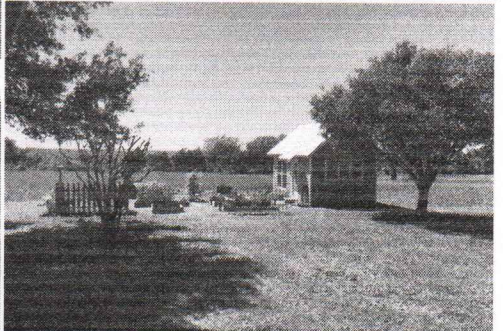


9105 Mayfair Lane

Brenham, Texas 77833



This Queen Anne-styled house was built in 1901, the last year of the Victorian Era. It was constructed on North Market Street in Brenham, Texas, for Robert and May Pennington. Brenham had power available to many residential areas by then, so it was wired for electricity. It remained at that location until 1976 when it was relocated, and what is now the Chase drive-through bank was constructed on the property.

Mr. Pennington was a lawyer and businessman and a descendant of Syd Pennington, a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence. His wife, May, was a poet, artist, historian, and associate editor of the *Brenham Daily Banner-Press*.

After Mrs. Pennington's death in 1922, the house was sold to the Hoffman-Reese family. Mr. Reese was sheriff for Washington County from 1925-39. His wife continued to live in the house until 1965.

In 1976 the house was given to Irvin Levy of Houston, moved to its current location, and refurbished.

In 1990 the house was purchased by Steve and Mary Sue James. They enlarged the house, restored it to its original Victorian glory.

PENNINGTON - REESE HOUSE

In 1901 the home was built on the 200th block of North Market Street in Brenham for Robert Elijah and May Williams Pennington.¹ The house was built by a Brenham building contractor, Alex Griffin (b. 1870 d. Oct. 15, 1939),² and was wired for electricity.³ The house exterior is of cypress blocks beveled to resemble masonry. It is Queen Anne style with wrap-around porches on the first and second stories and has a turret on the third floor. The interior of the house features original pine, oak and pecan woodwork, long leaf pine floors, pecan staircase, and stained glass window.

R. E. Pennington (b. May 13, 1866⁴ d. Mar. 21, 1952) was a prominent Brenham lawyer and businessman and descendant of Syd O. Pennington, one of the signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence.⁵ His wife May (b. 1868 d. Mar. 26, 1922)⁷ was a poet, artist, historian and associate editor of The Brenham Daily Banner Press.⁸

After Mrs. Pennington's death, Mr. Pennington sold the house to the Hoffman L. Reese family in October, 1922. Mr. Reese (b. July 18, 1884 d. Sept. 3, 1939) was sheriff of Washington County from 1925 until his death in 1939. He also served as President of the Texas Sheriff's Association. His wife Kathyrine Dodd Reese¹⁰ (b. Mar. 31, 1888 d. Oct. 21, 1982)¹¹ lived in the house until 1965 at which time she moved into the home of her daughter Kathyrine. In 1977 Mrs. Reese sold the property to First National Bank (now Bank One) of Brenham. The bank was located adjacent to the Reese house and bought the property for bank expansion.¹² At the same time the house was acquired by Irvin Levy of Houston, and he had the house, which had been vacant over 10 years,¹³ moved to its present location on Aug. 9, 1977.¹⁴ According to Mrs. Reese's daughters Martha Reese Sterling and Kathyrine Reese Jones (who both grew up in the house),

in 1927 a carport and a sleeping porch above the carport were added, and a breakfast room and bathroom were made from the back north and south porches. (See photo labeled late 1920's.) The carport and sleeping porch were removed when the house was moved to its present location.¹⁵ On June 1, 1990, Stephen T. and Mary Sue James purchased the house and property from Mr. Levy. The Jameses had all the woodwork and floors restored.

Researched and compiled by Mary Sue James, Rt. 5, Box 344 J, Brenham, Texas, 77833, Oct. 30, 1992.

¹ As stated in the deed of R. E. Pennington to H. L. Reese, Oct. 2, 1922. Original is on file in office of James Reese Jones, grandson of H. L. Reese and an attorney in Brenham. A copy of this deed is in the possession of the present owners of the house.

² Phone conversation with Julia Griffin Friedrich, daughter of Alex Griffin, Brenham, Sept. 25, 1992.

³ Brenham Daily Banner, Vol. XXVI, No. 16, Jan. 18, 1901, p. 4.

⁴ Phone conversation with Mrs. R. E. (Helen) Pennington, niece by marriage of R. E. Pennington, Brenham, Sept. 21, 1992.

⁵ Brenham Banner Press, Vol. 87, No. 59, Mar. 24, 1952, p. 1.

⁶ 1920 Brenham census, Nancy Carol Roberts Library, Brenham.

⁷ Brenham Daily Banner Press, Vol. 39, No. 1, Mar. 27, 1922, p. 1.

⁸ Ibid, p. 1 and conversation with Mrs. Pennington's niece, Mrs. Helen Pennington, Brenham, Feb. 19, 1992.

⁹ As stated in deed (see footnote #1).

¹⁰ Brenham Banner Press, Vol 56, No. 138, Sept. 4, 1939, p. 1.

¹¹ Conversation with Martha Reese Sterling, Brenham, Oct. 30, 1992.

¹² Brenham Banner Press, Vo. 111, No. 157, Aug. 9, 1977, pp. 1-2, and Washington County Deeds, Vol. 357, pp. 674-675, Jan. 24, 1977.

¹³ Conversation with Martha Reese Sterling, Brenham, Mar. 2, 1992.

¹⁴ Brenham Banner Press, op. cit, Aug. 9, 1977, p. 1.

