

There are several accounts of the Moses Jackson Family massacre in 1858 , here in Brown County. I will give the least gruesome version (edited) of the incident. At the end of the story, I have posted a photograph of the girl that was capture and kidnapped by the Indians. The picture is some 60 years later, with her posing with her 10 children, daughter-in-law and husband. It is a testament to the courage and resolve of our Texas lady pioneers.

The following account is a long read, but I think well worth the time.

The following account is from
~ **Descriptive History of Early Times**
In Western Texas ~

by JOSEPH CARROLL MCCONNELL © 1933

Mose Jackson numbered among the earliest settlers of Brown County. But the territory in which he lived is now a part of Mills County. Mr. Jackson's home was about twelve miles west of Goldthwaite, on the west side of Pecan Bayou, and on the Goldthwaite-Regency road.

Mr. Jackson and some of his neighbors had previously selected some fine pecan trees to be cut and used for board timber. Since these trees were luxuriantly covered with pecans, it was agreed that each of the men return October 26, 1858, with their families, so the women and children could gather the pecans, while the men worked the board timber.

Some of the early citizens, with their lunches, arrived early on the scene, but Mr. and Mrs. Jackson and their children did not appear. The pecan timber being cut was about six miles north and a little west of the Jackson home, which was not far distant from the mouth of the Bayou. The place of meeting was farther up the same stream. Big, young, and old, were anxiously inquiring and wondering why Mr. Jackson and family had not arrived. They were further perplexed by the report of guns in a southern direction toward the Jackson home.

Mr. Jackson had a large family, and one of his sons, John, lived at Lampasas, and had previously protested against his father's moving as far out as Brown County. The morning of the picnic, Jesse, a son, was sick, so Jason, an older son, agreed to stay at home with him. Early in the morning Mr. Jackson hitched two horses to a hack, and started out with the remaining part of his family, to the pioneer gathering, about six miles up the Bayou. With him were his wife, seventeen-year-old daughter, twelve-year-old son named Tobe, nine year-old daughter named Rebecca, and a small son, seven years of age. As there were no roads, Mr. and Mrs. Jackson and their four children traveled along an old buffalo hunter's trail. After they had gone only about one and one-half miles, several men were seen on a distant hill, but the Jacksons supposed it were others going to the social gathering. So Mr. and Mrs. Jackson and children joyfully continued their journey.

They had only gone about one-half mile, however, and were traveling on the east side of a small stream, which emptied into the Bayou, when twenty-six hostile Indians appeared on the scene and dashed up

the bank and out of the nearby timber. They shot and killed Mr. Jackson instantly, and he fell to the ground from his hack. The team became frightened and started to run, but the twelve-year-old boy grabbed the lines and endeavored to stop them. The lines, however, were entangled, so the team circled out into the timber and soon hung up against a tree. About this time the seventeen-year-old daughter was also severely injured. The seven-year-old son stayed in the vehicle and watched every movement, Mrs. Jackson dropped on her knees and began to cry and pray. Finally she took a seat near a tree about twenty or twenty-five feet from the hack. The Indians took the seventeen-year-old daughter to a place under a bank about forty steps to the east, where the daughter was then killed. The seven-year-old son in the hack was killed next. Rebecca, the nine-year-old daughter, was now sitting beside the mother, and witnessing these horrible scenes. Tobe, the twelve-year-old son, was now walking to and fro not far distant from the mother. With an unflinching heart, she was wondering what would follow, when at this moment the Indians now divided into two divisions of eight and eighteen, respectively. The eight Indians, including the old squaw that saved the life of Mother Jackson, left the horrible scene afoot with the two remaining children, Tobe and Rebecca, on Mr. Jackson's horse, which had been harnessed to the hack. The mother was left alive and alone in the hands of the remaining eighteen Indians. When the eight savages had gone about twelve miles, they picked up a gentle mare and her colt, and the children were removed to the colt's mother. The Indians then went eight miles farther to Lookout Mountain, which was named by Albert G. Gholson, because it was a place frequently visited by Indian spies. The old squaw that saved the life of Mrs. Jackson, a younger squaw, and an old buck, were left here in charge of Tobe and Rebecca. The five remaining warriors went into Lampasas, Coryell, and as low as Burnet County on a horse stealing raid.

