

Appendix: Children

“The apple never falls far from the tree.”

David and Caroline had nine children, eight of whom married and had children of their own. The success of each of those eight varied so widely that one is tempted to examine and interpret their fates as a window into the personalities of David and Caroline themselves. It's risky, of course, to define success much less to measure it from the perspective of a century later with few documents to help, but the extremes can certainly be identified. One son achieved great financial success and, with his wives, provided a stable home, used his wealth to educate his children, started them in businesses of their choosing, and left his widow resources to live comfortably until her death. One daughter apparently married poorly, never owned a home, was widowed under mysterious circumstances, and had to plead total poverty to receive a state pension. One descendant, who thoroughly studied the family, speculated that the earliest born children were exposed to David's alcoholism and erratic behavior, and thus made poor choices, while the later ones grew up in a more stable environment, without alcohol, and made better choices.¹ A problem with this analysis is that the extremes mentioned above, L. M. and Julia Ann, were adjacent children, age-wise. Other factors were at work.

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JULIA ANN, next in age after Elizabeth, may have had the most unfortunate life of all the siblings—five of her children died before their fourth birthday, her husband disappeared, and she finished her life in poverty, sustained only by the stipend offered indigent Confederate widows.

She and James had travelled to Gonzales with the Kokernot family shortly after their 1853 marriage; there Julia delivered their first child two months later. They gave the daughter three names, two for Julia's sisters, Rebecca and Augusta, preceded by the first name Mary, perhaps for James's dead first wife. Children arrived in quick succession and their births—dutifully inscribed in the family Bible—testify to the vagabond life James and Julia led. Little James was born the following year in Gonzales County, followed in 1856 by Samuel in Harris County. The following year Elizabeth Alcerta, "Allie," was born back in Gonzales County. James died on the day before his third birthday, June 15, 1858, in Jackson County. December of that year found the family in Lavaca County, where Sarah Sophia was born. The family was still there when Clarissa was born in October of 1861. Just three months after Clarissa's birth, James returned to Gonzales County to join the Second Texas Regiment of Infantry, on January 11, 1862 (see chapter xx). As James joined the war he left Julia Ann with three girls, Augusta, almost eight; Alcie, four; and Sarah, three. Three other children, James, Samuel, and Clarissa, had died.²

Julia Ann bore another son, David Levi, nine months after James briefly visited Lavaca County after the Siege of Vicksburg (chapter xx) and another, William Arthur, in 1868, this time back in Gonzales County. The family apparently remained in Gonzales County until at least 1874. They appear there in the 1870 census and the family Bible records the birth of a daughter, Lillie, in 1871 and her death in 1874, both in Gonzales County.³ It is not clear how James Lang supported his family in these years after the Civil War. In the 1870 census he is a neighbor to both Julia Ann's parents and to her brother L. M., who had moved to his own home about a mile from

David and Caroline. This suggests that the Langs probably lived on Kokernot land. The census listed James's occupation as "Carpenter," and the value of his personal property—they owned no real estate—was \$90. L. M. reported \$5212 in personal property, which was mostly cattle.⁴ The Langs were clearly not prosperous, perhaps prompting their daughters to leave home by 1874, two at age fifteen and one at eighteen.⁵ Finally, a fifth son, Alonzo, had been born and died around this time, certainly before 1880.⁶

Times grew even worse for Julia Ann. By 1880 she was a widow, James's fate a mystery. She moved to neighboring Wilson County in 1876, possibly without James.⁷ The 1880 census there shows her household: herself as a widow, younger son William at school, and fifteen year old Lee listed as "farmer" and probably supporting the family.⁸ Lee married three years later, in 1883, and his wife later wrote that she never saw James nor learned his fate.⁹ The family Bible shows his birth, but is silent about his death. When Julia Ann applied for a pension as the widow of a Confederate soldier in 1899, she wrote "I don't know" for James's date of death.¹⁰

"Thomas Lee Halderman, William Halderman departed the life on November 16th, 1899 at 12:30 o'clock in the evening." These simple words in the family Bible belie the violent circumstances surrounding the departure of Julia Ann's grandsons, sons of her eldest daughter Augusta. On an April morning in 1899 in the Chiricahua Mountains of Arizona, Thomas and William had stepped from separate doors of the ranch house of a neighbor, raised rifles, and shot Chester Ainsworth and Ted Moore from their saddles. Ainsworth, a constable aided by Moore, had come to arrest the Halderman brothers for killing cattle. At their murder trial the boys claimed self defense, but were quickly convicted.¹¹ After a fruitless appeal to the Arizona Supreme Court, Julia Ann's brother, L. M. Kokernot, sent a Gonzales attorney, Samuel H. Hopkins, to plead for clemency from the Arizona governor "to prevent a stain on the name of one of the best pioneer fami-

lies of Texas.”¹² All he achieved was a delay in the inevitable hanging, which the brothers approached coolly. Thomas, the younger, even placed the noose around his own neck.¹³ Twenty-nine years later, Time Magazine described Tombstone as a town that gloried in duels, hangings, and feuds, but named the Halderman hangings as its “most famed.”¹⁴

Julia received only \$22.32 annually from James’s pension, rising to \$42.00 by her death in 1912.¹⁵ With that money, and little else, she lived with her younger son, William, on his farm outside Stockdale.¹⁶ She was apparently proud of her Kokernot heritage, or at least her descendants were, for hers is the only gravestone among her married sisters that bears her maiden name:¹⁷

