



# TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

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## Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

### Joseph Noah Rogers

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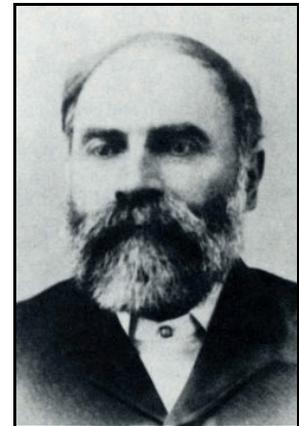
Joseph Noah Rogers was a Confederate veteran who lived with his parents and siblings at Grapevine when the War began. He later moved to Jack County, where he became a prominent newspaperman and churchman.

Joseph N. Rogers was born December 4, 1832 in Butler County, Kentucky, the oldest child of James Madison Rogers and his wife, Seanna (Borah) Rogers. An excellent account of his life and family, complete with photographs, by Marie Lane is to be found in [The History of Jack County, Texas](#), compiled by the Jack County Genealogical Society in 1985. Most of this biographical sketch was taken from that work.

Joseph and his siblings grew up in a slaveholding family...in 1850 his father owned two slaves, a forty-six-year-old male and a fourteen-year-old female.

Joseph married Martha Jane Layton in Butler County on July 18, 1853. Her father was a millwright and stone cutter named Major William Layton; her mother was Mary Jane Yater. Martha was born near the town of Lancaster in Garrard County, Kentucky on February 17, 1831. For the first four years of their marriage, Joseph and Martha lived at Logansport, Kentucky where Joseph was in the mercantile business.

Joseph and Martha, along with his parents, his brothers Jonathan and George and their families, left Kentucky and came to Grapevine, Texas. The 1860 tax lists for Tarrant County do not show that any of the Rogerses owned slaves in that year. However, Joseph's father owned nearly eight hundred acres of land in the Grapevine area at that time, in the surveys of Thomas Easter, J. Baird, M. Minter, and J. H. Hughes.



Joseph enlisted in Co. H, 30<sup>th</sup> Texas Cavalry on August 22, 1862 at Camp McCulloch. He was raised to Corporal on June 30, 1863. He presented himself for service with a horse worth \$150 and equipment worth \$20.

Joseph, his father, and his brother all registered to vote in Tarrant County on August 10, 1867. All three men said they had lived in Precinct 2 for eight years, and were natives of Kentucky. Thus they must have arrived in Tarrant County around 1859.

After the War, Joseph resumed farming at Grapevine. He was a charter member of the Grapevine Baptist Church, and was elected Sunday School Superintendent. All his children learned to play the organ and played in public, and Joseph taught music throughout his life.

In 1873 the family left Tarrant County and moved to Springdale, about ten miles outside Jacksboro, Texas. Joseph helped organize the Springdale Baptist Church in 1875 and served on the credentials committee of the Jacksboro Baptist Association.

Joseph's wife, Martha, was a fine cook and did beautiful needlework. She had a sister, Susan Layton, who was blind and who made her home with the Rogers family from 1860 through 1880.

While they were living at Springdale, Joseph and his two daughters, Alice and Joanna, began printing a Sunday School paper called "The Sunday Wreath" in the basement of their home. It became the "Rural Citizen" in 1880 and became a rural weekly paper.

In the fall of 1880, Joseph and his family moved to Jacksboro and continued to publish their paper in the town. In 1882 the paper's name was changed to the "Jacksboro Gazette." At first they set the type by hand and a steam engine ran the presses. They later bought a linotype machine and Joseph's daughter, Joanna, became expert in its use. She remained an expert until her death.

Joseph was a stockholder in the Jacksboro Mill and Elevator Company and of the Trinity Valley Trust Company of Dallas. Most important to him, however, was the running of the "Jacksboro Gazette." By 1903, J. N. Rogers and Company was publishing the Gazette, and Alice M. Rogers was the associate editor. After Joseph died, Alice and her sister Joanna kept working with the paper as long as their health permitted.

Joseph was a faithful Baptist all his life. The family Bible recorded that he joined the Baptist church in May, 1844, and was baptized by the Rev. Alfred Taylor in Kentucky. He and all his family members were active members of the First Baptist Church of Jacksboro.

