

**A History of the**  
**Pilant and Brooks**  
**Families**  
**of**  
**Texas**

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## Introduction

D.C. Rachal's (son of Dick Rachal) wife Frances Louise Pilant is descended from the Pilant and Brooks families. The following section is a brief history of those two families.

## Pilant Family

George Pilant was born in Limestone County Alabama in about 1850. Some time before 1875, he married Julia Unknown. Julia was born about 1846 in Alabama. George was a farmer in Alabama. George and Julia had at least 4 children:

| Name          | Birth date | Where | Notes |
|---------------|------------|-------|-------|
| George Pilant | ~1850      | AL    |       |
| Julia         | ~1846      | AL    |       |
| James L.      | 2/1875     | AL    | Or TN |
| John          | 1876       |       |       |
| Alice         | 1878       |       |       |
| Inus          | 1880       |       |       |

Their first born son, James L., married Melvina Unknown in about 1894. Melvina was born in Kentucky in September 1874. James and Melvina had at least eight children:

| Name            | Birth Date                 | Where | Notes                             |
|-----------------|----------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|
| James L. Pilant | 2/1875                     | AL    |                                   |
| Melvina         | 9/1874                     | KY    |                                   |
| Lillie M        | 3/1896                     | TX    |                                   |
| William Melvin  | 2/1897 or <b>3/16/1898</b> | TX    | D: 3/30/1956                      |
| Bessie          | 1/1900                     | TX    |                                   |
| Gracie          | ~1902                      | TX    |                                   |
| Elsie           | ~1906                      | TX    |                                   |
| No name         | Unknown                    |       | May have died young or in infancy |
| J.L.            | ~1912                      |       |                                   |
| Frances Marie   | ~1916                      |       |                                   |

In 1900, James and Melvina and family lived in Ellis County Texas, precinct #1. Ellis County is due south of Dallas. James L. Pilant was a farmer in this county.

In 1910, they were still living in Ellis County. The census indicates that Melvina had lost one child out of six born to her. In 1910, Julia Pilant, a widow, was living with her son James L. and his family.

William Melvin Pilant married Mary Bell Brooks in about 1919 and had one child, Frances Louise Pilant who was born 14 October 1919.

## Brooks Family

G.W. (George W.) Brooks was born in Georgia in July, 1843. Some time before 1862, he married Mary Jane Unknown. Mary Jane was born in Georgia in about 1840. G.W. and Mary Jane had at least ten children:

| Name             | Birth date | Where | Notes               |
|------------------|------------|-------|---------------------|
| George W. Brooks | 7/1843     | GA    |                     |
| Mary Jane        | ~1840      | GA    |                     |
| Henry Ely        | 10/1862.   | GA    | d: 10/21/1938       |
| George P.        | ~1865      | GA    |                     |
| Julia A.         | ~1867      | GA    |                     |
| Susan            | ~1869      | GA    | may have died young |
| Elizabeth        | ~1870      |       |                     |
| Effa             | ~1872      |       |                     |
| Magga Lee        | ~1876      |       |                     |
| Amanda O         | ~1878      |       |                     |
| Emma C.          | 11/1880    |       |                     |
| Tempy A.         | 10/1842    | MS    |                     |

In 1870, George W. was listed in the census as being a farmer living in the town of Newborn in Newton County, GA. The data shows that his father was born in South Carolina while his mother was born in Georgia.

By 1880, George W. and family had moved to Monroe, Arkansas, in the county of Sevier, and was farming there. In this census there are some interesting facts:

- ✓ Susan is not listed although she was born in 1869 and would be 11 years old. Maybe she had died or maybe she was living in another household for some reason.
- ✓ George P. is listed as having a “paralysis”.
- ✓ Julia A.(age 14) and Elizabeth (age 10) are listed with the occupation of “Ast HK” which probably translates to “Assistant House Keeper”. In this area and in this time frame, most young girls in their teens were listed with the occupation of “Ast HK”.

1890 census data were destroyed in a fire so it is difficult to determine from census data exactly what occurred in the 20 years beginning 1880.

There is an interesting find in the 1900 census, however. In 1900, George W. Brooks is found living in Eastland County with his wife Tempy A. (correct spelling is unclear....alternate spelling is Tempie) and daughter Emma C. George is 56 years old while Tempy is 57. She was born in October 1842. Emma C. is 19 and was born November 1880. The census data states that they were married for 12 years and that Tempy and George had no children together. Tempy was born in Mississippi while here parents were born in Tennessee and Virginia.

This data suggests that this is the same George W. as discussed earlier and that George's first wife Mary Jane may have died sometime after giving birth to a daughter Emma and that he remarried in about 1888 to Tempy.

