

## List of possibly unmarked Coombes family related burials in the Western Heights Cemetery; Dallas, Texas

Jim Barnes, 3rd June 2025, last revised: 26<sup>th</sup> August 2025

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of February 1881, Z. E. Coombes (1833-1895) and his brother-in-law, W.R. Fisher (1836-1900) purchase ~2 acres as a permanent cemetery and building site for their Christian Church. The site description in that deed specified there was already an existing cemetery in the northeast corner, whose southern edge was ~116 feet south of the cemetery's northern boundary (its north property line today). In this corner are tombstones of Coombes family members, indicating this had been their family graveyard prior to the 1881 purchase. This is a conjectural list of possible unmarked graves-- probably in that area.

1845 – **Unnamed infant Coombes (1845-1845)**, child of Wm. N. and Ivy Coombes.

1846 -- **Unnamed infant Coombes (1845-1846)**, with a child of Wm. N. and Ivy Coombes, or twin boys who died at birth. ??

no dates – **Rebecca Coombes**, child of Ivy and William N. Coombes (doubtful), possibly an internet repetition of Matilda Rebbeca Coombes (1842--1878). With one daughter already called Rebecca, it seem unlikely that the Coombes would have given the same name to another.

1846-July-6<sup>th</sup>: **Ivy (Green) Coombes (1805-1847)**, first wife of William Nelson Coombes – wife of the couple who were original White Settler land grant claimants. One story is that Ivy (Green) Coombes died during a **failed birth**, perhaps another infant buried with her.

1847-?: **William Ivy Coombes** (*FamilySearch.com* cites his birth on 17<sup>th</sup> June 1847—a dubious date. 1985-02-11; *Dallas Times Herald*; Bill Porterfield; "A family and a frontier lost in the American metropolis", p. A-13 states: "We know that Old Man Coombs' first wife is buried there with a still born daughter." Perhaps this was an infant death associated with its mother's passing. ??

c. 1852-April-27: **Elizabeth Gray**: On the 19<sup>th</sup> of November 1847, Elizabeth Gray had married Augustine Byram, according to Jackson County, Missouri marriage records, vol.2, p. 162. After his death she is enrolled in the 1850 Census, living in Dallas. Her estate was settled by the Dallas County Probate Court, with the earliest date in its file of case notes being 27<sup>th</sup> April 1852. The Administrator of her estate was L.G. Coombes, son of William N. Coombes. The relationships between Augustine Byram and Elizabeth Gray and the William Coombes family is presently unknown, but it is easy to imagine that L.G. Coombes buried Elizabeth Gray near the 1848 grave of her husband, Augustine Byram.

circa 1854: **Isaac N. Coombes, Jr.**-- infant death at age 2; son of Isaac and Berilla Coombes.

1854-May-18: **Isaac Nelson Coombes (1825-1854)**, second son of Wm. N. and Ivy Coombes. His burial is unknown. His wife, Berilla Kemper (Myers) Coombes, remarried in 1856 to John W. Bumpas. She died in 1877, about five years before the death of her second husband. Her burial in the Coombes family section of the Western Heights Cemetery suggests that she might have been buried alongside her first husband, Isaac N. Coombes. It has long been conjectured that the burial of her second husband, **John W. Bumpas (1830-1882)** is also in Western Heights Cemetery.

1854: **Janie H. (Heady) Coombes (1823-1854)**, wife of Levin Green Coombes (1823-?), the oldest child of Wm. N. and Ivy Coombes. Reportedly she died in Dallas County. Her burial site is unknown. Her husband, L.G. Coombes, sells his Dallas land grant to the La Reunion Colony the year of her death, leaves Dallas County, and remarries. It would be reasonable to believe that his first wife might have been buried in the Coombes family cemetery, in a grave now unmarked.

1867-June-11<sup>th</sup>: **William Nelson Coombes (1803-1867)**. In local legend this husband of the original land grantee couple was buried under what-is-now Fort Worth Avenue, but given that the family graveyard had already been started nearby -- not close to the roadway -- that legend seems improbable. William N. Coombes spent his last years working as a "freighter"; so, he might have suddenly died while out traveling -- might have been said to have been buried "on the Fort Worth road" somewhere; but it seems more likely that he is buried alongside his two wives in the Coombes family's northeast corner of Western Heights Cemetery.

1868-March-1<sup>st</sup>: **Rachel Ann (McDowell) Coombes (1831-1868)**, second wife of William Nelson Coombes (1803-1867). Probably died at her cabin across Neal Street. Burial unknown.

1870, prior to: **Andrew Coombes (1867- before 1870)**, son of Z.E. and Rebecca Coombes (grandson of Wm. N. Coombes). Other members of the family of Z.E. Coombes (1833-1895) are buried in Western Heights Cemetery.

1873-May-9<sup>th</sup>: **Ivy Coombes (1860-1873)**, daughter of Z.E. and Rebecca Coombes (granddaughter of Wm. Coombes). Other members of the family of Z.E. Coombes (1833-1895) are buried in Western Heights Cemetery.

probably prior to March 1878: **Matilda Rebecca (Coombes) Holt (1842--1878)**; daughter of William Nelson Coombes (1803-1867) and Ivy (Green) Coombes (1805-1847). Date and location of death unknown. Husband, William Leighton Holt (1844-1920) remarried with a new child born in December 1878. His first wife, Rebecca Holt, is possibly buried with her parents in Western Heights Cemetery.

after circa 1879: **Benjamin Franklin Coombes (circa 1877-?)** ; son of Zachariah Ellis Coombes (1833-1895). and Rebecca Finch (Bedford) Coombes (1835-1885); possibly an infant or early childhood death whose burial was near his parents' future graves in Western Heights Cemetery.

after 1880: **Nettie J. Bumpas (1869-?)**, daughter of Berilla and John W. Bumpas, last recorded in the 1880 Census living in Dallas. Possibly buried near her mother in Western Heights Cemetery.

1893-July-4: —**Barclay Martin Bradford (1818-1893)**: In 1868, he and his wife were appointed guardians of the youngest four children of William N. Coombes and Rachel A. Coombes. From the estate he bought the Coombes' cabin and its surrounding acreage, living there the remainder of his life. His first wife, Charlotte (Jones) Bradford was buried in the Coombes family cemetery in 1879. He sold the first 2 acres for the formal creation of Western Heights Cemetery in 1881, and since his burial is unknown, it is likely that he was buried there also, in an unmarked grave near his wife's.

1898-Nov-19: **Samuel Houston Coombes (1860-1898)**; son of William Nelson Coombes and Rachel A. Coombes, was born, and raised by guardians Charlotte and B.M. Bradford, in his parents' cabin about a block northeast of the cemetery. His wife, Jennie (Puckett) Coombes, was buried in 1911 in Oakland Cemetery, but his burial is unknown, and might be an unmarked grave in Western Heights Cemetery.

1958-January-23: **Berrilla Alice Fisher (1873-1958)**, daughter of W.R. Fisher (1836-1900) and Mary Ann (Coombes) Fisher (1850-1881). Burial unknown, death in Dallas. Possibly she was buried in an unmarked grave near her parents in Western Heights Cemetery.

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