Joseph Noah Rogers died January 6, 1910 in Jacksboro and lies buried there beside his wife and daughters. Mrs. Rogers died May 14, 1908. They are buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Jacksboro.

Joseph's and Martha's children included: Alice Maude Rogers (April 24, 1854-May 9, 1931); Elizabeth Jane Rogers and Mary Susan Rogers (twins born June 26, 1859- ); Joanna Lewis Rogers (April 15 or 25, 1863-January 31, 1953); and Ida Layton Rogers (February 21, 1869-July 28, 1869, buried with a readable headstone in Grapevine Cemetery).

An obituary for Joseph N. Rogers appeared in The Jacksboro Gazette on Thursday, January 13, 1910: *"In memoriam – J. N. Rogers. A watchman on the tower of Zion has fallen. Such was the thought that arose in the mind of the writer when he first learned of the death of Mr. J. N. Rogers.*

*"Mr. Rogers was born in Butler County, Kentucky on 4 December 1832 and was converted and joined the Baptist church when he was 10 years of age; and from that time on he was not only loyal to the church of his choice, but true to every interest. In 1853, he was married to Miss Martha Layton, a most estimable lady, who it will be remembered departed this life on 14 May 1908. She was a very intelligent lady of a strong mind and pleasant demeanor. Very few couples have lived so long together and whose joint efforts have been so useful in this life.*

*"Shortly after their marriage, some time in 1855, the father of Mr. Rogers moved to Texas, and he and his young wife followed them and located near Grapevine Prairie in Tarrant County. They lived there until the war broke out. Shortly after its commencement Mr. Rogers entered the Confederate Army and was a private soldier, fought through it in the defense of what he had assured himself were the rights of the South. At the close of the war he returned to Texas and in 1874 located in Jack county on the old Rogers homestead eight or nine miles south of Jacksboro. In 1880, he began the publication of a paper the predecessor of the present Jacksboro Gazette.*

*"Mr. Rogers was a success. He had accomplished what he had undertaken, and when he died he left behind him a record of which anyone could and should be proud. He also left an up-to-date, first-class printing office, thoroughly equipped with up-to-date machinery. This paper was the apple of his eye.*

*"He was constantly planning for the future, and just a short while before his death, he ordered and installed the very latest improved Mergenthaler Junior linotype."*

An extensive biography of Mr. Rogers appeared in 1906 in B. B. Paddock's History of North and West Texas: JOSEPH NOAH ROGERS. The press of Jack County has known the subject of this review as a publisher for a quarter of a century, and in view of this extended service and of the years which weigh \_\_\_\_\_ him in the balance of life it is appropriate to honor him with the title of "The Newspaper Patriarch" of the county. Although his connection with the craft is antedated some twenty years by the appearance of the first paper published in the county, it is the tenacity with which he has pursued his calling and the high order of his publication from a strict observance of the ethics which distinguish the newspaper fakir from the 'legitimate sons' of the profession that entitles him to a mark of distinction among the worthy citizenship of his county.

The newspaper age of Jack county began with the month of March, 1860, when the renegade Hemner brought this first issue of *The Whiteman* before the few people who constituted the citizenship of all the territory under the jurisdiction of Jack. The conduct of the editor of this pioneer paper became so questionable and his presence so odiferous that the elements which did the work of purifying society in those days elevated him to the limb of a cottonwood tree and separated him from *The Whiteman* for all time to come. The *Frontier Echo* appeared after the death of *The Whiteman* and this was succeeded by *The Jack County Guide* which suspended and left the field to *The Sunday Wreath*, a little leaflet devoted to the moral and spiritual welfare of the county and founded by the worthy subject of this article. *The Sunday Wreath* seems to have prospered, for it

grew in size with the lapse of time and became a four-column, many-paged rural journal; but with the establishment of *The Gazette* Mr. Rogers discontinued it, and all his time since has been devoted to the publication of a modern family newspaper, moral in tone and in politics representing the views of the Democratic party. *The Gazette* was founded June 4, 1880, and is owned and published by Mr. Rogers and his two daughters under the name of J. N. Rogers and Company.

