



TARRANT COUNTY

TXGENWEB

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Joseph H. Simmons

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Joseph H. Simmons was a Tennessee native who lived for several years in the Grapevine area during the 1860's and 1870's. It seems probable the Plains Indian depredations drove him from the Texas frontier to Grapevine just before the War began. During the 1870's he and his family apparently moved to the Indian Territory. Family sources say he returned to Texas before he died in 1905.

Joseph H. Simmons was born about 1832 in Tennessee. When the 1860 census was taken at Jacksboro, Jack County, Texas, Mr. Simmons was a single man and was working at the court house as a bailiff. The family in which he lived appeared to be a mixed one made up of a family and boarders, and it was headed by a female named R. P. Lowrance, who said she was born about 1829 in Tennessee. This was about eleven years after the actual event. The family next door was headed by J. Lowrance, a well-to-do North Carolinian who was born about 1790. Since Mr. Lowrance was apparently not a slaveowner, it seems his considerable personal property was made up of livestock.

The Lowrance family appears in the 1850 census of Marshall County, Tennessee, headed by John Lowrance, who was born about 1790 in North Carolina and his wife, Elenora, who was born in 1792, both in North Carolina. The oldest child with them is Rebecca P. Lowrance, who was born about 1818 in Tennessee. By the time of the 1860 census, that family had settled in Jack County, Texas.

Mr. Simmons married his Jack County landlord, Rebecca Prudence Lowrance, in Jack County on November 1, 1860. At some time during the 1860's both the Simmonses and the Lowrances moved back east and settled in Tarrant County. It seems likely that increasing pressure from the Indians caused their removal, as it did with so many other families in those days. Given the fact that he enlisted in a Northeast Tarrant County unit in December of 1861, they must have made the moved here by that time.

Joseph H. Simmons entered the Confederacy as a fourth sergeant in Capt. Thomas G. Berry's Company, 4th Regiment Texas Cavalry. This company subsequently became Co. A, 9th Texas Cavalry. He was thirty-one years old when he enlisted. He was mustered into the service at Camp Reeves, Texas on December 14, 1861 for a term of twelve months. He had ridden one hundred fifty miles to the rendezvous, and presented himself for service riding a horse worth one hundred ten dollars and with equipment worth twenty-five dollars. On the last day of the year he was with the regiment at Fort Gibson in the Indian Territory. He was sick in camp at some point during May or June 1862. On October 23 of the same year, he was detailed ten days as a wagon driver. On August 14, 1863 he was given a furlough for sixty days. During May and June 1864 he was one of a number of soldiers in a camp of dismounted men at Selma, Alabama. With the rest of his regiment, he was surrendered at Citronelle, Alabama on May 4, 1865; he was paroled at Jackson, Mississippi on May 14. At his parole he gave Birdville, Texas as his place of residence.

Mr. Simmons' mother-in-law, Eleanor Lowrance, died at Grapevine in 1869 and has a readable headstone in Grapevine Cemetery. When the 1870 census was taken, Mr. and Mrs. Simmons lived in a mixed family in the Grapevine area headed by Rebecca's father, John Lowrance.

Some of the data placed on the internet concerning this family are very confusing. Family internet sources report that Joseph and Rebecca had a daughter named Bessie Simmons who was born March 17, 1877 in Oklahoma. She married Henry Walker (1867-1941). She died April 21, 1962 in Fairfield, Freestone County, Texas. She was buried in Mount Zion Cemetery in Freestone County, Texas. Mrs. Walker's death certificate names her parents as Joseph Simmons and Rebecca Lorance.

However, the headstone of Rebecca Lowrance Simmons in Murray County, Oklahoma clearly says Rebecca was born in 1818, and this agrees with data from the 1850 census in Tennessee. It seems unlikely that a woman born in 1818 could have given birth to a daughter born in 1877. In the 1900 census of Payne County, Oklahoma, there is found a couple named Joseph and Rebecca Simmons who are of the correct age to have been the parents of this Bessie Simmons.

There is a headstone for Rebecca P. Simmons standing in the Lowrance Cemetery in Murray County, Oklahoma. She was born July 1, 1818 and died August 1, 1895. Also buried in the cemetery is Willis Burgess Lowrance (1830-1916), who was with the family in the 1850 census in Marshall County, Tennessee. Thus it seems likely that the Rebecca P. Lowrance in 1850 in Marshall County, Tennessee, the one in Jack County, Texas in 1860, the one who was the wife of Joseph H. Simmons in Tarrant County, Texas in 1870, and the one who lies buried in Murray County, Oklahoma are one and the same person.

Family sources on the internet say Joseph H. Simmons died in Texas in 1905. We have been unable to find him in the census records of 1880 and 1900.