

Margaret Coleman McNair is buried in Semmes Cemetery on the NW side of Meridian, Mississippi, with her husband, six children, two brothers, one uncle, her adoptive Mulholland parents and brother. The inscription on her gravestone is “Mama, Margaret Agnes McNair, Nov 19, 1859, April 10, 1948.”

First available record of her is US Census taken 29 June 1860 in Vicksburg, Warren County, Mississippi: dwelling 696, family 696

John Coleman, age 30 male, Laborer, born Ireland (presumptive father)

Margaret “ age 28 female, born Ireland (Presumptive mother)

Margaret “ age 1 female, born Miss

James “ age 28 male, laborer, born Ireland (presumptive bother of John, uncle of Margaret)

Mary A “ age 21 female born Ohio (Presumptive wife of James)

Grant’s siege of Vicksburg, from May into July 1863, caused severe shortages of food and medicine for all in the area. Scurvy, malaria, dysentery, diarrhea, and other diseases affected both military and the civilian populations. It seems likely that John Coleman, his wife Margaret and sister in law Mary A did not survive to bury James who died in 1867 in Lauderdale County.

The next record that I have found of the Coleman family is the gravestone of James Coleman in Semmes Cemetery with inscription “ James Coleman, died Aug 19, 1867, At Rest” and in the family plot McNair, Coleman and Mulholland.

The US Census taken 23 July 1870, Township 6, Lauderdale County, Mississippi has Margaret Coleman, age 11 with 3 younger siblings in their own dwelling #484 and listed as family #484. Patrick, age 8, Cathrine age 5, and James age 3. No adults, only those four pre-teen children.

Adjacent, family 483, are the Mulhollands who informally adopt the orphan Coleman children. Specifically they are: James Mulholland, age 61, and Margaret, age 40, both born in Ireland and their first two children - James 13 and Mary 17, who were both born in Alabama.

In 1875 sixteen year old Margaret “Maggie” Coleman married Henry L McNair who was 11 or 12 years older, maybe his second marriage. In 1880 she and Henry have 3 children, Maggie age 4, Willie age 2, and Obie 6 months old.

The 1900 census has them married 25 years, Maggie is 40 years old and reports as mother of 11 children with 10 alive, from age 23 years to 6 months. Her husband Henry died the next month. The baby, Nellie Catherine McNair the next June, both son James Obie and brother James T died in 1907.

Her husband H.L McNair died intestate and in August 1900, She is named administratrix of his estate. Her name appears both as Mrs Maggie McNair and Mrs M.A. McNair. Signing the bond are son WJ McNair, daughter M.A. McNair, and brother James T Coleman.

In the census 1910, Margaret McNair is a widow, age 50, born in Mississippi, both parents born in Ireland, with 4 teenage children with her. She reports as mother of 9 children (2 less than previous census) with 8 alive. Her married daughter Margaret Wilkins, husband and daughter are near by living with Margaret Mulholland, (who listed Margaret Wilkins as granddaughter with grandson in law and great grand daughter.)

In 1920, she reports as Maggie A. McNair, age 59, a widow, born in Mississippi, both parents born in Ireland and spoke Irish. She has two adult, unmarried children with her and 6 roomers.

Adoptive mother, Margaret Mulholland died in Jan 1924 and left 40 acres on east side of Meridian to her daughter Mrs M.E. McNair and her son J.H., Mulholland. Her money was to be divided in four equal parts between daughter Mrs M.E. McNair, (son) J.H. Mulholland, heirs of Mrs Kate Coleman Kling, and Edwin J Coleman son of Pat H Coleman. Also left money for grave markers including James Coleman, and left furniture to granddaughter Lillie Kling Watson.

She is living with her son Eugene in 1930 and he lists her as Maggie R and her parents born in Mississippi.

Her last census, in 1940, still Lauderdale County, she is again head of the house, lists her name as M.C. McNair, age 81 and has same two adult sons with her and also her adult daughter and granddaughter.