



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

James Elbert Botts

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James Elbert Botts was born November 23, 1846 at Red Bay, along the western edge of Franklin County, Alabama. His death certificate gives the date as November 24. The western border of Franklin County, Alabama is part of the eastern borders of Tishomingo and Itawamba Counties in Mississippi. After living for a time in Franklin Co., Alabama, James moved to Independence County, Arkansas by 1870, and on to Johnson County, Texas by 1880. He eventually settled at Grapevine, where he died and was buried.

When the 1850 census taker came, he found James Botts living with his parents and siblings in District 6 of Franklin County, Alabama. Also living with the family was one Lafayette Botts, born about 1825 in Tennessee, possibly a younger brother of James's father.

When the 1860 census was taken, James was living with his parents and siblings in the Western Division of Franklin County, Alabama. According to descendants who have posted material at ancestry.com, his parents were Joshua Botts (born about 1824) and Elisa (or Elsie) (Renfroe) Botts (born about 1830). They were married in Macon County, Alabama on November 15, 1840. This census shows their birthplaces as Tennessee and Louisiana, respectively. James E. Botts's death certificate says his mother's maiden name was Arnold.

James Botts served as a soldier in Co. A of Moreland's Regiment of Alabama Cavalry. Mr. Botts's records are very scant; he enlisted on July 1, 1863 at Dickson, Alabama for a term of three years. He was left sick in a hospital in Selma, Alabama on August 5, 1864. Moreland's Cavalry Battalion was organized in August, 1863 at Russellville, Alabama, with its men being raised in Franklin County. The battalion skirmished in North Alabama and Tennessee during the winter and spring of 1864-1864. It later moved to Mississippi and took an active part in the fight at Tishomingo Creek. On May 18, 1865, it surrendered at Iuka, Mississippi.

Mr. Botts's granddaughter, Martha Lowe, says her grandfather originally came to Texas to work with cattle. When the 1880 census was taken, James A. Botts and his father, Joshua Botts, were living in Johnson County, Texas. Living in the same household with them were Cyrus and Modenia (Botts) Lowe (Joshua Botts' daughter) and three of their children. The Lowes had been living in Arkansas until about 1879. Cyrus Lowe's son, Ernest Lowe, later married James Botts's daughter, Bonnie.

At some point in the early 1880's, Mr. Botts married Martha Harrison, who was a widow with at least one child. Her first husband's surname was Deweese, Martha Harrison Botts was born March 7, 1856 and died October 2, 1920. Her daughter's death certificate says Martha was born in Green County, Kentucky. Martha has no death certificate on file in Austin.

When the 1900 census was taken, Mr. and Mrs. Botts were living in District 66 of Precinct 7 in Johnson County, Texas. Mrs. Botts said she had given birth to six children, five of whom were still living. She and Mr. Botts had three of their own children living with them: Bonnie Botts (born in November, 1885); J. C. Botts (a daughter, born in February of 1889), and J. M. Botts (a daughter born in January of 1892). Also living with them was a step-daughter of Mr. Botts, named Booker Dewise, born in Kentucky in January of 1877. Thus Mrs. Botts was a widow with at least one child when she married Mr. Botts, and she had given birth to two other children. We have not discovered if they were in her first marriage, her marriage to Mr. Botts, or one in each.

Some time between 1900 and 1910 Mr. Botts and his wife and daughters moved to the Minter's Chapel Community, south of Grapevine. He told the 1910 census taker in Tarrant County that he was a Confederate veteran. In 1910, he owned property on the James Cate, G. W. Minter, and R. Worthington surveys. Also in that year, Mrs. Botts told the census taker she had given birth to five children, four of whom were still living. They had one single daughter, Iva Botts (born about 1892) living with them, and one married daughter, Bonnie Lowe, and her husband, Ernest Lowe.

