

John Marshall Coalson's first child was Willie, who was born and died in Mississippi before the second child was born. In 1869, John Marshall Coalson, wife Mary Eleanor, his mother-in-law, Matilda Eleanor Black-Shirley, and what children had been born in Mississippi, moved to a community in Parker County called Bear Creek. (Understand that there are many such named communities in Texas; so named because somebody probably saw bears there?) In 1874, the new children born in Texas and the above moved to what is known as Bethesda Community, in northwest Parker County. There Mrs. Shirley, both John Marshall and wife Mary Eleanor, and two of their sons lived out the rest of their lives and are buried there; the sons were John Black Coalson and Vines Lindsey Coalson, II (named for an uncle of the same name).

In 1885, John Marshall Coalson's brother, Vines Lindsey Coalson I, moved his family to the same community and lived just south a couple of farms from John Marshall. With Vines Lindsey Coalson, I, came his in-laws, the Alford family in part; one being his mother-in-law E. Katherine Alford and his brother-in-law John Alford. Vines, Mary Kate, and three sons lived in and around Bethesda all of their lives, and are buried there along with John Alford and Mrs. Alford.

The land that John Marshall Coalson patented from the State of Texas now belongs to a grandson, Marshall Hugh Coalson. This land was bought in about 1878 or 1879, and the family has now owned and operated the same farmland for over 100 years. I do not know whether the State of Texas marker has been erected there or not, but the State does make awards to families who own the same land and farm it for as much as 100 years.

The great gold rush came along in 1849. William Coalson's daughter Elizabeth had married a man named George King. They lived in Mississippi, and took a boat to New Orleans, and on to the Isthmus of Panama (no Panama Canal back then), rode across the Isthmus on donkeys, got another boat and went to the gold rush. As far as I have been able to ascertain, they got there, but nothing was heard from them after they arrived. No trace has been found of the family, nor children if there were any.

Some time later, John Marshall Coalson, Allen Powell Coalson, Vines Lindsey Coalson, the migratory brothers, in company with John Carter and a Mr. Tarpley, and six other men, secured a boat or ship of some kind and started to California, aiming to go around South America and on to California. Cuba, at that time belonged to Spain, and the Spanish navy took the shipload of men to be spies or pirates, captured the ship, took the 11 men to Cuba where they were thrown in prison and each had yellow fever. The United States demanded their release, and after some diplomatic maneuvers, the 11 men were sent back to the United States. The United States then requested \$1100 for each man, and this was in the diplomatic mill when the Civil War came along. Mississippi seceded, and became a "rebel" state; so, naturally the United States dropped the demands on Spain for the "rebel's" money. We prefer to call them "Southern Gentlemen".

The "wander lust" didn't "bite" many of the Coalsons I know. I am 73 years old as of this writing, and I live further from where I was born than I have ever lived, a whole 80 miles at most. My brother joined the Air Force in 1940, and was shipped to California where he still lives. My sister married a career service man and they are retired in San Antonio. Cousins by the dozens live through Parker County and Texas, but PARKER COUNTY is still "home" to us.