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Autobiography of William Harrell, East Feliciana Parish, La.  
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"As most every one has had something to say about myself and Betsey, as I have ever called my life companion, I ask space for an autobiography and the printing of our picture, which was made just before Betsey died. I wish this for the benefit of the many parties who are asking me for information about our family. I have no family record of my ancestors, so this is all from memory.

My grandfather, Leroy Harrell, moved with all his immediate family and negroes from South Carolina to some point on the Mississippi River in Tennessee. There he built flatboats and floated down the Mississippi River to Fort Adams about 1803-04. He moved with the intention of settling in Mississippi Territory. The direct way from South Carolina to Mississippi Territory being infested with robbers caused him to choose the northern route.

At some place on the Mississippi River some of his sons or grandsons, probably both, boarded a skiff and went ashore. They stayed long over their time, which irritated my grandfather very much. During the time one of his daughters was preparing dinner and my grandfather lay down on a bed in the rear end of one of the boats to sleep. Whey they went to wake him for dinner, he was dead. They carried his body as long as they could and were finally compelled to bury him at a place on the

Mississippi River bank,  
where the grave would fill with water.

From Fort Adams, in now Wilkerson County, Mississippi, my grandfather's family moved about forty miles into what they thought to be Mississippi Territory. There my father and his brothers and sisters divided my grandfather's property among themselves and all settled near each other on Boner Creek. When the state line was run they found that they had located in East Feliciana Parish, Louisiana.

My father and uncle Leny (should be Levy) had families of children when they came to Louisiana, but I don't know whether their first wives were living or not.

Aunt Sarah married and moved to Amite (Amite) County, Mississippi. Uncle Hezekiah married a Neeland. Uncle Louis and Leny (Levy) married daughters of a widow Bryant. My father, Samuel Harrell, married Miss Sarah Neatherlin, my mother in 1809, who came with her family from Georgia to Mississippi Territory in 1802. My grandfather was a full-blooded Irishman and my mother was Scotch. My father and his brothers and sisters would not sell one of their negroes out of the family.

My ancestors liked whisky, as might be expected of the Irish. I have seen a few of my uncles, cousins and brothers drink, but I am proud to say that I don't know of a sot in the Harrell connection.

The Christian names of my half brothers and sisters, who were with my father when he settled in Louisiana, were: James, Elizabeth, Jacob, Sarah, Ann, Leny (Levy), Celia, and Hezekiah.

I was born in East Feliciana Parish, Louisiana, January 8, 1810. I am the eldest of 13 children. Of that number Brother Frank and myself are now living. I married Miss Elizabeth Jane Haygood in Amite (Amite) County, Mississippi February 17, 1829. She was born in Fairfield District, South Carolina, February 15, 1811 and came with her parents to Mississippi in 1823.

I first met Betsey at one of the old time cotton pickings and log rollings to get the girls together. We were about 10 and 12 years of age. I right then and have ever since thought her to be the prettiest girl I ever met.

About a year after we met again at one of her aunts, who we always called Aunt Polly. She had that night a most enjoyable children's party. In the summer of 1827 our courtship began in earnest and we were married February 17th, 1829.

I wish to state here that I have been informed that the marriage records of Amite (Amite) County, Mississippi show that we were married February 19, 1829. I know the mistake is in the record, because we have for seventy-two years celebrated February 17th as our marriage day, and my memory of that particular even (event) is far superior to any record. I then bought land and improved us a home in Amite (Amite) County, Mississippi.

Betsy and I joined the Missionary Baptist Church in the fall of 1836. We and 42 others were baptized at the same time. I moved from Amite (Amite) County, Mississippi to Bowie county, Texas in 1844, and have since been a resident of the State of Texas. I moved from Bowie County to

San Augustine

County in 1846 and to Nacogdoches County in 1870. I have ever since 1870

resided near in Nacogdoches County.

I now make my home with my baby (Eddie) of ten children. Betsey and I made our home with him many years before her death.

October 28, 1891, Betsey fell from a horse block while dismounting from her saddle pony and broke her left hip bone, from which she never rightly recovered. She was never able to walk afterwards.

From the accident up to her death I was away from her side only one night.

She had been subject to choking attacks from many years and her only dread of dying was that she might choke to death. But I am happy to say she lived to celebrath our 72nd marriage day, February 17, 1901.

I now have living 4 children, 36 grandchildren, 39 great grandchildren, 3 great great grandchildren and 22 married into my family. Eleven pairs of twins have been born into my family. They are all living except two pair, which died in infancy."

(Signed)

William Harrell