A short note mentioning Mr. Botts appeared in the Grapevine Sun on Saturday, May 11, 1912: ***"J. E. Botts and daughter, Miss ___, are attending the Confederate re-union at Macon, Ga., after which they will visit Mr. Botts' old home at Belmont, Miss. We wish them a pleasant trip and safe return."*** Belmont, Mississippi is a town in Tishomingo County, Mississippi which borders Franklin County, Alabama, on the east where Mr. Botts was born and grew to manhood. The town of Belmont is very near the eastern boundary of Tishomingo County. Belmont, Mississippi and Red Bay, Alabama are only about five miles apart. In 1916, Ernest Lowe built a house on College Street in Grapevine and his family and Mr. and Mrs. Botts moved into town. There Mr. and Mrs. Botts spent the rest of their lives.

A lengthy obituary for Mrs. Botts appeared in the Grapevine Sun on October 9, 1920. More than half of it contains no information specific to her, but the first part is informative: ***"Mrs. J. E. Botts Dies Suddenly. Mrs. J. E. Botts of this place died suddenly at her home on Saturday, Oct. 2nd, of paralysis, having been sick only one day. She leaves a husband and four daughters—Mrs. E. G. Harris and Mrs. E. E. Lowe of this city; Mrs. J. F. Webster of Ft. Worth; and Mrs. G. A. Russell of Venus. Funeral services were conducted at the Baptist Church at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, conducted by Res. J. M. Hunt and C. W. Irvin, and the remains were interred in the Grapevine***

cemetery, followed to the grave by a large number of sorrowing relatives and friends. Mrs. Botts was an every day Christian....”

Mr. Botts died October 23, 1929. His obituary in The Grapevine Sun says: **“J. E. BOTTS BURIED TODAY. Just as we go to press we received the sad news of the death of our good citizen, Mr. J. E. Botts, who died at the Cook Memorial Hospital at Fort Worth at 5:00 a.m. Wednesday. Mr. Botts was born in the State of Mississippi eighty-three years ago, and has lived in the Grapevine community for twenty-five years, coming here from Venus in Johnson County. He was a gallant Confederate soldier and always attended the reunions. He is survived by the following children: Mrs. E. E. Lowe, Grapevine; Mrs. G. A. Russell, Cleburne; Mrs. J. F. Webster, Greenville, and a step-daughter, Mrs. E. G. Harris, Fort Worth; and four grand children. Funeral services will be held at the Baptist Church this afternoon (Thursday) at 2:30 by Rev. Ike Sidebottom of Arlington, assisted by the pastor, Rev. Boyd P. Milburn. Interment will be at the Grapevine Cemetery.”**

Mr. Botts's death certificate says he died in Room 306 in Cook's Hospital at 6 a.m. on October 23 of apoplexy, with a fractured skull as a result of a fall he had suffered four days earlier. He was buried at Grapevine the next day.

One of the children was Christine J. Botts, who was born in February, 1889. About 1918 she married George Alden Russell (1879-1953). They were living in Johnson County at the time the 1930 census was taken. Mr. and Mrs. Russell lie buried at Cleburne, Texas.

The daughter with whom Mr. Botts was living when he died was Bonnie Mary Lowe, who was born November 4, 1886 at Mansfield, Texas (according to her death certificate). She died January 29, 1962 in Dallas and was buried in Grapevine Cemetery. She was married to Ernest Everett Lowe.

The last daughter to marry and leave home was Iva Botts, who was born at Mansfield, Texas on January 5, 1892. She married Felix Webster. Mrs. Webster died in St. Paul Hospital in Dallas on February 28, 1955, and was buried in Grapevine Cemetery.

If the statement Martha Harrison Botts made to the census taker in 1910 is correct, the four children she had living in 1910 were the three daughters just named and the daughter from her first marriage, whose death certificate identifies her as Willie B. Harris. Willie was born in Kentucky on January 13, 1877, a daughter of a Mr. Deweese and Martha Harrison. She was the wife of Edward G. Harris. She died at 508 Beddell Street in Fort Worth, Texas on July 16, 1937. She was buried in Rose Hill Cemetery in the Handley section of Fort Worth.