In addition, George W's next door (or nearby) neighbor in Eastland county in 1900 was his son Henry with wife Lou and children Clyde, Mary, and Clinton.

George W. and Mary Jane's firstborn son Henry E. Brooks married Lou B. (or A.) Clark in about 1891. Lou was born in Texas on 1 September 1875 or 1876 to Luther and Jeanette Clark and was 15 years old when she and Henry were married. Lou's father was born in Mississippi while her mother was born in Texas. Henry and Lou had at least ten children, three of which died at birth:

| Name             | Birth date       | Where            | Notes          |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Henry Ely Brooks | 10/1862          | GA, near Atlanta | d: 10/21/1938  |
| Lou B. Clark     | 9/1/1875 or 1876 | Conroe, TX       | D: 1965        |
| Clyde            | 2/1893           | TX               |                |
| Mary Bell        | 12/27/1896       | Rising Star, TX  | D: 11/1972     |
| Clinton          | 12/1899          | TX               |                |
| George           | ~1905            | OK               |                |
| Terrell (sp)     | ~1908            | TX               | Died at birth? |
| Addie            | ~1912            | OK               |                |
| Winnie Gail      | ~1915            | TX               |                |
| Thelma Mozelle.  | ~1921            | TX               |                |
| Unknown          |                  |                  | Died at birth  |
| Unknown          |                  |                  | Died at birth  |

In 1900, Henry was a farmer in Eastland County, probably in/near the town of Rising Star. He and Lou had three children at home: Clyde (7), Mary (3), and Clinton (6 months). Their nearby neighbors were George, Tempy, and Emma.

In 1910 Henry was listed as a laborer in Eastland County living near his father as noted above. Children living at home included Clyde (17), Mary Bell (13), Clint (10), George (5), and Terrell (2). Clyde was working as a cook on the railroad. George W and Tempy and daughter Emma were living in Eastland County but apparently not near Henry. Emma was still at home at the age of 28 and was a seamstress.

By 1920, Henry was listed as a farmer in Knox County, TX. His son Clint and his wife Monnie (born in ~1902) were living with Henry and Lou. Clyde (27), George (15), Terrell (11) Addie ((8) and Winnie Gail (5) were still living at home. Mary Bell (24) had married William M. Pilant and had moved out of the house. Both Clyde and Clint were listed as farm laborers.

George W., Tempy, and Emma were nowhere to be found in 1920 census data. It is feasible that George and Tempy had passed away and that Emma had married.

By 1930, Henry and his family had moved to San Angelo, TX and Henry as a watchman for a construction company. He was 68 years old. His son George and his wife Maggie (born ~ 1907) were living with Henry and Lou.

Henry and Lou's first born daughter Mary Bell Brooks married William M. Pilant in about 1919. They had one daughter, Frances Louise Pilant.

### **Frances Louise Pilant**

Frances Pilant was born 14 October 1919, probably in Dallas County, TX. She was an only-child. Frances' father William Pilant was born in February 1897 in Texas while her mother, Mary Bell Brooks was born on 27 December 1896 in Texas. Mary Bell Pilant was known as "Gigi" to her grandchildren.

In 1920, per the census, William Pilant (age 21) and Mary Bell (age 21) were living in Dallas County, Justice Precinct #8 along with their daughter Frances (age 3 months). His occupation was listed as farmer. Justice Precinct #8 is now the present day Irving, TX.

In 1930, William and Mary, ages 33 and 32, were living Big Springs, TX. Frances was 10 years old. William's occupation was listed as Proprietor, Pig Stand. The Pig Stand was a small roadside drive-up restaurant. It originated in Dallas in 1921 and William apparently owned a franchise to this pioneering restaurant. It was apparently the country's first drive-up restaurant. William's mom and dad were listed as being from Tennessee while Mary's mother and father were listed as being born in Louisiana and Georgia respectively. There is a conflict in the census data as to where William's parents were born. Alabama seems to be the likely state and not Tennessee.

Apparently, William acquired another restaurant prior to 1933. This was the Hancock Café in Ozona, TX.

William and Mary moved quite a few times during their life. In addition to the towns listed above, it is known that they also lived for a while in Round Rock TX. They were divorced later in life. William remarried. Mary did not. Mary and Frances moved to San Antonio where Mary Bell worked in a café. They remained there until Frances married in 1941.

Frances Louise Pilant Rachal developed lung cancer which compromised her health, and 5 years later she was diagnosed with cancer again, and died at the age of 56 in July 1976 in Rockport, TX.