

estate to his beloved wife and expressing the desire that she educate and raise the youngest children as best she can, as he knows they will be “good and dutiful, loving and affectionate to their mother.” There are 13 headstones at Dallas for Rayburns. This one for Noah needs repair, again.

### **Cearley Family**

Patriarch **Elisha Cearley** (1802-1880) from North Carolina fathered eleven known children, with two wives – **Elizabeth Fortner** and, after her death, the much younger Mississippi-born **Adaline Hellums**. Elisha and Elizabeth were in Lafayette County by the 1850 census.

There are 11 (merely a coincidence) stones extant in the Dallas Cemetery for Cearleys, with other family members – such as Elisha and Elizabeth – known to be buried there but stones no longer visible.

The children of Elisha and Adaline were all born in Dallas, but in maturity moved to Texas and Oklahoma. Adaline will spend her last years living among their homes.

All of Elisha and Elizabeth’s children marry “locals” and raise their families close to home. They marry into families whose names are seen across Old Dallas Cemetery: Hartsfield, Watts, Swaim, Tutor, Harwell, Phillips, another Swaim. Several marry multiple times.

Let’s meet son **George B. Cearley**. He has a rather sad story to tell us, but it is so well documented that it could be a “Who’s Who of Dallas, Mississippi.” Nearly everyone in Dallas was involved in the affairs of George before the dust settled. So to speak.

George married first **Permilia Kirkland**. Her mother, **Elizabeth Harwell Kirkland**, rests in peace over on the edge of the cemetery with her Harwell grandparents, parents, and sisters and brothers. (They will tell their own stories.) George and Permilia’s only children to survive to maturity were sons **Abb Wesley** and **Posey** born 13 years apart. They lost 4 daughters, 2 named and 2 not, who are all buried in Dallas with headstones. Permilia died the year Posey was born, 1873, possibly in childbirth.

In September 1886 George married **Julia Frances Lindley Swaim**, a widow. He died 4 *weeks* after their marriage.

George, 54, dies intestate and deeply in debt, and Julia knows this, saying he wanted his debts to be paid and that she makes no claim to his estate. Louis A. Latham, who runs the local dry goods store, and from whom George has been buying for some time on credit, assumes the role of administrator of the estate. George’s creditors come out from all over Dallas. Neighbors help Latham itemize and appraise all of George’s worldly goods: cotton seed, corn, cows (black, spotted, black-headed, red), 2 little oxen, sows and pigs, a colt and yearling, plows, saws, shovels, household objects, a wagon, a clock.

The purchases of the pieces of the estate represent most of the families of Dallas: Brown, Watts, Bratton, Hartsfield, Phillips, Russell, Moreland, Harrison, Davis; even George’s son Abb Wesley Cearley and George’s brother Eli. (stone at right)

**J. L. Hartsfield** assumes guardianship of minor son, Posey, who had been moving back and forth from the Cearley home to Julia’s home for the 4 weeks his father was married. Oddly, we find no mention of Posey after the estate is wrapped up in 1888. (perhaps he was living with Julia – who had quickly remarried a Mr. Sanders – in 1890 but that is the census that burned). The guardianship papers use the name “Posey Kelly” giving us a clue to the pronunciation of Cearley.

