

# Generation 1

## **John S. Sutphen**

Born: June 01, 1805 in Ohio or New Jersey

Died: October 07, 1858 in Nacogdoches County, TX

Buried: Greenwood Cemetery, Appleby, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Married: June 13, 1833 in Williamson County, Tennessee to

## **Matilda W. Crisman**

Born: February 15, 1815 in Tennessee

Died: February 15, 1860 in Nacogdoches County, TX

Buried: Greenwood Cemetery, Appleby, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Parents: David Chrisman and Jemima

John S. Sutphen was born June 1, 1805. Some census records state Ohio as his birth place, others show New Jersey or New York. John's parents are currently unknown. He first appears in Tennessee in 1833, but nothing prior to that has been discovered. It is said that he came to Tennessee to learn the carpenter trade in Nashville, but no record regarding this have been found.

John and Matilda W. Crisman (or Chrisman) were married on June 13, 1833 in Williamson County, Tennessee by L. M. Andrews. The license was issued June 11, and the marriage bondsman was William D. Taylor. Matilda was born on February 18, 1815 in Tennessee, one of seven children of David and Jemima (or possibly Elizabeth) Chrisman. Family legends say that he was a wealthy planter, and gave Matilda and John ten slaves as a wedding gift.

David Chrisman's parents were Johannes Chrisman and Maria Magdalena. Johannes was born July 29, 1734 in New Providence Township, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and was christened August 11, 1734 in Augustus Evangelical Lutheran Church, Trappe, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He died in 1805 in Sullivan, Tennessee. Johannes' parents, Johann Georg Chrisman and Maria Agatha Gunther, were both born in Germany; Johann in 1697 and Maria in 1701.

John Sutphen does not appear on the 1830 Federal Census in Tennessee. He is shown on the marriage license in 1833 to be a resident of Franklin County, Tennessee. He also appears in Franklin County records as signing a petition for reimbursement for George Gillespie, whose slave was hung in 1833. A watch repair bill from J. Peabody, Jeweler, dated February 3, 1834 places him in Winchester, Franklin County. It may be that he came to Tennessee in 1831 or 1832.

John was named Postmaster at Rock Creek in Franklin County on January 29, 1836, a post he held until April 13, 1842.

The 1840 Federal Census for Franklin County, Tennessee shows a John S. Sutfin household as with 1 male age 30-40, 1 female age 20-30, 1 male age 5-10, 1 male age 0-5, and one female age 50-60. No names or relationships are recorded in the 1840 census.

Between 1835 and 1845, John purchased over 2000 acres of land. On February 24, 1835 he purchased 300 acres of land near Rock Creek in Franklin County from George Reese. John began selling off his Tennessee lands in 1850. He appointed Wiley Hickerson of Bedford County, Tennessee to be his attorney in fact to collect any debts owed to him (Deed Book V, pg. 376). He was preparing to move his family to Texas; the Sutphens came to Texas in November of 1850, going first to Upshur County, then Rusk County, and then settling in Nacogdoches County in East Texas.

The family is recorded twice in the 1850 Federal Census, both in Tennessee and Texas. The Tennessee census, dated October 2, shows the family in District 7, Franklin County:

John S. Sutfin, age 44, Male, Farmer, 1000 (value of real estate), born in Ohio

Matilda, age 38, Female, born in Tennessee

William, age 15, Male, born in Tennessee, attended school within the year

George, age 10, Male, born in Tennessee, attended school within the year

David, age 12, Male, born in Tennessee, attended school within the year  
Samuel, age 7, Male, born in Tennessee, attended school within the year  
John, age 5, Male, born in Tennessee  
Charity Ann, age 2, Female, born in Tennessee

The Slave Schedule for the 1850 Franklin County census also shows John S. Sutphen owning 3 slaves: a female age 38, a male age 37, and a male age 8. Abraham Sutphen should be one of these slaves, as it is thought that he came to Texas with the family, but his age does not match with either of the male slaves listed.

