

# History of Reads of Read Hill

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**M**artin I. Read was born 22, November 1803, in Halifax County, North Carolina. He was the grandson of Jesse Reed, nephew of Stephen Read, and the son of Rhesa and Mary Read. He had five sisters, Eunice Elizabeth, Lydia Elizabeth, Mary Ann, Rebecca, and Nancy Caroline.

Martin received his undergraduate education at Williams and Mary College in Williamsburg, Virginia. In 1826, he graduated in Medicine from the University of Pennsylvania. It was while he was attending William and Mary that he met Eliza Walker, his future bride.

Eliza Walker was the daughter Nathaniel Walker (1870-1816) and his wife, Mary Warburton (1780-1817) of James City County, Virginia.

Eliza and Martin were married in 1836 at Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg, Virginia. In 1834, the young couple moved to Canton, Wilcox County, Alabama. It was while they were living in Canton that their six children were born. They were: Martin Walker, Rhesa Walker, John Walker, Eunice Walker, Rebecca Walker, and Caroline Walker.

In 1854, on the advice of a friend General Titus, for whom Titus County is named, the Reads decided to move to Titus County. It must have looked like a caravan, because Dr. Read not only had to move his family but also one hundred slaves. He and his wife were traveling in one of the old-fashioned carriages, with strong springs but very little bounce. As they passed through Bowie County, somewhere north of (Old) Boston, they had to cross a swollen stream that at one time acted as a natural barrier between east and west Bowie County. It was in the spring of 1854 and chilly, as the driver was attempting to ford Holly Branch, the carriage Eliza Read was riding in overturned and she was thrown into the creek. As a result of exposure, Mrs. Read contracted pneumonia, and the family was detained at (Old) Boston for the length of her illness, which lasted several weeks. Dr. Read decided to remain in Bowie County instead of waiting for Mrs. Reads recovery and continuing on to Titus County. One of the reasons for staying was that Dr. Read had to find some way for his Negroes to earn their board and keep.

The land that Dr. Read found to settle on was the second highest point in three counties. (Red River, Cass, and Bowie) and was a part of the C.M. Collom Head

Right survey. The plantation was located about three miles north-west of (Old) Boston and was called READ HILL. Today it is known as READ HILL CEMETERY.

Dr. Martin I. Read died 14 January 1855, only one year after arriving in Bowie County, of pneumonia, and Eliza survived him by more than twenty years. With the death of his father, Martin Walker Read took over the plantation until his death at the age fifty-three. He married Eliza Killingsworth (1834-1881) in 1855.

John Walker Read married Elizabeth Harris (1849- ).

Eunice Walker Read married William Harrison Tilson (1837-1909) in 1862. In 1873 Tilson married her sister, Rebecca Walker and then in 1884, he married yet another sister, Caroline Walker.

Rhesa Walker followed in his fathers footsteps and became one of the leading physicians of Bowie County. He was born 20, December 1836 in Canton Alabama and died in Texarkana, Texas on 2 August, 1909. Rhesa was a graduate of Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana and in 1858 he graduated from the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania. Rhesa Walker Read began his practice of medicine first in DeKalb, moving to (Old) Boston in 1871, and Finally in 1879 to Texarkana, Texas.

In 1859 Rhesa married Elizabeth Kimbell, who was the daughter of John M. Kimbell and his wife Sara Angelica Elliot. Sara was the daughter of R.M.D.J. Elliot, who was an Alcade of the Republic of Texas, and Sara McCullough.

Dr. and Mrs Read had nine children, six of whom lived to maturity. They were:

1. Sara Ethel (1862-1943), married Walter \_\_\_\_ of Bryan, Texas, They had four children - Ida, Read, Carl, and Walter.

2. Ada Caroline (1867.1955), married in 1889 to Judge Robert Lee Penn (1864-1909). They had nine children - Robert Read, Donald Mitchell, Rhesa Lee, Eugene B., William, Elizabeth, Marian, Sarah, and William Y.

3. Albert Chisholm (1869-1936) married Julia Zimmerman of Little Rock, Arkansas. They had two sons - Albert C. Jr. and Vertner.

4. William Kimbell (1871-1930) married Julia Williams in 1895. They had no

children. He received his medical education at the University of Virginia and Tulane University, from which he graduated in 1894. He began his practice in DeKalb, but in 1902, he became associated with his father in Texarkana.

5. Eugenie Elizabeth (1874-1969) married Spencer Allen Collom (1866-1934). They had four children - Minnie Elizabeth, Alien Read, Martha, and Spencer Allen Jr., S.A., Jr. practice medicine in Texarkana alongside his father.

6. Mary Walker (1876-1941) married Dr. Leonard H. Bush of Huntsville, Texas. They had three children - Katherine, Leonard Ewing, and Mary.

Dr Rhesa Walker Read served in the War Between the States as a surgeon in the Texas Cavalry C.S.A. with the rank of Major.

William Kimbell Read, one of Rhesa Walker's sons, typified the "old country doctor" but he also recognized the advantages of the new scientific medicine which he began about the time of graduation. For this reason he sought to bring its' beneficial effects to this section of the country, and planned to establish a "Mayo" type clinic. Through this it might be said that he was the "Father of Southerm Clinic," although he did not live to see it completely organized.

One of R.W. Read's grandsons Spencer A. Collom Jr. along with Henry M. Carney founded the present day Collom and Carney Clinic.

When the estate of Martin I. Read was divided among his children. Read Hill became the property of Caroline, who with the consent of her three brothers, deeded it to the city of New Boston for a cemetery. She received the Family Plot for the use of any heirs desiring to use it.

Those among the Read/Tilson families that are buried at Read Hill Cemetery are: Dr. Martin I. Read, Eliza Walker Read, Martin W. Read, Eliza I. Read, John W. Read, Elizabeth Read, Mary E. Read, Mitchell Read, Eunice Read, Thomas Clyde Read, Caroline Read Tilson, Rebecca Read Tilson, Eunice W. Read Tilson, W.H. Tilson, Laura Tilson, Kittie Clyde Tilson, William Lee Tilson.