Mr. Rogers' career in Jack county begins with the year 1873, when he settled on a new farm on the head of Keechi creek and began its cultivation and improvement. For fifteen years he had been identified with Texas farming on Grapevine Prairie in Tarrant county, and he completed his connection with this honored vocation with seven years of application to his Jack county farm. On leaving the latter he established his home in Jacksboro as the proprietor of *The Wreath* and his connection with the newspaper fraternity has continued uninterrupted since.

In Butler county, Kentucky, December 4, 1832, Joseph N. Rogers was born. His forefathers were English and on his paternal side settled along the Potomac river in Virginia and Maryland and were descended from the noble Squires. Lord Baltimore who settled Maryland had in his colony the Rays whose posterity we ultimately find along the north bank of the Potomac river where Jonathan Rogers met and married Elizabeth Ray. In the days of Boone in Kentucky Jonathan and Elizabeth Rogers separated from their Virginia home and crossed the mountains into Kentucky and identified themselves with the new and wooded country about Bardstown, finally establishing their home in Nelson county, where their family was brought up. Jonathan Rogers died in Ohio county in 1844, at sixty-five years of age. They were the parents of Samuel, Elizabeth, wife of Joseph James, James Madison, Cinderella, who married Simeon Wilson, Joseph, Nancy, who became the wife of John Butler, and Lloyd.

James Madison Rogers, father of our subject, was born in Nelson county, Kentucky December 4, 1808, came to maturity upon his father's farm and became a successful farmer himself. For his wife he married Seanna, a daughter of George Borah, of Pennsylvania German stock, and related by blood to the Muhlenburgs and the Valentines, noted families of the Keystone state. Mrs. Rogers passed away in Breckenridge, Texas in 1882, at seventh-three years of age. She accompanied her husband from her Kentucky home to Texas overland, being seven weeks en route and reaching the state when twenty-five miles of railroad was all it possessed. They made their first stop in Tarrant county, where farming was engaged in until their removal to become pioneer settlers in Jack county. Here Mr. Rogers became one of the well-known men of the county being called to serve in the early years as justice of the peace and filling also the office of commissioner from one of the precincts of the county. He died in Ohio county, Kentucky while on a visit in 1892 at eighty-four years of age. Of the issue of James M. and Seanna Rogers, Joseph N., of this notice, is the firstborn and sole survivor. The others were: Elizabeth, who married A. P. Maddox and died in Ohio county, Kentucky; George W. who died in Jack county with issue; and Jonathan J., who passed in Fort Worth in 1904, leaving a family at death.

Joseph N. Rogers passed his youth on his father's Kentucky farm and acquired a fair education in the schools of his native county. His parents' home was his own until his marriage July 21, 1853, when he soon afterward engaged in mercantile pursuits in Logansport, following the same four years. Upon his retirement from this he accompanied the family flock to Texas and renewed his

acquaintance with farm work on Grapevine Prairie, Tarrant county, as previously stated, some miles removed from his nearby neighbors.

While residing in Tarrant county, the war between the states came on and Mr. Rogers enlisted in Company H, Thirtieth Cavalry, Colonel E. J. Gurley, and after two years service was transferred to the Seventeenth Texas Light Artillery, serving under General Gano when the war closed. He fought at Poison Springs, near Camden, Arkansas, at Mark's Mill, and at Prairie Dian(?), and was in several brushes with the Indians in the territory. When the issue was decided and the war over, he returned to his farm and resumed civil life where he had dropped it three years before.

Mr. Rogers married Mina Martha Layton, a daughter of Major William Layton, a Kentucky millwright, and stone-mason who passed his life in Garrard county, where Mrs. Rogers was born February 17, 1831. Four daughters have resulted from this marriage, viz: Alice Maud, one of the proprietors of the Jacksboro Gazette; Lizzie and Mary S., twins, the former now Mrs. W. N. Leek and the latter the widow of James Colvin, of Jack County; Joanna Lois, the youngest, is the junior member of J. N. Rogers and Company, owners of the Gazette.

Mr. Rogers is a stockholder in the Jacksboro Mill and Elevator Company and of the Trinity Valley Trust Company of Dallas, but all his personal energies are directed toward the proper editing and successful conduct of the creature of his young and vigorous manhood, the Jacksboro Gazette. He joined the Temple of Honor many years ago, and the families are workers in the Master's cause as members of the Missionary Baptist church.