The 1850 Texas Census, dated November 28, shows the family in the Upper District of Upshur County:

J. S. Sutphen, age 45, Male, Farmer, 150 (value of real estate), born in NY  
M. Sutphen, age 35, Female, born in Tennessee  
W. C. Sutphen, age 15, Male, born in Tennessee, attended school within the year  
D. S. Sutphen, age 12, Male, born in Tennessee, attended school within the year  
G. W. Sutphen, age 11, Male, born in Tennessee, attended school within the year  
S. C. Sutphen, age 8, Male, born in Tennessee, attended school within the year  
A. J. Sutphen, age 5, Male, born in Tennessee  
M. A. Sutphen, age 3, Female, born in Tennessee

It is only an assumption that both the Tennessee and Texas censuses list the same family, because of the many similarities. However, the youngest two children, Mariah Ann and Andrew Jackson, seem to have changed names on the way to Texas.

John and Matilda Sutphen had 12 children, 9 surviving to adulthood. William, David, George, Samuel, Andrew Jackson, and Mariah were born in Tennessee; James K. Polk, Martha Jane, Mary Ellen, and John were born in Texas. An infant was born and died on January 10, 1850, and was buried in the Lasater Cemetery in Coffee County, Tennessee, near Tullahoma (Coffee County was created from Franklin county in 1836). A second infant died February 25, 1856, and is buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Nacogdoches County, Texas. The youngest child, John Sutphen, died in 1867 at the age of 10, and is also buried in Greenwood Cemetery.

Nacogdoches County tax rolls show that in 1852, John owned no land, 5 Negroes (value \$1800), 6 horses (value \$200), and no cattle. On 1 May 1852, John bought 320 acres of land in the original Raymond Norriss Spanish grant, lying on the waters of Naconeach Bayou, near the town of Appleby. The land was purchased from Lewis Knight for \$900: \$20 in cash, and three promissory notes due in January of 1854, 1855, and 1856.

The 1853 Nacogdoches County tax rolls show that he owned 320 acres (value \$500), 5 Negroes (value \$500), 5 horses (value \$250), and 4 cattle (value \$20). In 1854 he owned the same 320 acres (value \$700), 5 Negroes (value \$1800), 5 horses (value \$250), and 18 cattle (value \$90).

John died of congestion (possibly tuberculosis) October 7, 1858 in Nacogdoches County, Texas, and was buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Appleby. Matilda died of pneumonia on February 15, 1860 in Nacogdoches County Texas, and was buried in Greenwood Cemetery next to John. Their headstones display a hand with the index finger pointing toward heaven, which indicates that they were Methodists.

At the time of Matilda's death in 1860, 9 of the children were under the age of 18, the youngest being only 3 years old. Only the oldest child, William C. Sutphen, was married. He petitioned for guardianship of the minor children. At the time William became guardian, the estate was valued at \$3,055.00; this was stock animals, farming utensils, household furniture, cotton crop, and 320 acres of land at \$4.00 per acre.

Five of John and Matilda's sons served in the Confederate Army. William died at Little Rock, and George was killed at the battle of Mansfield, Louisiana. David, Samuel, and Jack survived the war.

**Documents:**

- 1840 Census, Franklin County, Tennessee
- 1850 Census, Franklin County, Tennessee
- 1850 Slave Schedule, Franklin County, Tennessee
- 1850 Census, Upshur County, Texas
- Tax Rolls, Nacogdoches County, Texas; 1852, 1853, 1854
- Early Middle Tennessee Marriages, Vol. 2. Byron & Barbara Sistler. Byron Sistler & Associates, 1988
- Records of East Texas, Volume 2. John W. Wilkins, January 1968
- Bible Records, Williamson County, Tennessee. Louise G. Lynch. 1970
- Jeanne Ridgeway Bigger Genealogical Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives
- Letters, Mayme Vanecek to Curtis Sutphen, 1966