

Francis Melvin McKinney

(October 14, 1841 – September 18, 1892)

Compiled by Richard J. McKinney, a great, great grandson, 2017

Francis McKinney was the father of Claude Adams McKinney and the grandfather of Harold C. McKinney, Sr. and his seven siblings. He was born and raised in Greensboro, North Carolina. During the Civil War he was enlisted in the Greensboro regiment in the Army of Northern Virginia under General Robert E. Lee. The family lore was that at the Battle of Bull Run he deserted and went North, but his regiment was not involved in the Battle of Bull Run, but it did see action in the decisive Battle of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania (July 1863) and took many casualties. There were also many unaccounted for who may have deserted and quite likely Francis McKinney was among them as he ended up in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania (Northwest of Pittsburgh) where he married a woman named Mary Teresa Adams, born in 1848.

Mary Teresa Adams was the daughter of Oscar Edmund Adams, an oilman in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, the son of Dr. Milo Adams of Beaver County, the son of Dr. Samuel Adams, the son of Captain Benjamin Adams of the Continental Army and participant at the Boston Tea Party and the Battle of Yorktown. Benjamin was the son of William Adams, the son of sea Captain Abraham Adams, the son of militia Sargent Abraham Adams, the son of Robert Adams, who came to Massachusetts from Devonshire, England in 1635 and eventually settled in Newbury where, according to his will, he amassed a sizable amount of property. Robert was said to be a cousin of Henry Adams of Braintree Massachusetts, the ancestor of Presidents John Adams and John Quincy Adams, who came to the colonies around 1633.

Like his father-in-law, Francis McKinney also became an oilman and he and his wife moved to Oil City, Pennsylvania, where there were many oil wells and refineries. Their son and only surviving child, Claude Adams McKinney, was born there in 1873. They then moved to Hunters Point, Long Island in 1876 where Francis managed a refinery for the Standard Oil Company formed by John D. Rockefeller in 1870. While living on Long Island Francis led adult Sunday school classes in the Methodist Episcopal Church and his son wrote that his father often prayed with tears of joy.

In the 1890's Francis contracted tuberculosis and the Company sent him to Florence, Colorado where the thin air was thought to be beneficial for tuberculosis patients. There were a number of financial panics in the 1890's and the family was said to have lost most of their money at that time. Francis McKinney passed away in 1892 leaving behind his wife, Mary and his 19 year old son, Claude. His son wrote that he died with a smile on his face while his wife and son sang gospel songs to him. Later on, Mary remarried a man named Marvin _____ and in their old age they lived together with her son Claude for a period of time. She died in _____.