

Evolution of Architectural Style

The first decade of the 20th Century witnessed a huge shift in architectural styles. This shift paralleled the cultural shift that saw improving labor conditions and a growing middle class that had enough money to spend on property and homes, modest though they may be. This new culture had little affinity, for the older aesthetic which valued ornamentation and grandiosity. This change is clearly apparent in the architecture of McKinney.

Queen Anne Style

Before 1900, the preferred style was what we now call the Queen Anne Style. This style is characterized by complex gabled roofs, asymmetry, turrets, and an abundance of elaborate ornamentation. Locally, the Aron House at 523 W. Hunt Street exhibits this architectural vocabulary.

Modern Emerging Alternatives

Just before the 20th Century began, however, new architectural forms offered by the Prairie and Foursquare Styles began appearing in home construction. The Bristol House at 508 Tucker Street was one of the first homes in McKinney to incorporate the deep eaves, hip roofs, and the sprawling geometry these new styles offered.

The Heard-Craig House at 205 W. Hunt Street designed by Dallas architect J.E. Flanders incorporates many of these new forms into a home that is still essentially Queen Anne but mimics the symmetry of the American Foursquare Style (see 801 N. Church St.). Five years later, Flanders moved closer to creating a pure Prairie Style home when he designed the Brown House at 509 N. Church Street.



By the early 1900s, not all builders and clients were ready to abandon the old familiar style and the prestige it conveyed. This resulted in many homes becoming an eclectic mixture of new and old styles.

McKinney builder W.J. Higgins built the Brooke House at 608 W. Hunt Street in 1910. It appears that neither the builder nor the client was ready to embrace the “modernness” of Flander’s designed. Instead, the Brooke house preserves the gabled pavilions and proportions of the Queen Anne Style while adding sprawling porches on the first and second floors. The result is a marriage of two styles with a practical solution to ventilation.

The Davenport House which sits across the street at 613 W. Hunt Street was probably built by Higgins in the same year as the Brooke House. Higgins was an accomplished builder of American Foursquare homes and incorporated its boxy, pyramidal forms into many of the homes he built. The pavilion which had a gabled roof in the Brooke House now has a hip roof. Though Davenport house moves further away from the Queen Anne Style, the builder put an ornamental finial at the apex of the roof to remind us of the home’s (and the client’s) appreciation of tradition.

Elsewhere in McKinney, builders and clients were warming up to the new style. The home at 510 Foote Street built for F.E. Wilcox in 1910 is decidedly in the Prairie Style with its wide eaves, square columns, and hip roof. Still, the window treatment lacks a complete expression of the style.

Finally, in 1911 J.P. Burrus spent \$30,000 dollars on a house at 405 N. Waddill that was unabashedly in the Prairie Style. The Queen Anne vocabulary is completely gone. Thus, a new design paradigm became the mode of the day in McKinney.



Queen Anne Style

The elements that characterize the Queen Anne Style are:

- typically two stories
- asymmetrical front facade
- complex gabled roof
- abundant ornamentation
- elaborate spindlework and brackets
- towers or turrets
- wrapping porches
- vertical massing
- simple one-over-one sash windows
- fish-scale shingle
- decorated gables

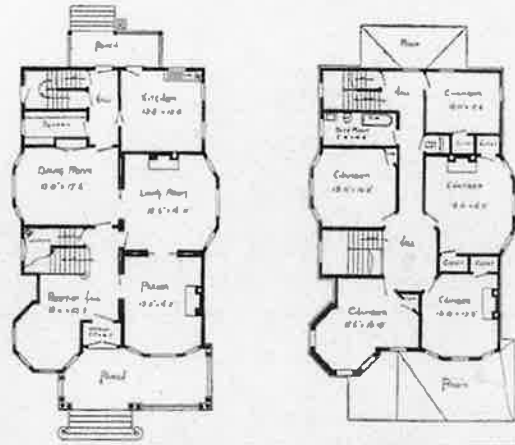
The Queen Anne Style originated in England around the mid 19th Century. It was among other Victorian era designs that developed around that time that included Second Empire and Beaux-Arts styles. The Queen Anne Style was inspired by medieval architectural forms like steep cross-gable roofs, towers with spires, spindlework and other decorative flourishes. It was popularized by English architect Richard Norman Shaw.

