

# Hallinan Genealogy

Genealogical Research Services

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## RESEARCH REPORT

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<b>Case Title</b>	Search for Bertha (McCoy) McGinley's mother.
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### Research Question

Who was the mother of Bertha McCoy, born 10 March 1881, and married to Walter Scott McGinley on 12 May 1895?

### Background Information

Bertha (McCoy) McGinley died 20 June 1931 in Stamford, Jones County, Texas, from pernicious anemia which she had been suffering from for three years.<sup>1</sup> The details that can be ascertained from her death certificate were provided by her thirty-one year old son, Charlie McGinley, but he failed to provide the information for his maternal grandmother whose name and birthplace were reported as unknown.

### Proof Summary

Family tradition held that descendants were connected to a Native American princess, but surviving records do not identify whether this story referred to Bertha McCoy, her mother, or another ancestor. No record located during this research directly identifies Bertha McCoy's mother; however, the evidence provides a clearer picture of Bertha's reported origins and the limits of the surviving records.

To evaluate the information reported on Bertha McCoy's death certificate, records were examined in reverse chronological order, beginning with her final census appearance in 1930.<sup>2</sup> Her appearance in the 1930 United States census at first glance does not appear to provide any useful information into Bertha's identity as the birth locations for her and her parents are in conflict with the death certificate. The discrepancies raise questions regarding the source and reliability of the information reported for Bertha.

In the 1920 United States census, the enumerated data for her and her father are a match to her death certificate, and for the first time a clue to the mother's origins is given, a reported birthplace of South Carolina.<sup>3</sup> The family resided in Hylton, Nolan County, Texas, and the household included Walter and Bertha McGinley along with their six children and two grandchildren.

The 1910 census corroborates Bertha's age, length of marriage, and children, but reports Texas as the birthplace of Bertha and her parents, information contradicted by earlier and later records.<sup>4</sup> To see a more accurate representation of this data, the 1900 United States census gives a detailed picture of the birth locations, but highlights inconsistencies in what was reported.<sup>5</sup> For example, Walter's father was reported as being born in Georgia in all

documents, but his mother's birth location was unknown. She was still alive and in 1942 provided an affidavit for her son Walter's delayed birth certificate, giving her birth location as Alabama.<sup>6</sup> Conversely, Bertha's birthplace was listed as Indian Territory, the name at the time in 1900 for Oklahoma, which became a state in November 1907. Her father and mother, however, were noted as being born in Louisiana and Alabama, respectively. These inconsistencies become clearer when considered alongside later evidence.

Walter Scott McGinley and Bertha McCoy married on 12 May 1895 in Weatherford, Parker County, Texas, when Walter was 21 and Bertha was 14.<sup>7</sup> There are no parental acknowledgements, release, or permission shown for the minor bride. Later land records in Tarrant County and Parker County, Texas, in 1897 and 1898 have property transactions for Walter and Bertha McGinley, and dower releases for Bertha McGinley.<sup>8 9</sup> She was still a minor at the time of the transactions but no parental or familial connection other than her husband is found in research of probate and land records.

Bertha's obituary appeared in the Stamford American on 26 June 1931.<sup>10</sup> "Mrs. Bessie McGinley died Saturday." Although the obituary corroborates Bertha's reported Oklahoma birthplace, it contains factual errors, identifying her husband as "Tom McGinley" and reporting four surviving children when six children survived her. These discrepancies reduce confidence in the obituary's family information while not necessarily affecting its report of her birthplace.