For nine days and ten nights, the three Indians and two children remained on Lookout Mountain. The old buck would slip out during the dark hours of night, and bring water in a buffalo pouch. The colt was killed and barbecued. The little boy soon adopted himself to the surroundings, but Rebecca could not and was slowly dwindling away. The five Indians finally returned in charge of a herd of stolen horses. They arrived on Lookout Mountain during the night and left the same way. The two children were placed on the same old mare, which was driven by the Indians in the herd with other horses, and the savages with their spoils started toward the wild and unsettled west.

When this tragedy occurred, Capt. John Williams and his company of Texas Rangers were camped near the north line of San Saba County, in the Bowser Bend of the Colorado. Some of the scouts struck an Indian trail about two days old. This was followed and the rangers soon reached a point where they found the remains of Mr. Jackson and other members of his family. The news of this horrible massacre now became known to the outside world. The two sons left at the Jackson home had previously thought their parents, brothers and sisters had stopped to stay two or three days with neighbors. The rangers reached the horrible scene just at sundown, but during the night they went to distant ranches for assistance, digging implements, etc. When the news was broadcasted through the settlements, the male citizens one by one during all hours of the night, began to arrive on the scene, and by daylight approximately thirty rangers and forty-five citizens had arrived.

As soon as possible the rangers took up the savages trail. Instead of following the eight Indians who had the children, however, they followed the trail of the eighteen. This trail led in a southerly direction. From

time to time the local citizens joined the ranging force. Since the Indians had three days in the lead, a council was held. The rangers and citizens decided it would be useless to try to overtake them, but it was agreed a patrol duty would be established between the Colorado and Leon Rivers, for the purpose of picking up the Indian trail, when the savages came back out of the settlements with stolen horses. The rangers left the place where Mr. Jackson and members of his family were murdered October the 29th.

During the morning of November the 7th, following, Lieutenant Gideon Cowan, and several other scouts picked up a fresh trail where the Indians had camped the night before, and when the trail was discovered a scout was sent in each direction. But two of the rangers never returned. Rhome Vaughn and two others joined Lieutenant Cowan's command about 4 o'clock in the evening. During the day six men from Lampasas and Burnet County also joined the command. These men had been following the Indians' trail to recover their stolen horses. And it was soon discovered that the citizens and rangers were not following the trail of the original eighteen Indians, but had evidently picked up the trail of the eight others that had the children. This was shown by strips of the little girl's clothing, occasionally found hanging on the brush where the old mare would run' under a tree. When the command

passed Salt Creek in Brown County, they found conclusive evidence showing that they were following the eight Indians with the children, for they saw the little girl's track in the mud, where she had gotten down for water. When night was approaching, Lieutenant Cowan said: "Boys, we have got to do all possible to rescue those children." He further said: "The Indians are going toward a certain star, so we will follow that by night and follow the trail by day."

When morning came they assumed a V formation to again pick up the trail, and it was soon found a little over a mile to the north. In this manner of following the trail by day and the western stars by night, it was soon discovered they were rapidly gaining on the Indians. After the passing of the second night and early the next morning, to the joy of the rangers, it was discovered they were directly on the trail. Just at daylight, they also discovered an Indian spy on a distant mountain. This Indian soon galloped away. Frank Gholson, who was in the lead, motioned for Lieutenant Cowan, and told him what he had seen. Lieutenant Cowan then ordered his men to ride rapidly along the trail, and after riding about one and a half miles farther, the rangers saw the Indians in the lead. The Indians soon began to round up the horses, and about this time two footmen left the band of savages and started out in a southerly direction. Lieutenant Cowan told the sergeant to take a part of the men and cut these Indians off at the point of the mountain, and said that he would cut the Indians off from the herd of horses.

