



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Joseph Manning Henderson

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Joseph Manning Henderson was a prominent and influential Confederate veteran in Tarrant County for nearly forty years after the war. He lies buried in Birdville Cemetery.

A lengthy biographical sketch, probably written from material he supplied himself, appeared in *A History of Texas, Together With a Biographical History of Tarrant and Parker Counties...*, published by the Lewis Publishing Co. in Chicago in 1895: *“Joseph M. Henderson has long been identified with the interest of Tarrant county, Texas, is enthusiastic over its progress and development, and is found among the front ranks of its most enterprising citizens. He arrived in Tarrant county when this whole country was a sea of grass, without a mark of civilization anywhere. With his team he was the first to drag a log over the grass to mark the road for travelers to Dallas. Mr. Henderson was born in Bradley County, Tennessee, March 21, 1841, and in 1845 moved with his parents from there to Cooper county, Missouri. His father died in Missouri, August 8, 1846, and his mother was afterward married, her second husband dying in 1849, while on his way to California.*

“In 1851 she and her children emigrated with some friends to Texas, and located near where the subject of our sketch now lives, in the vicinity of Birdville. Here he grew to manhood. His education was limited to that received in the common schools. Mrs. Henderson bought 320 acres of prairie land, upon which she settled and where she passed her remaining days and died, her death occurring September 3, 1880. She was a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and was a woman in whose life was portrayed that amiability and courage which so characterized the pioneer mothers.

“After her death Mr. Henderson bought the interest of the other heirs to the old homestead, has also made other land purchases, and is now the owner of 1,715 acres of fine black soil, all under fence, and 300 acres in a high state of cultivation, the rest being used for stock purposes. He rents the most of his cultivated land and gives his personal attention to the stock business, making a specialty of grading both cattle and horses. He has some fine specimens of shorthorn cattle. He also fattens

beef cattle for market. For years, Mr. Henderson has taken an active interest in political matters, and has filled some responsible and lucrative offices.

“In 1876 he was nominated by the Democratic party, of which he is an enthusiastic member, for Sheriff of Tarrant county, was duly elected, and served two terms, his second term expiring in 1880. He also served two terms, four years, as Tax Collector of the county, and his whole public service has been characterized by the strictest fidelity. Besides his valuable farm above alluded to, he has acquired other interests. He has rental property in Fort Worth, and is a stockholder in the Traders’ Bank.

“Like most of the middle-aged men of this country, Mr. Henderson has a war record. He enlisted in July, 1862, in Green’s brigade, and Waller’s battalion, which was consigned to the Trans-Mississippi Department, in which he continued until the close of the war. He was in some hotly contested battles, and did a large amount of skirmishing, was on the Banks raid up Red river. In the last battle of Yellow Bayou he was wounded in the mouth by a minie ball, which knocked out five teeth and broke his jaw bone. He still has the minie ball. Thus disabled, he came home on furlough and remained two months, at the end of that time returning to his command. At the time of Lee’s surrender he was on the lower Brazos, his command was there disbanded, and from there he directed his course homeward.

“Of Mr. Henderson’s parents, we further record that they were William and Serena (Ware) Henderson, and that they were natives, respectively, of Virginia and Tennessee. The father was a farmer and slave owner, and, as already stated, died in Missouri. Beyond this, little is known of the Henderson family. The maternal grandfather, John Ware, was a native of Tennessee. He also died in Missouri. His widow and her family came to Texas in 1851, with the Henderson family and others, and settled in this county. She died in 1863, leaving a son and four daughters, viz.: Margaret, Samuel, Mary, Nancy, and Serena. Margaret and Mary are the only ones of this number now living, and Margaret is eighty-six years of age; both have large families.

“ Six children constituted the Henderson family, namely: John E., who was killed in the battle of Mansfield; Mary J., who died at the age of eighteen years; Joseph M., the subject of this article; Emily A., widow of John Acres; William C., a farmer and stock dealer of Tarrant county; and Sarah, wife of James Hardesty, of Fort Worth.

