

misfortune to suffer a compound fracture of his thigh bone which shortened his limb and made him a cripple for life.”

About this time he moved to Plantersville in Grimes County in order to send his older children to school while he worked at the carpenter trade. From there he moved to Shiner in Lavaca County and became its first mayor (1969 letter of C. C. Welhausen to Mrs. J. L. Reitch). Philip's daughter Sophie was born there and named for her mother, whom John C. Amsler called “the most patient and loving wife I have ever known, who survived him many years.” Philip's health failed and he died in January 1891, John C. wrote.

The exact chronology of Philip's enterprises is difficult to ascertain because John C. Amsler wrote varying accounts. In his “Cotemporary,” dated April 1938, the family chronicler stated that his Uncle Philip had spent some time as a carpenter with Uncle Sam in McGregor, but wanderlust seized him again; he bought 200 acres embracing the sawmill homestead in Montgomery County about 1880 and started an apiary. In 1867 [should be 1869] he married Sophie Flato, spent two [he said *four* in “The Torch's Final Flare”] years at the sawmill in Montgomery County, then moved to Hempstead where, on Lot #116, his father established a planing mill and lumber yard for him. When the mill proved unsuccessful, it was dismantled, refitted, and opened as the St. Charles Hotel, with Philip as operator. Young John C. remembered being present at the opening, when free luncheon and dinner were served.

Another of Philip's forays into the world of commerce was the establishment of a broom factory, but the time and place of this venture were not specified by his nephew.

Sophia (Flato) Amsler

Sophia (Sophie) Flato was the sister of Franklin who married Sophie Welhausen, twin sister of Charles who married Eliza Amsler. Eliza was the sister of Louis Philip

Amsler. “Flatonia . . . was established by the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1873. . . . Settlers in old Flatonia, a mile away . . . loaded their houses on wagons and staged a mass migration . . . the town was named for a pioneer merchant, F. W. Flato” (*The Handbook of Texas*, Vol. I, p. 610).



Documents in the Texas State Archives at Austin show that Sophia filed two applications for a pension as the widow of a Confederate soldier: (1) Form B. 1390, Widow's Application for Pension, filed 16 Oct. 1909, and marked “service OK [but] too much property” and (2) #20049, signed 1 Feb 1911, witnessed by Charles H. Flato, E. J. Merrem, and R. Valenta. The latter as county assessor certified that she had property assessed at \$900.50 on the county rolls.

Combining Sophia's statements on the two applications reveals the following data: She was born at New Ulm, Austin County, about 1852. She had lived 23 years in Lavaca County and was then residing at Moulton, ten miles north of Shiner. She was married 27 Jly 1869 at “old Flatonia” in Fayette County to L. P. Amsler, who died 14 Jan 1891 in Fayette County.