When close to the savages, the Texans discovered the natives had released the two children and horses, for they, no doubt, thought that would satisfy the rangers and citizens. The Indians then mounted fast animals and rode rapidly away. Eight rangers endeavored to overtake them, but failed. The rangers now rode up to the two children, who had been Indian captives for nearly two weeks. Tears were already in the eyes of all. Just before they reached Tobe and Rebecca, the little boy rose up three different times from his stooping posture, and said: "They are white men, they are white men, they are white men, I see their hats and stirrups."

He then dropped down again. The rangers and six citizens then surrounded the children. Several of the men jumped down and shook hands with the boy. The first question that was asked, "Are you the Jackson children?" "Yes," the boy said. The boy then asked, "Did the Indians kill mother?" With tearful eyes, the rangers answered "Yes." For a moment let us now turn our attention to this splendid lady. After the eight Indians rode away, she was left in the hands of the remaining eighteen. When Captain Williams and his men reached the scene of this horrible catastrophe, they found Mrs. Jackson dead. Let us now again turn to the two children. Surrounded by rangers, many miles from the nearest settlement, and perhaps somewhere in the present Nolan County, and in the vicinity of Sweetwater, Rhome Vaughan stepped up to the little girl, whose elbows were on her knees and her hands helping to support her heavy head. He said: "Sissy, stand up if you are able; you are safe now. You are in the hands of your friends."

At this moment, A. J. (Jack) Brown began to shout, and said: "Praise God, that he had inspired Lieutenant Cowan with such skill and ability to effect such an achievement." About that time, Gabe Choate said: "Jack, are we going to have a revival in the wilderness?" Jack replied: "Yes, the good Lord deserves praise in the wilderness for such wonderful wisdom as this; as well as in the church house."

The children were brought back one and one-half miles on the trail to the first water, where the command remained until 1 p. m. of the next day to permit the girl, Rebecca, to partly recuperate. She was placed in charge of Lieutenant Cowan and Gabe Choate, the two oldest men in the command. The poor little girl's appetite was completely gone. She was offered different things to eat, but refused. Finally however, the rangers and citizens were successful in getting Rebecca to eat some roasted bacon. To add to her comfort, a blanket was folded so as to make Rebecca a little bed many miles from the nearest settlements. When the rangers resumed their journey, they had gone only about four miles when Rebecca began to complain again. The command again stopped and after she had rested they went about four miles farther and camped for the (night. From; this point, it took six days to reach Camp Colorado. The Christian mothers at this post made clothes for the little girl, and the army surgeon administered her aid. The command remained at the post two nights and one day, and then left for their camp in the Bowser Bend. By this time Rebecca had greatly recuperated. Mrs. Williams, who happened to be at the camp, took temporary charge of the girl. When time came to leave the little boy said he preferred staying in the camp, and wanted to join the rangers. The six citizens who lived in Lampasas and Burnet Counties, however, were instructed to tell John Jackson that Tobe and Rebecca had been recaptured, and the girl was in the immediate charge of Mrs. Williams. At another time she was under the care of Mrs. Thomas Priddy. When John Jackson came to the camp for his little brother and sister, a guard was furnished to protect him and them through the dangerous parts of the country.

It has been said the shock of this terrible tragedy drove Tobe Jackson crazy, and that he afterwards died in the asylum. At one time he visited the scene of the difficulty, and it is said he had to be led away. Rebecca later married Jack Stroud; and at last account was living in New Mexico.

The photo of the grave had the following written on the back - "Pecan Baoyue (1) one grave.(ON BACK OF PICTURE) There is another grave about 150 feet from this one North bearing a little west. In this one grave Lyndia Margaret (O'Neal) Jackson born 24 August 1809, killed by Indians 24 August 1858. Buried with her Louisa Jackson, born 1841 & J. J. Jackson born 1853. This grave was dug into October 17, 1964. The grave was filled up Oct. 24, 1964. These graves are in a field near Mullens, Texas, in now Mills Co. My Aunt Annie (Partin) Russell visited these graves several times and feels sure this is the grave of Joshua Jackson born 5 Aug. 1800-killed by the Indians 24 August 1858