Early versions of the style as seen in McKinney's **Gough House** featured a profusion of ornamentation that was only limited by the owner's budget. It's focus on complex framing and ornamentation came at a cost. Even though this ornamentation was made more affordable by advancements in industrial production, a full-fledged Queen Anne Style home was beyond the financial means of most McKinney citizens. It was this mechanization and superfluous decoration that later styles like the Arts & Crafts Movement railed against. Nevertheless, the style was enormously popular at the end of the 19th Century.

Less affluent McKinneyites often had to settled for simpler, unadorned structures, usually a single-story, L-plan house with a dominant front-facing gable, similar to the house at **406 Parker Street**. These homes were simple to build and were as functional as the barns that were often close by. However, as the economy of McKinney grew, people became more interested in decorating their homes with manufac-



Floor Plans of Design No. 141



The above illustration is from a 1901 pattern book showing a late Queen Anne Style home. In 1903, the same company offers a simpler and more "modern" version of the style.

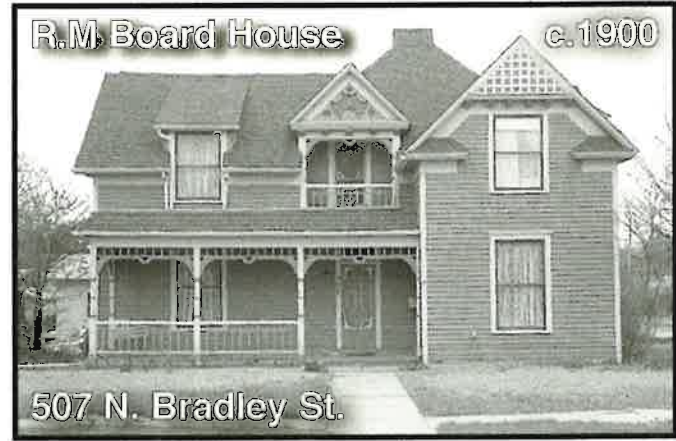
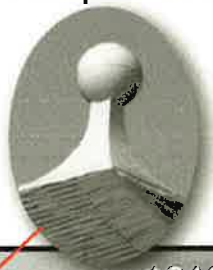


tured ornaments like turned railings and spindle-work. The addition of these decorative motifs to the otherwise vernacular farm house gave rise to the Folk Victorian Style.

In the beginning, the added ornamentation appeared as almost an after thought but as the local economy improved so did the sophistication of this style. Instead of tacking on a bracket to a porch column, more thought was given to the overall look of the house. While the Folk Victorian Style became more elaborate, other design influences such as the Craftsman and Prairie Style that valued simplicity and restraint were leading builders to tone down the Queen Anne motifs.

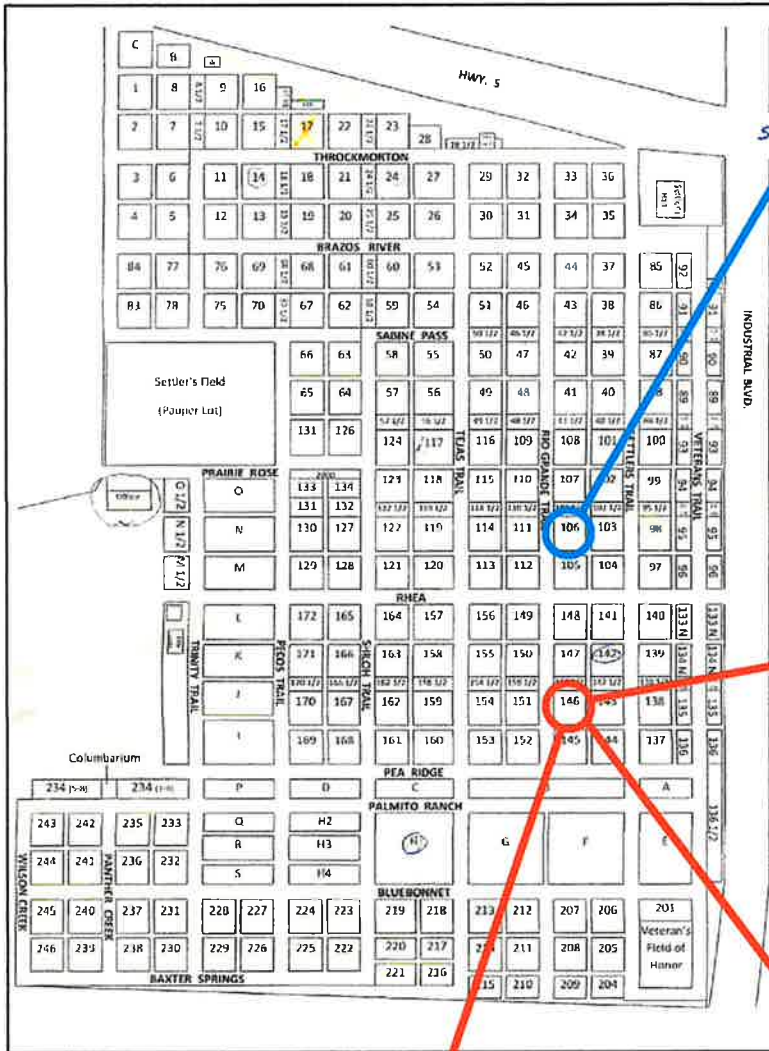
In the first decade of the 20th Century, as design tastes were changing, builders often combined characteristics from various styles. During this period, the difference between Folk Victorian and Queen Anne became nearly indistinguishable. The **Metz House** is a good example of a Queen Anne house of this period. While decidedly Queen Anne in its stateliness, its basic form owes much to the Folk Victorian Style. In contrast, the **R.M. Board House** demonstrates a stylish interpretation of the vernacular form.

