



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

William C. Henderson

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William C. Henderson was a native of Missouri. He came with his mother and siblings to Birdville before the War and served in a Texas regiment. He spent the rest of his life here, died in 1916, and lies buried in Birdville Cemetery.

Two of William's older brothers, John E. Henderson and Joseph M. Henderson, were also in the Confederate service and have a place on our local veterans' memorial. We have not been able to ascertain the specific unit in which William served. Many Confederate soldiers' records do not contain enough personal information to positively identify them by age or residence. Several men named William Henderson served in Texas Confederate units.

William C. Henderson did not apply for a Texas Confederate pension, nor did his wife because she died many years before he did. He was not a member of the Robert E. Lee Camp of United Confederate Veterans at Fort Worth. His Confederate service is confirmed both by his answer to the 1910 census taker and by a statement in his newspaper obituary.

William Henderson could not have been born after the spring of 1847, if indeed his father died in Missouri on August 8, 1846 as one source records. William's headstone in Birdville Cemetery records his birth date as August 28, 1849, which is obviously too late. He was a son of William and Sarena (Weir) Henderson. After the elder William Henderson died, Sarena was remarried to Alexander V. Stowell in Jackson County, Missouri on October 15, 1849. Her Stowell surname appears on her headstone in Birdville Cemetery.

When the 1850 census was taken, Mrs. Serena "Henderson" and her children were living in Fort Osage Township, Jackson County, Missouri, in a household headed by her father, John Weir, who was born about 1772. Curiously, she has two boys with her named John E. Henderson...one born about 1838, and another born about 1846. It seems likely that the younger boy's name was mistakenly recorded, and that he is actually William C. Henderson.

Several interesting facts about William Henderson's early life may be gleaned from a biographical sketch of his brother, Joseph M. Henderson, which 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. It tells us that William's parents and older siblings originally lived in Bradley County, Tennessee, "*...and in 1845 moved...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 [Joseph M. Henderson] now lives, in the vicinity of Birdville. Here he [and his siblings] grew to manhood. His education was limited to that received in the common schools. Mrs. Henderson [William's mother] 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..."

At the time of the 1870 census, William was a twenty-five year old bachelor living with his mother, Sarena Stowell, and his older brother, Joseph, at Birdville. Neither he nor his brother owned any real estate.

By 1875 Mr. Henderson was well-established as a landowner in Tarrant County. The tax list in that year shows him as the owner of sixty-five acres of the S. Elliott survey (worth \$325), two hundred ten acres of the S. Screech survey (worth \$1680), fifty acres of the G. B Stanley survey (worth \$400), three hundred twenty acres of the J. N. King survey (worth \$1600), and ten acres of the W. A. Trimble survey (worth \$40). He also owned a considerable amount of livestock and personal property.

William C. Henderson appears in the 1880 census of Precinct 4 of Tarrant County. He age was given as forty-three, which yields an approximate birth date of 1847. He was a bachelor, and had two young men living with him...one a laborer and the other a servant.

Mr. Henderson appears in the 1880 agricultural census of Tarrant County, at which time he was sharecropping on a one-hundred-acre farm, all of which was in cultivation. The farm was worth three thousand dollars. He owned farming implements worth one hundred dollars and livestock worth five hundred fifty. He estimated the value of all his farm productions in the past year to be one thousand two hundred dollars. He owned two horses and eight mules. He owned six milk cows and twenty cattle of other classes. Ten calves had been dropped on his place in the past year. He estimated they had churned two hundred pounds of butter during that time. He had a few hogs, either four or six (the numeral is not readable on the microfilm copy). He had thirty-five acres in Indian corn which had made two hundred bushels, fifteen acres in oats which had made eight hundred bushels, and fifty acres of cotton which made sixteen bales.

On October 2, 1882 in Cass County, Texas, Mr. Henderson was married to Dona Snipes. She was born October 17, 1863 and died April 25, 1886. Family internet sources say she was a daughter of James Harvey Snipes (1819-1889, who died in Cass County, Texas) and his second wife, Mary Jane

Wilson (1828-1917, who died in Collin County, Texas). They also say Dona was born at Creek Stand, Macon County, Alabama, and grew up in Douglassville, Cass County, Texas. Census data suggest the Snipes family made the move from Alabama to Texas about 1868.

W. C. Henderson's home appears on the Sam Street Map of Tarrant County of December, 1895. It lies along the western boundary of the W. Screech survey. In modern-day terms, it was in present-day Haltom City, in the general area of the small power station north of the north end of Rita Lane, east of the railroad track and west of Denton Highway (377).

At the time of the 1900 census, Mr. Henderson lived in Precinct 4 along with his daughter, Mary, and his son, Con Henderson. He gave his birth date as August 1848.

When the 1910 census was taken, Mr. Henderson and his son, J. C. Henderson, were working as stock raisers in Precinct 4 of Tarrant County. They had a black female cook named Jean Tribble working for them.

Mr. Henderson died in Fort Worth on February 17, 1916. An obituary for him appeared in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram on February 18. It said: "*HENDERSON FUNERAL CONDUCTED BY MASONS. Following a short illness, W.C. Henderson, 68, well known Tarrant county pioneer and brother of the late Joe Henderson, former sheriff, died Thursday afternoon at All Saints hospital.*

Funeral services were held Friday at 2:30 p.m. at the Birdville Baptist Church. Rev. W. A. Patterson officiating. Burial was at the Birdville cemetery under the auspices of the Masons.

Henderson was born in Birdville and served in the Confederate army. He invested in Birdville lands when a young man and increased his holdings considerably. He also engaged in mule trading extensively. He was a member of Fort Worth commandery.

Surviving the deceased are a son, J. C. Henderson, and a daughter, Mrs. L. C. Day of Haskell; one sister, Mrs. Sallie Hardesty of Fort Worth."

Mr. Henderson appears on the Find-A-Grave site as "Willinger Connelius Henderson. He does not appear in any other records with this given name. One possible explanation is that it was one transcriber's guess from his entry in the 1900 census, over which the census taker had done some calculations, and the vertical stroke of a numeral "4" makes it appear that Mr. Henderson had a "g" in his first name.

We have discovered records of William C. Henderson having only two children. The first, Mary Henderson, was born about 1884. Her father's obituary says she lived in Haskell, Texas in 1916 and was the wife of L. C. Day. Her brother's 1922 obituary says she lived in Fort Worth.

J. Con Henderson was born July 25, 1885. The 1920 census records his name as Joseph Conrad Henderson. His wife's name was Mabel (1875-1949). He died at his home in Fort Worth at 2215 Hemphill Street at 3:25 a.m. on May 14, 1922. He was buried in Oakwood Cemetery the next day. A short obituary in the Fort Worth paper said he was survived by his wife, a daughter Fannie May

Henderson, and a sister, Mary Day, all of Fort Worth. The 1920 census says the daughter's name was Connie May Henderson.