

Collin McKinney

Collin McKinney (not to be confused with Colin P. McKinney) was born in Hunterdon County, New Jersey on April 17, 1776. He was one of the ten children born to Daniel and Mercy B. McKinney. In the late 1770s, McKinney and his family moved to Virginia. When his dad, Daniel, went to fight in the American Revolution, McKinney supported his family; and for this reason, he received no formal education. After the revolution, they moved to an unnamed outpost that is now called Lincoln County, Kentucky.

McKinney married two times in his lifetime, first to Annie “Amy” Moore, and when she died, he [McKinney] married Elizabeth Leek. After both marriages, McKinney ended up with 11 children (James, Ashley, Polly, Emeline, William C, twins Amy and Margaret, Anna C, Samuel L, Eliza S, and Younger S).

A few years later, in 1818, he started to manage some estates owned by Senator George W. Campbell, who was serving as minister to Russia at the time. He also built a trading post before giving it up and going back to Kentucky in 1821. Then, many of his relatives moved to Arkansas, where he got elected as *justice of the peace*.

A few years later, in 1826, he became friends with *Benjamin Milam*, who was settling people in the Red River Colony in Northeast Texas. He had also been in the James Long Expedition, a mission to turn Texas into a country.

Ten years later, in 1836, he was one of the five men to sign the Texas Declaration of Independence which quoted, “The Mexican government ceased to protect the lives, liberty, and property, from whom its legitimate powers are derived.”

In 1846 at age 80, he moved one last time, due to one of the worst floods on the Red River ever recorded. He went to the northern portion of the Blackland Prairie, near Liberty, TX, which was soon renamed Mantua, TX by his 11th child, Younger Scott McKinney. This is where the border between Collin and Grayson Counties, which would soon be founded years later.

Sadly, On September 9, 1861, he passed away at the age of 95 in his home, right when the Civil War broke out. He was buried at the nearby Van Alstyne Cemetery. Historians don't know his last words, or anything he really said, in fact. He did have scribes, but they wrote down some something like "He gave a fiery speech," but not what McKinney actually said.

Today, Collin McKinney has left a stain of legacy. He signed the Texas Declaration of Independence, which separated Texas into 254 counties, creating Collin County. He supported the Patriots and Minutemen who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of the United States of America. He founded the future border between Grayson and Collin Counties. McKinney had a impact on other U.S. Counties, too. He declared every county must be 30 square miles or less so anyone could travel with ease to the *county seat*, do anything they needed to do there and come back to their hometown in less than a day.

He is now honored by a historical marker at his home ([click here](#)), which is located in McKinney, TX. As you can see, Collin County, TX and McKinney, TX are both named in his honor by the *Texas Legislature*. He will always be remembered in history for his bravery, courage, and ambition.

Bibliography

- 1) Wikipedia - Collin McKinney, Justice of the peace
- 2) Youtube - The Legend of Collin McKinney | Texas History Remembered
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