. Stubblefield, M.M. Stubblefield, Fannie Stubblefield Lincecum, Sudie Stubblefield Bedell, Zelma Stubblefield Griffiths (Deceased May 26, 1907) (who left her 1/7th part of the estate to Walter G. Griffiths, her husband and their children William Dewitt Griffiths, Stephen P. Griffiths, Walter Elmer Griffiths, Percy B. Griffiths and Edna Perl Griffiths. ① This was to give the property a clear title, as the above heirs had sold the property to Mr. C.M. Mears for the amount of \$1,750:00 on 17 January 1907. ②

February 20, 1907, Mr. C.M. Mears and his wife Dora, a warranty deed was filed selling the property to Mr. C.C. Hickman for the amount of \$800:00. ③ This was the business lot where the present Stubblefield building is located.

On July 14, 1909, C.C. Hickman and his wife Effie sold the Stubblefield building and business lot to Mr. David Mitchell for the amount of \$1,600:00. ④

May 31, 1910 a suit was filed in the District Court in Williamson County in order to insure a clear title to the entire Henry Field's Headright Land Grant. (When the land grant was sold at public auction for non-payment of \$4:60 taxes, a quit-claim title was not obtained from Henry Fields) (15 June 1850). ⑤ As a result of the lawsuit, a clear title was granted to the property ⑥

On March 1, 1920, a warranty deed was filed by David Mitchell and his wife, selling the property to Mr. E.V. Vaughan for the amount of \$3,000, which included a \$1,500 down payment and a promissary note in the amount of \$1,500. ⑦

On August 6, 1929, a lawsuit was filed in District Court, Williamson County, Texas. David Mitchell and his wife had both died and the warranty deed had been defaulted by E.V. Vaughan. ⑧ There were considerable numbers of the Mitchell family involved in the lawsuit, and the court ordered that the property be sold and the money divided. ⑨ The lawsuit was resolved down to two members of the Mitchell family, Annie Mitchell Jones and Katie Mitchell. The property was sold in receivership. Leo L. Insall purchased the note. At a later date he was found to be of unsound mind by the court and a guardian was appointed. The property had fell into a state of dis-repair and the court authorized the sale of the property. ⑩ The property was sold to Mr. W.E. McCoy for the amount of \$800:00. ⑪

FOOTNOTES:

- ① Vol. 152, page 224, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas.
- ② Handwritten deed filed with County Clerk, Crockett County, Texas.
- ③ Vol. 123, page 151, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas.
- ④ Vol. 129, page 552, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas.
- ⑤ Vol. 4, page 238, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas.
- ⑥ District Court, Williamson County, Tex. Case No. 6890, Vol. 14, page 83.
- ⑦ Vol. 194, page 170, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas.
- ⑧ District Court, Williamson County, Texas, Case No. 10,110.
- ⑨ Vol. 18, page 547, Civil Minutes, District Court, Williamson County, Texas.
- ⑩ Case No. 2502, DR 365, District Court, Williamson County, Texas
- ⑪ Page 253, DR 365, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING (Continued)

Mr. William Edgar McCoy died on 16 June 1952, and his widow recieved all of the property when their childern assigned their portion over to their mother. ①

On 6 March 1954, Myrtle McCoy, sold the property to Mr. A.A. Berry for \$750:00 with three vender lien notes.

The Berrys were divorced and Mr. Berry recieved full ownership of the property. Later, Mr. Berry payed all three vender lien notes off in full.

On February 7, 1958, A.A. Berry sold the property to E.R. Morgan. ④

On 28 June 1962, E.R. Morgan and his wife Gertrude sold the property to Mr. Bruce R. Pinyan for \$4,900, which included a vender's lien note in the amount of \$3,500. ⑤ E.R. Morgan and his wife then sold the vender's lien note to Mr. Claude Meadors, Sr. ⑥ on 6 August 1962.

On 27 January 1965, Bruce R. Pinyan transfered the property via Quitclaim to Mr. Claude Meadors, Sr. ⑦

On January 25, 1965, Claude Meadors, Sr. sold the property to Leslie L. Allman. ⑧

On 7 August 1973, Leslie L. Allman sold the property to the present owner, Mel Fowler for the amount of \$5,000. ⑨

LAST ITEM

FOOTNOTES:

- ① Vol. 381, page 117, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas
- ② Page 399, DR. 394, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas
- ③ District Court, DV-4, page 349, Williamson County, Texas
- ④ Vol. 421, page 525, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas
- ⑤ Vol. 452, page 265, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas
- ⑥ Vol. 453, page 200, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas
- ⑦ Vol. 474, page 655, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas
- ⑧ Vol. 475, page 31, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas
- ⑨ Vol. 572, page 673, Deed Records, Williamson County, Texas