



TARRANT COUNTY

TXGENWEB

Barbara Knox and Rob Yoder, County Coordinators

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Joseph J. Willingham

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Joseph J. Willingham of Roanoke, Tarrant County, Texas, was a Confederate veteran living in our community for a time. He was born May 21, 1848 in Greene County, Alabama. He told a census taker in 1880 that both his parents were South Carolinians. Family researchers report that he was a son of John Ralph Willingham and his wife, Nancy E. Mays.

The family is found in the 1850 census of Greene County, Alabama. He appears as one of five children in the John R. Willingham family, and is listed as John J. Willingham. John R. Willingham was the owner of four slaves in that year.

He came to Texas in 1867. At the time the 1870 census was taken, he and his wife were living in Precinct 2 of Henderson County, Texas. He was working as a farm laborer. His wife, Mary M. (Ashmore) Willingham, was born in March, 1851. She was still living at the time the 1900 census was taken.

By the year 1880, Joseph and his family had moved to Precinct 6 of Anderson County, Texas. In that year they had two sons, Arnold P. Willingham (born about 1875) and Walter Willingham (born about 1878).

The 1900 census taker found the family living in Precinct 2 of Henderson County, Texas. Mrs. Willingham said she had given birth to eleven children, only five of whom were still living. The children with them in 1900 included a daughter, Bonner L. Willingham (born in September 1880); Columbus C. Willingham (born in February 1886); Lon C. Willingham (born in February 1889); Tommie (a son born in May 1896). According to the birth certificate of his son, Lon C. Willingham, Joseph Willingham, in 1889, was living in 1889 in Athens, Texas with his wife, Mary. Also, according to the birth certificate, Willingham and his wife had ten children before Lon's birth, but only 4 were still living.

About the month of March 1913, he moved to northeast Tarrant County and settled in an area served by the post office in Roanoke, which sits just across the county line in Denton County.

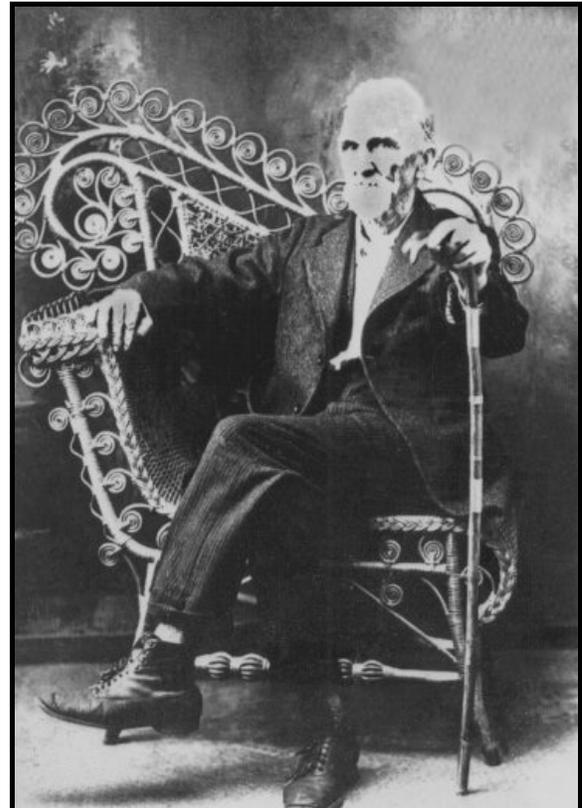
Willingham applied for a Confederate pension in 1914. In his application, Willingham said he left the service in Calhoun County, Mississippi with the rest of his command. He was in Company K, 15th Mississippi Cavalry.

Willingham was admitted to the Confederate Home in Austin on July 28, 1921. He died there on August 22, 1927, and was buried the next day in the State Cemetery. His death certificate says he was widowed, and died of pneumonia.



Headstone in Confederate section of the State Cemetery in Austin

Photo courtesy of Judy Russell



Joseph J. Willingham

Photo courtesy of Judy Russell