The Queen Anne Style slowly lost its popularity during the first decade of the 20th Century as more restrained and economical styles became popular and incorporated into home design. Even with its roof-top finial, the **R.W. Davenport House** built in 1910 demonstrates the waning influence of the Queen Anne Style in McKinney in favor of a more reserved, spacious structure.



Pecan Grove Cemetery

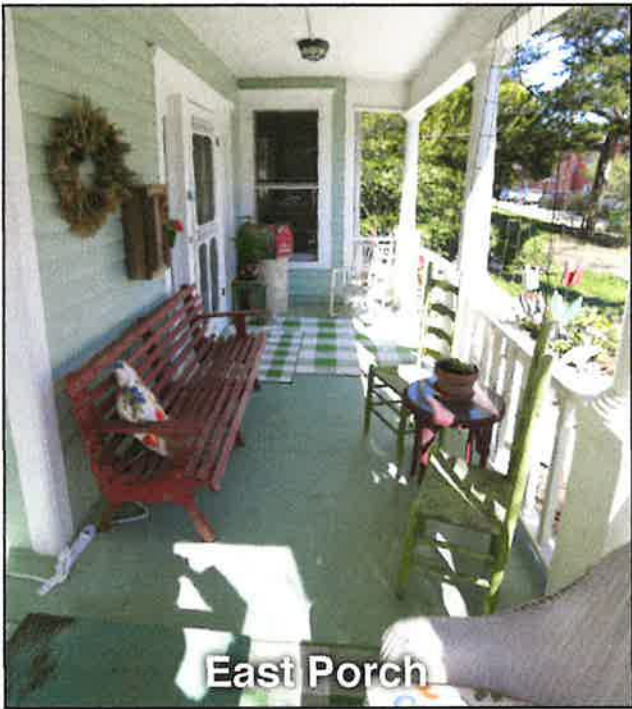
This map of Pecan Grove Cemetery in McKinney shows the final resting places of people associated with 309 N. Benge Street.



Wootson "Dock" Coleman Hill
Sept. 5, 1860 - Jan. 9, 1934



Current Photos (2020)



Neighborhood Context (2020)