In April, 1888, Mr. Henderson married Miss Ishie Jewell, who was born in Parker County, Texas in 1865, daughter of H. C. Jewell, a native of Tennessee. Mr. Jewell came to Texas in 1848, and first settled in Lamar county, from whence he successively moved to Grayson, Collin, Hill, Parker, and Tarrant counties. He is now a resident of Fort Worth, and is engaged in the real-estate business.

“ Mr. and Mrs. Henderson have two children: Modinia, born February 21, 1889; and Robert W., born December 9, 1891. Mr. Henderson is a Royal Arch and Knight Templar Mason, and a member of the Missionary Baptist Church. Mrs. Henderson is a Methodist.”

Henderson's Compiled Military Service Records in Washington indicate that he was twenty-two years old when he enlisted on July 21, 1862 at Fort Worth, and joined the regiment on August 27,

1862 at Vermilion, Louisiana. He brought with him a horse worth \$135 and equipment worth \$20. He was captured on May 20, 1863 at Bayou Beouf, Louisiana. He is shown on a list of men “sent down” on May 26, and received by Federal authorities on May 29, 1863. No locations are given for these transfers. Henderson's name appears on a roll of paroled and exchanged prisoners for the period January 1 through June 30, 1863 at Camp Lee near Richmond, Virginia. He is shown present on a muster roll dated February 29, 1864.

A sketch of Mr. Henderson appeared in Mack Williams, In Old Fort Worth, published by the News-Tribune, and includes some details not mentioned in the 1895 biography: *“The name of this former Tarrant County sheriff is perpetuated today in Henderson Avenue. He had another distinction: he was the only sheriff in Tarrant County who served simultaneously as tax collector. It is likely that taxes were paid more promptly during his term...Confederate veterans were powerful in politics in those days (after the Civil War), and in 1876 Joe Henderson was elected sheriff. One of his best campaign workers was his father-in-law, Hiram Jewell...”*

Joseph M. Henderson lies buried in Birdville Cemetery beside his son, Robert W. Henderson, who was a veteran of World War I. Joseph’s headstone records simply that he was born in 1840 and died in 1903. He has no Texas death certificate. If Mrs. Henderson is buried with them there, her grave is unmarked. It seems probably that an obituary for Mr. Henderson is to be found in the Fort Worth newspaper, but since we have not discovered the month and date of his death we have not made a search for it. Genealogists interested in Mr. Henderson and his family background have posted information at Ancestry.com.

The following obituary for Mr. Henderson appeared in the Dallas Morning News on August 31, 1903: *“EX-SHERIFF HENDERSON DEAD. Texas Pioneer and Confederate Veteran Passes Away at Fort Worth. SPECIAL TO THE NEWS. Fort Worth, Tex. Aug. 30. Ex-Sheriff Joseph Manning Henderson died this afternoon at 6:50 o’clock. Sheriff Henderson had been suffering from a cancer for the past year and has been confined to his room for the past several months. He leaves a widow and two children, a daughter, Miss Modania, and a son, Robert Wiley. Joseph M. Henderson moved to Texas sometime in the 50’s from Tennessee. At the time of his death he was 63 years old, having been born the 21st of March, 1840. He was the son of William and Salina Henderson. At the beginning of hostilities in the ‘60s, he enlisted in Capt. J. C. Terrill’s Company and remained with them during the four years of the war and was considered by his Captain as a soldier above reproach. About twenty years ago he served two terms as Sheriff of Tarrant County and won the reputation as a faithful officer. He was a Mason of high standing and an active member of the Knights Templars. It was said of him at no time could one in distress, or the people at large call upon him and find him wanting. He was always ready, both with his services and his means, to subserve the wishes of the people of the community in which he lived. The funeral services will be held from the residence, 1014 Monroe street, at 2:45 tomorrow afternoon, and the interment will take place at Birdville in this county. There will be a committee of veterans from R. E. Lee Camp No. 158, United Confederate Veterans, and from the Masons and Knights Templars Lodges in attendance on the funeral.”*