Although not original evidence, her memorial on Find A Grave references Kinney Funeral Home Records, Book 1929-1934, page 225, a potentially valuable source for future research.<sup>11</sup>

Perhaps the most compelling evidence of Bertha's birth location comes from her children's delayed birth certificates. A common occurrence during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was to document the births that occurred in rural homes, at a later date when records were needed to prove the birth of an individual. These records required affidavits and witnesses to prove their validity. In the case of Bertha's children, four of the six children filed for delayed birth certificates (see Table 1). Three of the four children listed their mother's birthplace as Oklahoma, while the fourth, Archibald, provided a more detailed location of Choctaw Nation. These delayed birth certificates were

Record	Date	Evidence	Supporting Evidence	Significance
United States census, 1900 <sup>a</sup>	6 June 1900	Birthplace stated as Indian Territory.	as Father's birthplace listed as Louisiana, Mother's birthplace Alabama.	
United States census, 1910 <sup>b</sup>	21 April 1910	Birthplace stated as Texas.	Parent's birthplaces listed as Texas.	
United States census, 1920 <sup>c</sup>	2 - 3 March 1920	Birthplace stated as Oklahoma.	Father's birthplace listed as Missouri, Mother's birthplace South Carolina.	
United States census, 1930 <sup>d</sup>	10 April 1930	Birthplace stated as Texas.	Parent's birthplaces listed as United States.	
Texas Death Certificate <sup>e</sup>	20 June 1931	Birthplace stated as Oklahoma.	Father's birthplace listed as Missouri; Mother is unknown.	
Delayed Birth Certificate <sup>f</sup>	17 August 1960	Bertha McCoy's birthplace reported as Oklahoma by daughter.	Supporting documents: son's birth certificate from 1935, Tax Poll dated 1954, paternal aunt provided affidavit dated 1 Aug 1960.	Willie Grace McGinley born in Jonesboro, Coryell, Texas 14 Sep 1897. Father born in Texas, Mother in Oklahoma,
Delayed Birth Certificate <sup>g</sup>	14 July 1941	Bertha McCoy's birthplace reported as Oklahoma by son and husband.	Father Walter age 30 born in Coryell County, Texas, Mother Bertha age 26 born in Oklahoma. Signed by W.S. McGinley.	Claud McGinley born 25 Apr 1902 Aledo, Parker Texas, twin birth, younger brother Clyde.
Delayed Birth Certificate <sup>h</sup>	14 July 1941	Bertha McCoy's birthplace reported as Oklahoma by son and husband.	Father Walter age 30 born in Coryell County, Texas, Mother Bertha age 26 born in Oklahoma. Signed by W.S. McGinley.	Clyde McGinley born 25 Apr 1902 Aledo, Parker Texas, twin birth, older brother Claud.
Delayed Birth Certificate <sup>i</sup>	4 December 1941	Bertha McCoy's birthplace reported as Choctaw Nation by son.	Father - Walter Scott McGinley, age 41 born Coryell County, Texas. Mother - Bertha McCoy, age 33 born Choctaw Nation. Affidavits by Walter Scott McGinley, H.I. Dean.	Archibald Clarence McGinley born 13 September 1914, Shep, Taylor, Texas.

**Table 1. Evidence Relating to the Birthplace of Bertha McCoy**

<sup>a</sup> 1900 U. S. census, Parker Co., Tx., pop. sch., Justice Precinct 7, ED 78, sheet 3, Walter McGinley household.

<sup>b</sup> 1910 U. S. census, Nolan Co., Tx., Justice Precinct 3, ED 177, sheet 4-A, Walter S McGinley household.

<sup>c</sup> 1920 U. S. census, Nolan Co., Tx., Justice Precinct 3, ED 178, sheet 4-A, Walter McGinley household.

<sup>d</sup> 1930 U. S. census, Stonewall Co., Tx., Justice Precinct No. 3, ED 217-4, sheet 5-A, W. S. McGinley household.

<sup>e</sup> Jones Co., TX., "Texas Death Certificates, 1903-1982," image, death certificate, Jones Co., Bessie McGinley, aged 50.

<sup>f</sup> Coryell County, Texas, "Delayed Births v. 1-3 file date 1960-1974 event date 1871-1922", database with images, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G9VK-S9Q6-6> : accessed 30 May 2026), entry for Willie Grace McGinley, delayed birth certificate 8789, for 14 September 1897 birth, Image 70 of 1467.

