

The Many Marriages of William Richard Rainwater of Mississippi, 1844-1935

by Susan Chance-Rainwater, 25 Jul 2023, revised 29 Feb 2024

William Richard Rainwater was the son of John R. Rainwater and Margaret Burrow. He was born in 1844 in Alabama, and died in 1935 in Mississippi.

Dick, as he was known, was married four times. These marriages conflict somewhat, because on at least two occasions, he was married to the next wife before he was divorced from the prior wife. This is a summary of his marriages.

William Richard Rainwater marries Eveline Hudnall

20 Jan 1868 Copiah Co MS

Result: Eveline is living in a separate household by 1880. According to a family story, passed to me by Glidie Rainwater Mobley, she ran off to Texas with a traveling sewing machine salesman, deserting her two children. In 1884, the couple finally divorces.

Records: 1870 & 1880 federal censuses; Copiah Co MS marriage records; family story, divorce citation notice

William Richard Rainwater marries Dorothy F Arnold

1881 Lincoln Co MS

Result: Married in 1881, Dorothy deserts in 1885. A legal divorce is not obtained until 1904.

Records: No marriage records are available for this date in Lincoln Co MS. All records come from the 1904 divorce record.

Note: Her maiden name was Wooley. Arnold is her surname from her 3rd marriage.

William Richard Rainwater marries Mary Arnold

14 Oct 1891 Franklin Co MS

Result: Because William was not legally divorced from his prior wife, this was not a legal marriage.

Records: 1900 census record; Franklin Co MS marriage record

Note: Arnold is probably not her maiden name.

William Richard Rainwater divorces Dorothy F Arnold

Filed and granted 17 Feb 1904, Lincoln Co MS

Result: Divorce granted. Dorothy Arnold doesn't contest, and her signature is witnessed by R S Woolley.

Records: Divorce record (Lincoln Co MS Probate Court)

William Richard Rainwater remarries Mary Arnold

17 Feb 1904 Lincoln Co MS

Result: On the same day that he legally divorces Dorothy Arnold, William remarries his wife Mary Arnold. It's not clear what happened to Mary Arnold, but presumably she died before 1910.

Records: Lincoln Co MS marriage record, divorce record (Lincoln Co MS Probate Court)

William Richard Rainwater marries Brunette "Nettie" Golman

26 Jun 1910 Franklin Co MS

Result: William remained married to Nettie until he died. Nettie died in 1968.

Records: Franklin Co MS marriage record; 1910-1930 census records; Findagrave

Sources

- 1870-1930 federal census records
- Mississippi Marriages, 1776-1935, Ancestry.com
- Mississippi, Wills and Probate Records, 1780-1982, Ancestry.com
- 290: Glidie Rainwater Mobley, 1936-2018
- 824: Franklin County, Mississippi Computer Indexed Marriage Records, 1817-1899, Nicholas Russell Murray, 1970, Hunting for Bears Inc., Hammond LA
- 828: Lincoln County, Mississippi Computer Indexed Marriage Records, 1893-1913, Nicholas Russell Murray, 1980, Hunting for Bears Inc., Hammond LA
- 829: Copiah County, Mississippi Computer Indexed Marriage Records, 1823-1875, Nicholas Russell Murray, 1980, Hunting for Bears Inc., Hammond LA
- 2954: Marriage Records of Franklin County, Mississippi, 1883-1915, Vols. 3 & 4, Jewel Dixon Johnston, 1980, Mt. Pleasant TX
- 290: Glidie Rainwater Mobley, email, 12 Feb 2002
- 2312: Find a Grave, <https://www.findagrave.com/>

- 3533: Divorce citation notice (Evelina Rainwater v. William Richard Rainwater), Vicksburg Evening Post, Vol II, No. 105, pg 3, Vicksburg MS, 6 May 1884, via newspapers.com

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