Julie Ann Kokernot
Lang
Feb 12, 1835
Dec 5, 1912
Dau. of David L. and
Caroline Dittmar Kokernot

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Notes for Appendix 1: Children

1. Kent Gardien, Cuernavaca, Mexico, to Barbara Jo Brothers, Gonzales, Texas, letter, 9 June 1975, Kent Gardien papers, Gonzales Archives, Texas.
2. Family Bible of an unnamed descendant of James Lang, in application file of Norma Ruth (Fogle) Gaugler, no. 8621, Daughters of the Republic of Texas, DRT Library, Austin. This file holds copies of eight pages from the Bible, but does not indicate the original owner. It seems reliable—records that can be independently verified are correct.
3. 1870 U.S. census, Gonzales County, Texas, population schedule, Belmont Post Office, p. 439 (stamped), dwelling 20, family 20, Lang (written “Laney”); NARA microfilm publication M593, roll 1587. Bible record in Note 2.
4. Gonzales County, Texas, Texas County Tax Rolls, 1870; FHL microfilm 2282220.
5. Augusta Lang married Jesse Halderman on 19 Dec 1872 at age eighteen, Elizabeth Alcerta Lang married Daniel Wheeler on 17 Nov 1872 at age fifteen, and Sarah Sophia Lang married John Guy Cox on 2 Jan 1874 at age fifteen, all from the Bible of Note 2.
6. Barnes Papers, copies supplied by John Barnes, Refugio, Texas. John Barnes received the papers in the early 1930s from his father, B. H. Barnes, a grandson of Bloome Amanda Kokernot. The elder Barnes was trying to establish a legal case for reclaiming the league of land that David Kokernot had sold to James Morgan in 1835 (see page xx). He was attempting to establish who the legal heirs to that land would be and contacted some Lang descendants at that time. The papers consist of only seven pieces, four of which are signed letters to Barnes. The other three are unsigned papers listing surviving heirs or deceased children of James and Julia Ann Lang. Alonzo Lang is named on two of the unsigned papers, without giving dates for his birth or death.

This account implies the Langs had ten offspring, five of whom died as children. Sources are not in agreement on this. Alonzo, for example, appears in the Barnes Papers but does not appear in the Bible nor in any census. One of the unsigned papers in the Barnes Papers states “Mrs. Julia A. Lang had seven children, two died in childhood.” The younger James, Samuel, and Clarissa appear nowhere in the Barnes Papers. Julia Lang’s Personal Description in her 1900 census entry (see Note 16) shows she had eight children with four living. I think my compilation is the most likely correct and that later writers did not recall the deaths of James, Samuel, and Clarissa a half century earlier. It is also possible that “Alonzo” was a nickname for James or Samuel and I am counting one child twice. It is also possible that one or more of James, Samuel, or Clarissa was a niece or nephew of Julia and James; the Bible does not explicitly state the parentage of any of the children on the “Births” page.
7. Julia Lang, Texas Confederate pension application #6426, Texas Comptroller's Office, Austin. Lang stated that she had lived in Wilson County twenty-three years as of 16 Aug 1899.
8. 1880 U.S. census, Wilson County, Texas, population schedule, p. 73 (stamped), enumeration district 150, page 23, dwelling 198, family 210, Lang, Julia; NARA microfilm publication T9, roll 1333
9. Mrs. D. L. Lang, Stockdale, Texas, to B. H. Barnes, Beaumont, Texas, 4 Jan 1930, Barnes Papers.
10. See Note 7.
11. *Pacific Reporter: Containing All The Decisions Of The Supreme Courts Of ...New Mexico...*, vol. 60, March 15-May 31, 1900 (St. Paul: West Publishing, 1900), 876-9, *Halderman et. al. v. Territory*. The death date in the Bible is early by one year as confirmed by the men’s death certificates: Cochise, Arizona, death certificates no. 324 (1900), Wm. Halderman, and 325 (1900) Thos. Halderman.
12. “Hopkins, S.H., makes plea for Haldermans,” *Gonzales (Texas) Daily Inquirer*, 28 Sep 1900. [check this after getting copies from Gonzales]
13. “Desperate Efforts Made to Save Youthful Sheriff Slayers’ Lives,” 23 July 1900; “Two Brothers Hanged for Murder in Arizona,” 16 Nov 1900; both articles quoted from unnamed Phoenix newspaper, *Cochise County, Arizona, Newspaper Articles*, in Arizona Genealogy Trails (<http://genealogytrails.com/ariz/cochise/newspaper.html> : accessed 3 Jan 2009).

14. "Tombstone," Time, Inc, *Time*, 2 Dec 1929, (<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,738164,00.html?iid=chix-sphere> : accessed 3 Jan 2009).
15. Texas State Library & Archives Commission, *Confederate Pension Payment Amounts*; (<http://www2.tsl.state.tx.us/arc/pensions/amounts.html> : accessed 3 Jan 2009).
16. 1900 U.S. census, Wilson County, Texas population schedule, Justice Precinct 7, enumeration district 122, sheet 8, dwelling 153, family 154, Lang William A; NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 1680; 1910 U.S. census, Wilson County, Texas population schedule, Precinct 7, enumeration district 165, sheet 6B, dwelling 108, family 108, Lang William A; NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 1598; The assertion "and little else" is inferred from Julia Langs statements in her pension application, see Note 7.
17. Stockdale Cemetery (Wilson County, Texas; Lat-Lon N 29d 13.813m, W 97d 58.182m; State Route 87 in Stockdale), Julie Ann Kokernot Lang marker, read by author, 18 April 2007.