



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Thomas B. James

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Thomas B. James was born October 25, 1840 in Pulaski County, Missouri, to a Virginian father and a Tennessean mother. Family sources at RootsWeb.com say he was a son of William A. James and Jane Rentfro James. His mother, Jane James, 1819-August 11, 1876, age 57 years, 7 months, and 23 days, is buried with the family at Birdville.

In the late 1840's, William A. James brought his family to Dallas County, Texas, where they appear in the 1850 census. When he registered to vote on July 29, 1867, Thomas said he had been in Texas for twenty-two years and in Precinct 3 of Tarrant County for thirteen years. His mother, Jane James, appears in the 1863 and 1864 tax lists for Tarrant County.

James settled in Tarrant County before the Civil War. According to his granddaughter, Ada Bell Nash, he enlisted in Co. F, 28th Texas Battalion, and fought in battles at Barwick Bay, Morgan City, and the Red River Campaign. These facts she stated in her 1925 application to join the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

The records of his service in the National Archives show he was a member of J. C. Terrell's Company of Waller's Texas Cavalry. He enlisted at Vermilion, Louisiana on August 27, 1862 for a term of three years. He brought with him a horse worth \$100 and equipment worth \$20. He appears on a muster roll for August 27 through October 31, 1862. He said he was twenty-one years old. He was present on a muster roll dated February 29, 1864. An original pay voucher for \$72.80, signed by James and dated May 2, 1864, remains in his file in the National Archives. The voucher gives some personal information: twenty one years old, blue eyes, sandy hair, 5'5" tall, light complexion, born Pulaski County, Missouri, paid \$50 bounty for enlisting.

Thomas's wife, Zarilda (Elliston) James, was born in 1843 and died May 12, 1868, at the age of 25 years and 9 days. She was a daughter of Birdville pioneer Mark Elliston. She lies buried in Birdville Cemetery.

Thomas B. James was elected Sheriff of Tarrant County, Texas on December 3, 1869. He was re-elected on December 2, 1873 and served until February 15, 1876. He was a member of the Robert E. Lee Camp of United Confederate Veterans in Fort Worth.

By the time the 1870 census of Tarrant County was taken, Thomas had remarried. He is shown as County Sheriff in that census. His wife, N. G. James (born about 1846 in Arkansas) and a son, Thomas James (born about 1868) were with him.

The Fort Worth City Directory for 1878-1879 lists Thomas James residing on the west side of South Main Street in Fort Worth, between Seventh and Eighth Streets.

The 1880 census taker found the James family living on Main Street in Fort Worth. T. B. James was a planter. His wife, Mrs. N. G. James, was born about 1845 in Arkansas to two native Kentuckians. They had three children living with them in that year: Thomas James (born about 1868); V. I. James (a female, born about 1872); J. H. James (a male, born about 1875); and Elbert James (born about 1877). Elbert James's headstone is still standing in Birdville Cemetery (May 18, 1877-March 10, 1881).

Thomas B. James died at his home on March 30, 1884 and was buried in Birdville Cemetery. An obituary appeared for him in the Fort Worth Gazette on March 31, 1884: *"Died. On March 30, 1884, at his late residence in this city, after a short illness, T. B. James, aged forty-three (43) years. The funeral will take place at 10 o'clock today. The remains will be buried at Birdville. Friends and acquaintances are requested to attend."*