309 North Street neighborhood context



View looking south on N. Benge Street



View looking north on N. Benge Street

Homes near 309 N. Benge Street



313 N. Benge St.



401 W. Hunt St.



502 N. Hunt St.

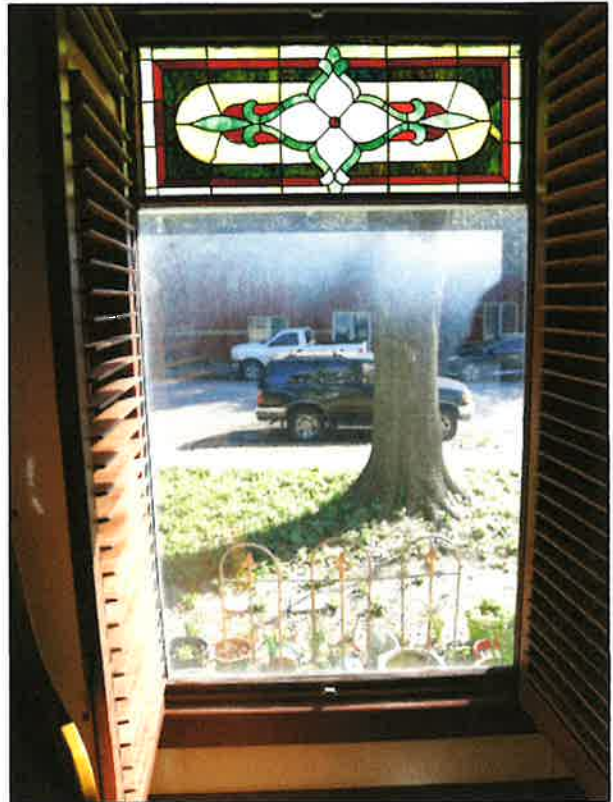


401 W. Lamar St.

Architectural Accents

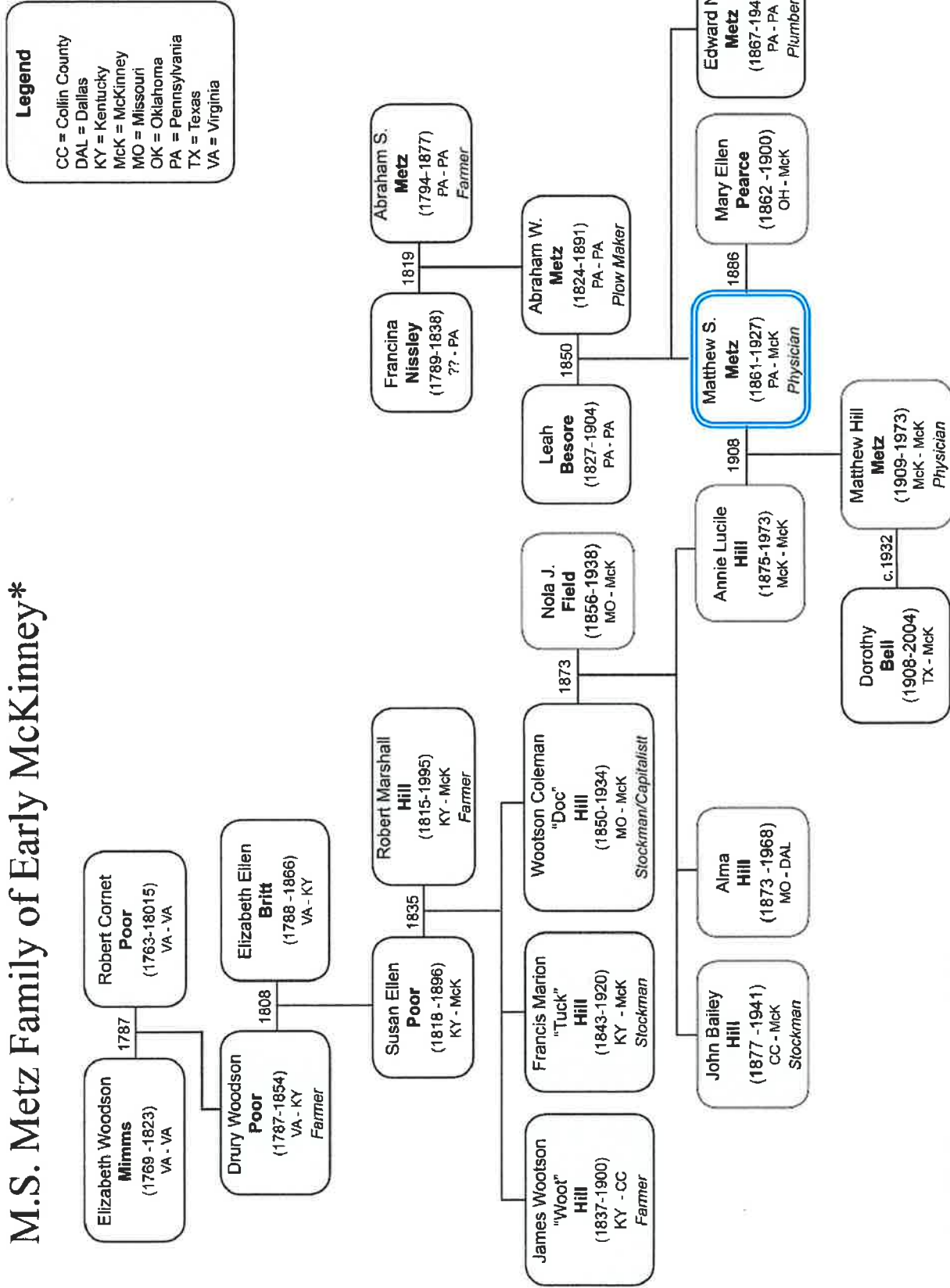






H. Additional Information

M.S. Metz Family of Early McKinney*

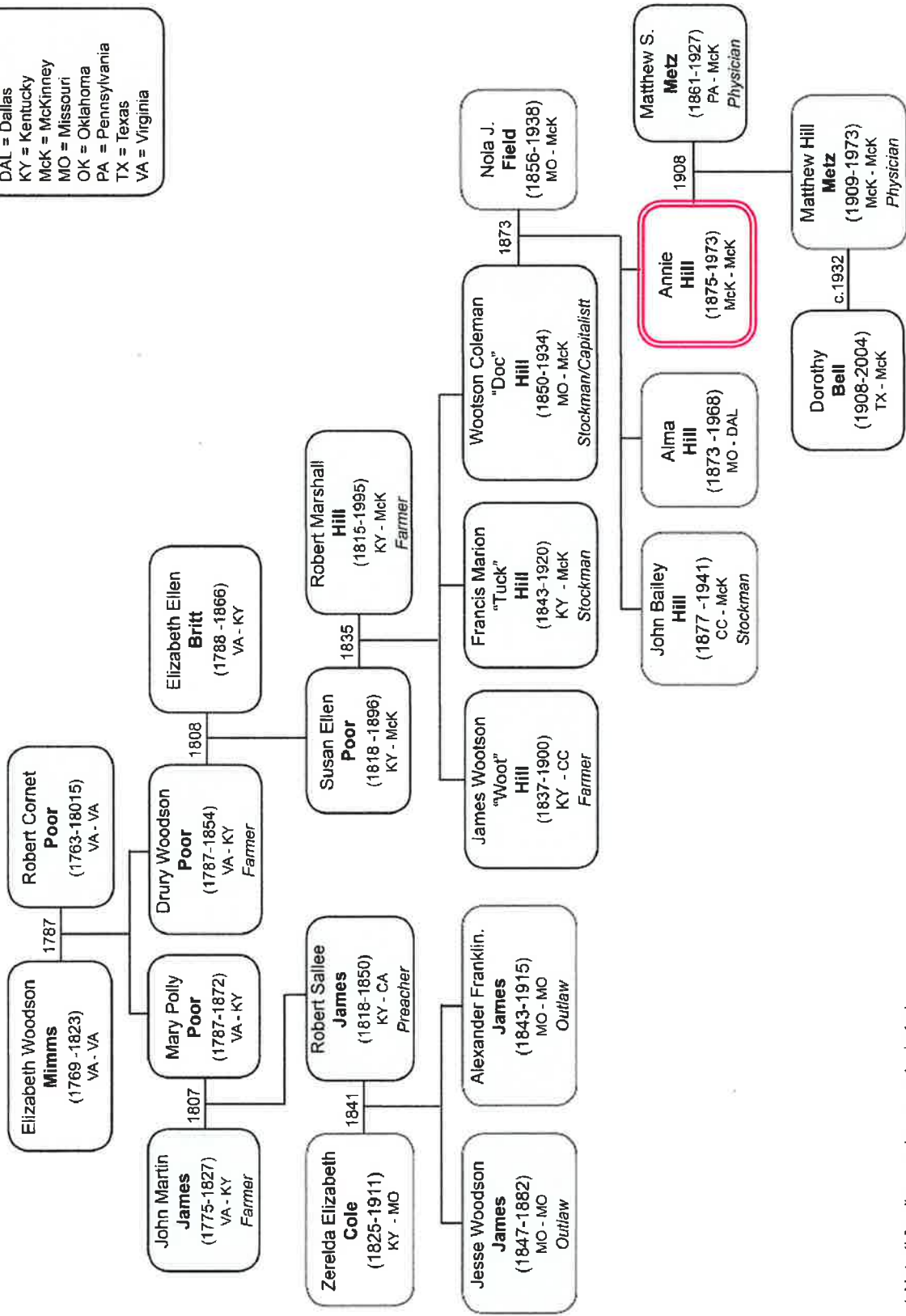


* Not all family members are included.

Annie Hill Family of Early McKinney*

Legend

CC = Collin County
 DAL = Dallas
 KY = Kentucky
 McK = McKinney
 MO = Missouri
 OK = Oklahoma
 PA = Pennsylvania
 TX = Texas
 VA = Virginia



* Not all family members are included.

I. References & Resources

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“Portal to Texas History,” texashistory.unt.edu

Ancestry.com

McKinney Public Library

Research assistance provided by Tom Michero

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