

# MARY SMART MCMURRY RESEARCH PLAN

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## OBJECTIVE

The objective of this research project is to identify the parents of Mary Smart, who married John McMurry probably in 1880 or 1881, in or around Winn Parish, Louisiana, and died sometime after December 1888, likely in Winn Parish.

## SUMMARY OF KNOWN FACTS

### *Mary Smart:*

- Mary was probably born before 1866. This date is 16 years before the birth of her oldest known child. If her age was closer to that of her husband's, she could have been born as early as the mid-1850s.
- Mary may have been born in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, or Ireland, according to "mother's birthplace" data cited in her sons' census records. The most likely locations are Louisiana (cited 5 of 9 times) or Texas (cited earliest).
- Mary married John McMurry sometime after 1 June 1880 (census enumeration date) and early 1882 (estimate based on birth date of first known son). Mary has not been located on the 1880 census, but John is listed as a single laborer in the household of G. B. Higgs in Ward 2, Jackson Parish, Louisiana.
- Mary had three known sons:
  - Robert Franklin, born 3 October 1882, in Winnfield, Winn Parish
  - James, born 13 March 1884, in Gaar's Mill, Winn Parish
  - George Washington, born 10 December 1888, in Gaar's Mill, Winn Parish
- Mary died sometime between George's birth (10 December 1888) and the 1900 census enumeration date (1 June 1900), as John is listed as widowed on this census.
- Robert Franklin identified his mother's name as "Mary Smart" on his application for Social Security; this is the only direct evidence of Mary's maiden name.
- George Washington identified his mother as "Mary McMurry" on the statistical information he provided for a marriage license to Lula McKaskle in Franklin Parish on 26 December 1912.
- Genealogist Agnes McWeeny Johnston recorded in a 1992 letter that she interviewed Wallace McMurry, son of Robert Franklin, and he said, "his grandmother [Mary Smart] was a sister to Jim Smart and Alma and Georgia."

### *John McMurry:*

- John was born in Louisiana, in the late 1850s or early 1860s, according to the 1880 and 1900 censuses.
- John worked as a laborer for G. E. Higgs in Ward 2, Jackson Parish, at the time of the 1880 census.
- John patented 160 acres of land near Gaar's Mill, Winn Parish, on 1 December 1898. The physical description of this land is the SW ½ of the NW ¼ and the N ½ of the SW ¼ of Section 22, Township 13N, Range 2W of Winn Parish. John purchased this land as part of the Homestead Act of 1862, meaning he lived on the land for at least five years (since approximately 1893) prior to obtaining the patent.
- John cannot be located on the 1910 census, suggesting he died before that date.

## WORKING HYPOTHESIS

Mary Smart was born between 1855 and 1866, most likely in Louisiana, or possibly Texas. She married John McMurry between 1880-1882, in Winn Parish, Louisiana, and records do not exist due to that parish's complete record loss in

1886. After their parents' early deaths, Mary's sons may have maintained a relationship with her possible siblings, Alma Smart Johnston McKaskle, Georgia Smart Horne, and Jim Smart. Proving a relationship among these possible siblings could lead to identifying Mary's parents in siblings' records.

## IDENTIFIED SOURCES

- 1860 census records for Mary Smart in Louisiana or Texas with possible parents
- 1870 census records for Mary, Alma, and Jim Smart in Louisiana or Texas within the same family unit with parents
- 1880 census records for Mary, Alma, Jim, and Georgia Smart in Louisiana or Texas within the same family unit with parents
- Marriage records of Alma, Jim, and Georgia for any shared witnesses or family connections
- Court records (conveyance/land/probate) in the following jurisdictions for any transactions among siblings: Winn Parish, Franklin Parish, Morehouse Parish
- DNA matches among descendants of Mary, Alma, Jim, and Georgia
- Death record of Jim Smart for identification of parents
- 1910, 1920, 1930, and 1940 censuses for shared migration or proximity of McMurry sons to possible Smart relatives and Smart siblings to one another

## PRIORITIZED RESEARCH STRATEGY

### 1. Census Records

Search 1860-1880 census records for Smart siblings in Louisiana or Texas within a family unit with possible parents.

1860 US Census ([Ancestry](#), [FamilySearch](#))

1870 US Census ([Ancestry](#), [FamilySearch](#))

1880 US Census ([Ancestry](#), [FamilySearch](#))

Search census records for 1900 and forward for shared migration or proximity of McMurry sons to possible Smart relatives and Smart siblings to one another.

1900 US Census ([Ancestry](#), [FamilySearch](#))

1910 US Census ([Ancestry](#), [FamilySearch](#))

1920 US Census ([Ancestry](#), [FamilySearch](#))

1930 US Census ([Ancestry](#), [FamilySearch](#))

1940 US Census ([Ancestry](#), [FamilySearch](#))

### 2. Marriage Records

Check marriage records of Alma, Georgia, and Jim Smart for any shared witnesses or family connections.

[Winn Parish Marriages, 1886-1916; marriage index 1886-1971](#) (FamilySearch)

[Franklin Parish Marriage records, 1843-1917; general index to marriages, 1843-1972](#) (FamilySearch)

Check marriage records of Robert, Jim, and George McMurry for any Smart family connections.

[Franklin Parish Marriage records, 1843-1917; general index to marriages, 1843-1972](#) (FamilySearch)

### 3. Death Records

Obtain death record for Jim Smart; check if parents are identified. (*Mary, Alma, and Georgia all died before death records were kept.*)

[Louisiana Deaths, 1850-1875, 1894-1960](#) (FamilySearch)

Obtain death records for any other possible Smart siblings identified in research; check if parents are identified.

4. **DNA**

Identify descendants of Smart siblings who have taken DNA tests without pedigree collapse in their family trees. Collect shared cM data between testers; see if cM range is appropriate for MRCA being parents of Smart siblings.

5. **Court Records**

Search court records (conveyance, land, probate) for transactions among Smart siblings or with McMurry sons in Winn and Franklin parishes.

[Franklin Parish Court records, 1843-1890 : index to court records, 1843-1930](#) (FamilySearch)

[Franklin Parish Donation book A, 1849-1940](#) (FamilySearch)

[Franklin Parish Notarial books and records \(conveyances\), 1843-1889; index, 1843-1949](#) (FamilySearch)

[Franklin Parish Probate records \(successions\), 1843-1889; index to probate docket, 1843-1964; index to successions, 1843-1965](#) (FamilySearch)

[Winn Parish Conveyance records, 1882-1900; index, 1886-1971](#) (FamilySearch)

[Winn Parish Successions, 1885-1903; index to successions, 1885-1962](#) (FamilySearch)

6. **Naming Patterns**

Compare naming patterns for the children of Smart siblings to identify similarities and possible names for parents.

7. **FAN Club Analysis**

Compile friends, neighbors, and associates (FAN) list from all source documents for further analysis.