¹⁵ Conversation with Martha Reese Sterling and Kathryn Reese Jones, when they visited the house on Feb. 18, 1992.

SITE OF LIVE OAK FEMALE SEMINARY

AND JAMES WESTON MILLER HOME

On this site in February, 1853, Reverend James Weston Miller opened the Live Oak Female Seminary in his home.¹ J. W. Miller was born Nov. 15, 1815, near Mill Village, Erie County, Pennsylvania and graduated in 1840 from Jefferson College, Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, as valedictorian and from Allegheny Theological Seminary in 1844. He served as principal at Waterford Academy, teacher at Jefferson College, and principal at Grove Academy, Steubenville, Ohio. In 1844 he moved to Houston, Texas, where he became minister of First Presbyterian Church. For health reasons he moved to Washington County and he became pastor of Prospect Presbyterian Church in 1850.²

The location of Texas's first capital at Washington-on-the-Brazos brought many settlers to the county and many of the Millers' neighbors were prominent families in republic and early statehood days of Texas. Thomas Affleck, who had the largest library in Texas at that time, Captain Horatio Chriesman (surveyor-general of Stephen F. Austin's colony, Judge R. E. Baylor (for whom Baylor University is named), as well as the first judges for the Texas Supreme Court lived nearby. When Reverend Miller opened the school he served as superintendent and his wife's sister, Rebecca Jane Kilgore Stuart was the principal. Miss Stuart was educated at Steubenville Seminary and married Dr. George C. Red, whom she met after moving to Washington County. The school immediately became one of the most popular and best girls' schools in the state. At the height of its prosperity it included several buildings including dormitories, an auditorium and music conservatory. All of the buildings were within the same enclosure, surrounded by huge oak trees for which the school was named. The science

instructor was Dr. George Clark Red, who married Rebecca Stuart in 1854. There was a limit of 60 boarders and 50 day pupils. Neighborhood boys who met the school standards were allowed in classes along with male Miller and Red relatives.³

Reverend Miller, Mrs. Miller, Dr. Red, Mrs. Red and other faculty members taught Latin, French, Greek, moral philosophy, English, history, sciences, mathematics, music and home economics.⁴

The Civil War disrupted school and only day pupils attended. After the war the school again thrived until Reverend Miller decided to give up the responsibilities of a large school and Mrs. Red moved to Austin to open Stuart Seminary in 1875.⁵ From that time Live Oak continued as a day school to train the children of the Prospect Church. The school was taught by Miller's daughters until his death⁶ in 1888 (Apr. 29).⁷ According to Reverend William S. Red, D.D., "Live Oak Seminary, which was patronized by people of various religious demoninations and of no church at all, was for twenty years the ranking school of its kind in the state."⁸ Mr. E. H. Cushing, owner of The Houston Telegram, whose wife and daughter-in-law attended Live Oak, said, "This respectable and well conducted institution of learning is located near Gay Hill. It is surrounded by fertile soil and a large population of intelligent and wealthy planters, who appreciate the importance and advantage to their neighborhood of such an institution, and who show their appreciation by extending it a liberal patronage. I. . . am free to say that I know of no institution in the state where I would as willing place a daughter or friend to receive an education," in an editorial appearing in The Houston Telegraph, Dec. 3, 1856.⁹ Among students at the school were the daughters of the following: A. J. Burke (a Houston mayor), M. D. Conklin (a

leading Houston businessman), Reverend Henry Lee Graves (first president of Baylor University), Judge John Stamps (member of the Congress of the Republic of Texas), Judges E. John Hemphill, Royall T. Wheeler and Abner Smith Lipscomb (judges of the first Texas Supreme Court), Col. A. M. M. Upshaw (representative to the Texas Legislature in 1857 and 1859), & the Hon. John Rice Jones (Postmaster General under President Lamar in the Republic of Texas).¹⁰ Although the school did not confer regular degrees, the course of study placed it at collegiate level.¹¹

Reverend Miller lived here and served as pastor of Prospect Church for 38 years.¹² In 1873 Austin College bestowed the degree of Doctor of Divinity upon him. He was twice Moderator of the Presbyterian Synod of Texas, and was chosen to preach at the Synod's twenty-fifth anniversary.¹³ He was on the original board of trustees of Austin College for twenty five years and twice elected as its President but declined because of his own Live Oak School.¹⁴

Researched and compiled by Mary Sue James, Rt. 5, Box 344J, Brenham, Tx.,
77833, Oct. 27, 1992.

¹ Mabelle Purcell, Two Texas Female Seminaries, The University Press, Midwestern University, Wichita Falls, Tx., 1951, p. 19. Mrs. Purcell gives a detailed account of the school's faculty, student body and curriculum in this book.

² Dr. Robert Finney Miller, A Family of Millers and Stewarts, Aug., 1909, pp. 4-6.

³ Purcell, op. cit., pp. 19-24.

⁴ Ibid, pp. 30-32.

⁵ William Stuart Red, A History of the Presbyterian Church in Texas, The Steck Company, 1936, p. 273.

⁶ Miller, op. cit., p. 9.

⁷ Red, op. cit., p. 408.

⁸ Ibid, p. 273.

⁹ Purcell, op. cit., pp. 55-56.

¹⁰ Ibid, pp. 53-67.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 89.

¹² Miller, op. cit., p. 15.

¹³ Red, op. cit., p. 408.

¹⁴ Dr. Robert Finney Miller, "Early Presbyterianism in Texas as Seen by Rev. James Weston Miller, D. D.," reprinted from The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, Oct., 1915, Vol. XIX, No.2, p. 4.