<sup>g</sup> Texas, "Probate delayed births v. 285-292 no. 138801-142200, Jul. 1941", database with images, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G9XW-NWG6> : accessed 30 May 2026), entry for Claud McGinley, delayed birth certificate 139250, for 25 April 1902 birth, Image 463 of 3479.

<sup>h</sup> Texas, "Probate delayed births v. 285-292 no. 138801-142200, Jul. 1941", database with images, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-89XW-NWN3> : accessed 30 May 2026), entry for Clyde McGinley, delayed birth certificate 139251, for 25 April 1902 birth, Image 464 of 3479.

<sup>i</sup> Texas, "Probate delayed births v. 428-435 no. 210201-213600, Dec. 1941", database with images, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-99X7-K9HW-9> : accessed 30 May 2026), entry for Archibald Clarence McGinley, delayed birth certificate 211020, for 13 September 1914 birth, Image 844 of 3477.

birthplace, providing stronger support than any single census entry alone.

While no direct evidence was found linking Bertha McCoy to her parents, her death certificate identified Tom McCoy as her father, reportedly born in Missouri.<sup>12</sup> No contemporary record was located that independently corroborated this information.

Searches of probate, guardianship, land, and court records in Parker County and associated Texas localities failed to identify a parent, guardian, or other relative of Bertha McCoy.<sup>13</sup> A guardianship record initially appearing to reference Bertha McCoy proved to concern Bertha McCorckle.<sup>14</sup> The absence of guardianship or probate records is notable given Bertha's marriage at age fourteen, circumstances that often generated records identifying parents or legal guardians. Likewise, no probate record was located identifying Tom McCoy as Bertha's father.<sup>15</sup> These negative findings do not disprove Tom McCoy as Bertha's father, but they show that no located record connects him to Bertha or identifies her mother.

## Summary of Findings

The collected evidence presents conflicting reports regarding the birthplace of Bertha's parents, variously identifying them as natives of Louisiana, Alabama, Missouri, and South Carolina. However, the records show greater consistency regarding Bertha herself, whose birthplace is repeatedly reported as Indian Territory, Oklahoma, or Choctaw Nation.

Bertha McCoy was a fourteen-year-old girl who married young, owned property with her husband while she was still a teenager and together, built a family. The research into her mother's identity, while unsuccessful, led to a wealth of information on the individual that was Bertha (McCoy) McGinley. The family lore depicting a Native American princess cannot be proven, or conversely disproven, based on evidence alone. The preponderance of evidence supports a birth in Indian Territory, later Oklahoma, and suggests that Bertha was most likely born within the Choctaw Nation. Later reporting of her birthplace followed Oklahoma's statehood in 1907 and conformed with the naming of the state at that time.

## Future Research

Future targeted research should include the locating of Kinney Funeral Home Records, Book 1929-1934, page 225. Investigate marriage, probate, and death records for candidate Thomas "Tom" McCoy, whose age, residence, spouse, or children align with Bertha's reported 1881 birth in Indian Territory/Oklahoma. Lastly, determine whether records survive for Bradshaw Baptist Church, whose pastor officiated at Bertha's funeral.

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<sup>1</sup> "Texas Death Certificates, 1903-1982," database with images, *Ancestry* ([https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/2272/images/40394\\_b062020-01391](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/2272/images/40394_b062020-01391) : accessed 11 December 2025) >Jones>1931> Apr-Jun, certificate 680-25999, Bessie McGinley, aged 50: citing "Department of State Health Services. Texas Death Certificates, 1903–1982. Austin, Texas, USA".

<sup>2</sup> 1930 U. S. census, Stonewall County, Texas, Justice Precinct No. 3, page 235 (stamped), enumeration district (ED) 217-4, sheet 5-A, dwelling 90, family 92, W. S. McGinley household; imaged, "United States Census, 1930," *Ancestry* ([https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6224/images/4547368\\_01076](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6224/images/4547368_01076) : accessed 30 May 2026), Image 9 of 27.

