

DR. THOMAS QUINCY MARTIN AND SARAH MCCONNICO PUCKETT

In the town of Oakville in Lawrence County, Alabama, on June 3, 1841, **Thomas Quincy Martin (1817–1862)** married **Sarah McConnico “Sallie Mac” Puckett (1826–1898)**, who was only fourteen years old.*

Neville’s Martin heritage¹ is traceable with certainty to her fourth great-grandfather **Thomas Martin (1752–c. 1790s)** of Goochland County, Virginia. His marriage to **Susannah Walker (1757–1840)** is recorded in 1772, and he enlisted as a Revolutionary War soldier in 1781. Interestingly, Thomas and Susannah Walker Martin are also antecedents (sixth great-grandparents) of President Barack Obama (b. 1961). Neville is, thus, a fifth cousin of President Obama’s grandmother Madelyn Lee Payne Dunham (1922–2008), and our grandchildren are seventh cousins of President Obama.²

Thomas and Susannah Walker Martin had six children, the fourth of whom was **Dabney Amos Martin (1778–1850)**,³ who married his first cousin **Elizabeth Walker (1788–1830)**. Dabney became a successful plantation owner in Morgan County in northern Alabama and sired eleven children, the fifth of whom was Thomas Quincy Martin.

In a 1906 booklet entitled *The Martin Family*, **Irene Dabney Galloway (1869–1957)**, Neville’s great-aunt, wrote: “*Thomas Quincy Martin was born in or near Washington, Wilkes Co. Ga. He received his academic education at Somerville Academy, Ga., and then read medicine, attending lectures, in 1837–38, at Lexington, Ky.*” This suggests that Thomas Quincy Martin did not actually earn a medical degree; rather, he was a medical practitioner. This was often the case for doctors in the early nineteenth century.

*Sarah McConnico Puckett Martin’s tombstone records her birth year as 1824. However, all family records show her birth date as November 4, 1826, and her daughter Eudocia Margaret Martin wrote that her mother was only twenty years old when Eudocia Margaret was born on November 29, 1846. Thus, we have used 1826 for Sarah’s birth year.

Around the time they married, Dr. Thomas Quincy Martin and Sallie Mac Puckett had their portraits painted in Alabama. Neville and I have owned these portraits for over forty-five years.⁴

Dr. Thomas Quincy Martin practiced medicine in Oakville, Alabama, and then moved in 1846 to Houston, Mississippi. In about 1851, the family moved to Danville, near Corinth, in northeastern Mississippi, and in about 1854, they moved once again to a farm close to Corinth.

In 1861, while living in or near Corinth, Dr. Thomas Quincy Martin supported Mississippi's secession from the Union. He then moved his family to live with his brother in Pontotoc, Mississippi (seventy miles southwest of Corinth), and joined the Confederate Army; he was forty-four years old at the time. In 1910 he was referred to as "*An Unselfish Patriot*" by the magazine *Confederate Veteran*.⁵

Dr. Thomas Quincy Martin mustered into the Confederate Army as a first lieutenant in Company G of the 32nd Mississippi Regiment on April 2, 1862, in Corinth. His military service would last less than seven months.⁶ While encamped in or near Corinth, he experienced the Battle of Shiloh on April 6–7, 1862, and wrote three letters about that event to his wife in Pontotoc.⁷ He also wrote at least eighteen letters during the Siege of Corinth (April 29–May 30, 1862) and on the retreat to Baldwyn and Tupelo, Mississippi.⁸ In his letters, he often wrote about the exploits of his thirteen-year-old son,



Dr. Thomas Quincy Martin with his son, Charles Minor Martin, on his lap, late 1850s.

Richard “Dick” Puckett Martin (1848–1931), who had remained in Corinth and was trading with Confederate soldiers in 1862.⁹

On July 28, 1862, the members of the 32nd Mississippi were sent by rail from Tupelo to Chattanooga, Tennessee. They arrived on August 3. From there they set out for Kentucky on a forty-day march, which culminated at the unsuccessful Battle of Perryville on October 8, 1862. It was on the road to Perryville that Lt. Thomas Quincy Martin wrote his final four letters.¹⁰ He was at the Battle of Perryville, though he was ill, probably with typhoid fever. Afterward, he endured the retreat with his fellow soldiers down to Knoxville, Tennessee, where he died on October 24, 1862.¹¹ A letter to his wife said: “*His disease was Diarrea [sic].*”



Sarah McConnico “Sallie Mac” Puckett was born in Lawrence County, Alabama. Her grandfather **Richard Puckett (1750–1813)** was an American Revolutionary War soldier with a family heritage in colonial Virginia.¹² Her grandmother **Sarah McConnico (1768–1813)** was a descendant of Scottish ancestors who came to Virginia from Wales in the early eighteenth century. Sallie Mac was the second of six daughters of **Major Richard Puckett Jr. (1804–1867)** and **Eudocia Daughtery (1806–1855)**, who was of Irish descent.¹³

Between 1842 and 1861, Sallie Mac Puckett Martin and her husband had nine children, six of whom lived to maturity,¹⁴ including Neville’s great-grandmother **Eudocia Margaret Martin (1846–1927)** and her sister **Mary Florence “Mollie” Martin (1857–1893)**, who has descendants living in Corinth today.¹⁵



*Sarah McConnico Puckett
Martin with her son, Charles
Minor Martin, late 1850s.*

Sallie Mac Puckett Martin became a widow at age thirty-five, and after the Civil War, she moved back to war-torn Corinth. In 1866 she purchased a house and took in boarders. That house, called Oak Home,¹⁶ is a historic antebellum home in Corinth today. Sometime after 1884, she moved and lived for some years with her widowed daughter, Eudocia Margaret Martin, in Fayetteville, Arkansas. She died after several years of invalidism, at age seventy-one, on May 2, 1898, and is buried at the State Line Cemetery in Texarkana, Arkansas. She was living with her daughter [Susan Pride Martin \(1853–1931\)](#) at the time of her death.