



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Dr. Sidney James Brownson

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Dr. Sidney James Brownson, a native of New York, served in a Minnesota Union infantry regiment. He lived in northeast Tarrant County for several years around the turn of the century and practiced medicine in the Bedford area. He later moved to California where he died.

Sidney was born January 8, 1845 in North Lawrence, St. Lawrence County, New York. He was a son of John Lewis Brownson, Jr. (1823-1901) and his wife, Sarah Elizabeth Draper (1826-1893). By 1880, John and Sarah Brownson and their younger children had settled at Fort Worth, Texas, where John was working as an assistant baggage master. Both lie buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Fort Worth.

By the time the 1850 census was taken, John L. Brownson had moved the family to Iowa, and had settled in Farmersburg Township in Clayton County. Sidney was four years old when the census was taken. His father owned and worked a farm worth two hundred dollars.

In 1857 Sidney and his parents and siblings appear in the Minnesota state census in Goodhue County's Township 113, R. 4. They also appear in the federal census of 1860 in the same place. In this census, their home is shown as Red Wing, Minnesota in Town 113, N. R. 15 W. Sidney was fourteen years old, and was helping his father work their farm which was valued at four thousand dollars.

Sidney entered the service of the Union at Red Wing, Minnesota on February 26, 1864. He became a private in Co. E, 3 Minnesota Infantry. He spent most or all of his service in Arkansas. He was mustered out at Duvall's Bluff, Arkansas on September 2, 1865, and was discharged at Fort Snelling, Minnesota on September 16, 1865.

When the 1870 census was taken, Sidney was a single man living with his parents in the city of Red Wing, Goodhue County, Minnesota. He owned one thousand dollars worth of real estate in his own right and was working as a gardener.

Sidney married Eva J. Woolman on June 29, 1876 at Lane Seminary Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. She was born April 15, 1854 in Cincinnati, Clermont County, Ohio. She died in Fort Worth on March 11, 1912.

In 1880, Mr. and Mrs. Brownson and their children lived in Rossville, Ross Township, Clinton County, Indiana. Their two children, Delos W. and Melvin, were with them. At this time, S. J. Brownson was working as a minister. His name appears in various Presbyterian publications as a minister during the years 1877 to 1881, inclusive. A member of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., Sidney J. Brownson, was received from the New Albany, Indiana presbytery into the Crawfordsville presbytery on September 14, 1880.

The data in the 1900 census indicate that the Brownsons spent some time in Kansas in the 1880's. He attended Civil War veterans reunion held at Eureka, Kansas on October 12, 1887. His daughter, Sarah, was born in Greenwood County, Kansas the following year.

Mr. Brownson filed his application for a Union pension while a resident of Kansas on April 12, 1890. He was issued pension certificate number 966584. He was granted an increase on March 1, 1907 because of his age. Because of the prohibitive cost of obtaining copies from the National Archives, neither his compiled military service records nor his pension file were examined in the course of preparing this biography. Should some descendant be willing to share information from those files we would welcome its inclusion here.

When the 1900 census was taken, Dr. and Mrs. Brownson and two of their children, Melvin and Sarah, were living in Precinct 1 of Tarrant County, Texas. It seems logical to speculate that Dr. Brownson settled here because of the presence of his parents. He was a physician and they owned their real estate. Mrs. Brownson said she had given birth to four children, all of whom were still alive. This suggests there must have been a child who was born after the taking of the 1880 census who had gotten out on his/her own by the time the 1900 census was taken.

In the Texas State Journal of Medicine, published in May, 1910, the following notation is found: "Recent Medical Licentiates. Since last report of the State Board of Medical Examiners for Texas, the following have been issued certificates upon reciprocity.... Sidney J. Brownson...Fort Worth...P. & S...Joplin...Arkansas B'd."

In 1910, Mrs. Brownson and her daughter, Sarah, were living on Tenth Street in Big Spring Township in Benton County, Arkansas. Mrs. Brownson was working as a saleslady in a drug store; her daughter Sarah was working there as a pharmacist. They owned their home. In that same year Dr. Brownson was living and working as a physician at Bedford, Tarrant County, Texas. He was renting a place to live. The census confirms that he was married, but he was living alone.

On April 3, 1917 Mr. Brownson was admitted to the National Military Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers in Malibu Township, Los Angeles County, California. At the time of his admission he was

five feet eight and one-half inches tall. He had a fair complexion, blue eyes, and gray hair. He was a protestant and a physician. He was a widower. His next-of-kin was his daughter, Miss S. E. Bowman, of 621 West 4th Street, Los Angeles. In the 1920 federal census Sidney J. Brownson appears as a widowed inmate living in the National Military Home.

On July 25, 1924 he left the home. The reason given was “Dpd GO #24.” He was readmitted on March 16, 1927, by which time he had remarried. His second wife’s name does not appear in the records, but her address was 8256 Norton Avenue in West Hollywood, California.

When the 1930 census was taken, Sidney lived with his widowed daughter, Sarah, at 143 Park Avenue in Palo Alto, California. He again appears as a widower.

Dr. Sidney J. Brownson died in Palo Alto, San Mateo County, California on May 14, 1933. His body was brought back to Fort Worth and he was buried beside his wife and parents in Oakwood Cemetery.

Census records say Dr. and Mrs. Brownson had four children. We have discovered the names of only three: Delos Woolman Brownson, Melvin Graham Brownson, and Sarah Elizabeth Brownson. The following paragraphs offer a few details of their lives.

Delos Woolman Brownson was born in Jennings County, Indiana on May 18, 1877. He worked for many years as a railway mail clerk. He died about 1 p.m. on September 23, 1953, enroute to Harris Hospital from his home in Fort Worth at 1523 Pruitt Street. His death was caused by cerebral hemorrhage incidental to diabetes and tuberculosis. He was buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Fort Worth the next day. His wife, Minnie Louisa (Bush) Brownson (1877-1952) lies buried beside him.

Melvin Graham Brownson was born in Switzerland County, Indiana on October 18, 1878. He was married three times; first to Martha Elizabeth Crawford on September 27, 1905 at Pampa, Texas; his second wife was Yvonne Balanguet. His third wife was Mabelle Highwater, whom he married in Fort Worth, Texas about 1944. He was a retired civil servant. He died of a coronary occlusion in Tarrant County, Texas in the 3200 block of Springdale Road on December 17, 1945. He was buried in Fort Worth’s Mount Olivet Cemetery. The informant for the death certificate was Mrs. Mabelle Brownson of Palo Alto, California. The death certificate lists Palo Alto as Mr. Brownson’s last permanent address.

Sarah Elizabeth Brownson was born at Climax, Greenwood County, Kansas on May 12, 1888. She married Harry C. Critchley (1885-1929) on December 15, 1923. She died in Menlo Park, California on April 19, 1975.



Sidney's inscription is on the north side of a single stone shared with his parents.