<sup>3</sup> 1920 U. S. census, Nolan County, Hylton Village, Texas, Justice Precinct 3, page 63 (stamped), enumeration district (ED) 178, sheet 4-A, farm, family 39, Walter McGinley household; imaged, "United States Census, 1920," *Ancestry* ([https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6061/images/4391487\\_00710](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6061/images/4391487_00710) : accessed 21 December 2025), Image 4 of 8.

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- <sup>4</sup> 1910 U. S. census, Nolan County, Texas, Justice Precinct 3, page 195 (stamped), enumeration district (ED) 177, sheet 4-A, dwelling 57, family 42, Walter S McGinley household; imaged, "United States Census, 1910," *Ancestry* ([https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7884/images/4454394\\_01002](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7884/images/4454394_01002) : accessed 21 December 2025), Image 7 of 23.
- <sup>5</sup> 1900 U. S. census, Parker County, Texas, population schedule, Justice Precinct 7, enumeration district (ED) 78, sheet 3, Walter McGinley household; imaged, "1900 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry* ([https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7602/images/4118552\\_00501](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7602/images/4118552_00501) : accessed 21 December 2025) Image 6 of 32.
- <sup>6</sup> Coryell County, Texas "Probate Delayed Birth Record 5," Walter McGinley delayed birth certificate, filed 25 April 1942, digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-99VV-TCN> : accessed 30 May 2026), Image 664 of 856.
- <sup>7</sup> "Texas, County Marriage Records, 1837 -2010," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-L94K-MNQL> : accessed 11 December 2025) W.S. McGinley and Bertha McCoy, Image 436 of 652.
- <sup>8</sup> Coryell County, Texas, Deed Book 19:137, Charles McGinley and Jane McGinley to Walter S. McGinley, deed, 6 April 1897; "Deed Records, 1867–1899," digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3SF-WQFF-G> : accessed 3 June 2026).
- <sup>9</sup> Coryell County, Texas, Deed Book 21:11-13, Charles McGinley and Jane McGinley, Walter S. McGinley and Bertha McGinley to Bell Overton, deed, 3 January 1898; "Deed Records, 1897–1900," digital image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3SF-8B69> : accessed 3 June 2026).
- <sup>10</sup> "Mrs. Bessie McCoy Dies," *Stamford [Texas] American*, 26 June 1931, page 1, column 8; imaged, *Texashistory.unt.edu* (<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph975671/m1/1/zoom/> : viewed 8 June 2026).
- <sup>11</sup> *Find a Grave*, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/129635204/bertha-mcginley>: accessed 8 June 2026), memorial page for Bertha "Bessie" McCoy McGinley (10 Mar 1881–20 Jun 1931), Find a Grave Memorial ID [129635204](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/129635204), citing Shep Cemetery, Taylor County, Texas, USA.
- <sup>12</sup> Jones Co., TX., "Texas Death Certificates, 1903-1982," image, death certificate, Jones Co., Bessie McGinley, aged 50.
- <sup>13</sup> Parker County, Texas, "Probate minutes, 1874-1935; general index, 1874-1950; probate packets, 1862-1889", database with images, *FamilySearch*, searched probate index entries by last name beginning with M and Mc, no entry for Bertha McCoy.
- <sup>14</sup> Probate Packets, Collin. Probate Estate Files 1893, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QHV-1QGB-J1MP> : viewed 6 June 2026), entry for Bertha McCoy; name returned in error, actual name Bertha McCorckle.
- <sup>15</sup> Parker County, Texas, "Probate minutes, 1874-1935; general index, 1874-1950; probate packets, 1862-1889", database with images, *FamilySearch*, searched probate index entries by last name beginning with M and Mc, no entry for Tom McCoy.