This Family History Snapshot is based on information gathered from the U.S. Federal Census Collection and other records widely available through online databases including ancestry.com and familysearch.org. It is called a “Snapshot” because it provides limited information on a single line that enables descendants to place their family members in a geographic area, to identify other ancestors in the family unit and to discover details the family provided at the time of the census. Information gleaned from vital statistics such as birth, marriage and death records may also be included if readily available. The Snapshot covers roughly a 50 year period of time and is based on information provided by the requesting client. It includes a summary of the research enhanced by images of referenced documents when available.

The Family History Snapshot is not a complete representation of a family’s genealogy; it is intended as a starting point for further research into a much broader range of record sources. The Snapshot is based on careful research that adheres to professional genealogical methods and standards.

I hope you will find this information interesting and informative and that it will serve as a catalyst for family members to learn all they can about their ancestry...and just maybe, you’ll be “bitten” by the genealogy bug yourself. Watch out; it’s a very compelling and satisfying pastime.

Sharon Batiste Gillins
FAMILY RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION
Research is requested by Samuel Collins of Hitchcock, Texas. He provides the following information:

- **Full Names** - Benjamin Bonner, Mary Jane Bonner
- **Known place of residence** - Brazoria County, TX.
- **Place of birth** – unknown
- **Time period** – prior to 1900
- **Parents of Benjamin Bonner** - unknown
- **Parents of Mary Jane Bonner** - unknown
- **Surname of Mary Jane Bonner** – unknown
Ben Barner lived with his wife Mary J. in Justice Pct. 8 of Brazoria County. They had been married for 18 years, had 11 children and 9 living children. His place of birth is Texas; his father’s POB is Alabama and mother’s POB is South Carolina. Mary, her parents and all the children were born in Texas. Ben is a farmer and employer, not a wage earner. He owns the land where he operates a mortgaged home farm. His wife and 4 oldest children are farm laborers. Both Ben and Mary J. could read and write. Their calculated marriage date is 1892, Ben’s calculated DOB is 1870 and Mary’s 1871.
Ben Bonner lived with his wife Mary J. in Justice Pct. 07 of Brazoria County with 6 children; they had been married 6 years. *Mary’s age is given as 29 and birth year of 1881. She is the mother of 7 children and 6 are living. *Mary’s POB is Texas and her parents ‘ Alabama. *Ben’s POB is Texas and his parents’ Missouri.

*Several errors are noted in this census record. The birth year for Mary is miscalculated; it should be 1871 if she is 29 years old. The POB for both Ben and Mary are inconsistent with other records; it appears that the census enumerator was off by one line in recording the POB for Mary and Ben, likely caused by the single entry above the Bonner family.
Ben Bonner was assessed as a property owner in Brazoria County. Other male members of the Bonner family are assessed as owners as well. Ben Sr. and Green Sr. are recorded with Abstract 84, original grantee is J. McCloskey. Green Sr. & Ben Sr. each have 15 ½ acres each worth $200. Between them they have 3 horses/mules and Ben has 4 cattle worth $50.

*In the absence of extant 1890 census, this 1889 tax record places the Ben Bonner family in Brazoria County. These are male property owners assessed as one unit, suggesting they are purchasing and/or working this land together, likely several Bonner generations. Although Ben Bonner Sr. and Jr. are identified here, a question is raised. Ben Jr. (son of Ben & Mary) in the 1900 census is 6 years old, born in 1893. Two adult Bens are in this record made before Ben Jr.’s birth in 1893. This suggests there are 3 Ben Bonners in this family.*
There are a number of Bonner family members on this page and the census pages that precede it (pgs 32-34/53.).

In this record, Benj Barner, 38, is head of a family that consists of:

- his wife, Louisa, 30 (both born in Alabama as were their parents)
- Benj, 16 yrs
- Ann, 14 yrs
- Betty, 8 yrs.
- Shepherd, 3 yrs.

Benj’s calculated birth year is 1864. This Benj (son of Benj & Louisa) is the head of the household in the 1900 census that consists of Ben and Mary Jane and their son Ben Jr., born in 1893.

The 3 Ben Bonners:

1. Benj – b. 1842
2. Benj (aka Ben Sr. son of Benj & Louisa) – b. 1864
3. Ben Jr. (son of Ben Sr. and Mary Jane) – b. 1893-4
On page 35 (the next page of the census on which so many Bonner family members were located) is the family of Miles and Elizabth Calwell [Caldwell]. In the household is Mary J. Calwell, a mulatto aged 13, identified as the daughter of the head of the household, Miles Calwell. Mary J. Bonner’s maiden name is CAL[D]WELL. Miles and his parents were born in Mississippi; Mary and her parents were born in Louisiana. At age 25, Elizabeth is not old enough to be the mother of Mary J. Calwell, an indication that Miles was married previously. Only the youngest child is probably the birth child of Elizabeth.

The Bonner family and Caldwell family are neighbors, living within a few households of each other.
This 1878 marriage record suggests that Lizzie is the mother of the youngest child, Carry, but not the older children.
This 1870 census record shows Miles Caldwell, mulatto male age 27, married to Elizabeth, black female age 27. There are 2 children in the household, Marion, 3 and Simon 5. Marion and Simon are the correct ages to be the same Mary Jane and Simon Cal[d]well found in the 1880 census in Miles Caldwell’s household. There is a woman in the house next door named Marion and this is likely who Marion (Mary J.) was named for. Marion could be Miles’ sister or other family member. Elizabeth, born in Alabama, is the mother of Marion (Mary Jane), not Lizzie McPerson.
This 1870 census record shows Benjamin Barner, age 35, as head of household including wife, Louisa, age 25. Son Benjamin is 8 years old, followed by Ann and Judith, just 9 months old. The Caldwell family is on page 37 and the Barner family is on page 38.
Evidence supports that this is Benjamin Bonner and that this is a problem of spelling. A search of the 1870 census in Brazoria revealed no person with the surname Barney.
The succeeding page of the Voter Registration identifies Barney as a “colored voter” and that he is a native of Alabama, as Benjamin Bonner has reported in subsequent census records. Benjamin has been in Texas and in Brazoria County for approximately 15 years. Family member, Green Bonner, reports he has been in the state for 14 years. It is likely that these family members traveled together from Alabama in approximately 1855.