



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

Barbara Knox and Rob Yoder, County Coordinators

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Henry Clay Daggett

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Henry Clay Daggett was a veteran of the Mexican War and the Confederate Army. He and his brothers were among the true founders of Tarrant County. One of his brothers was Fort Worth pioneer and promoter Ephraim M. Daggett (1810-1883).

Henry Clay Daggett was born in Lewiston, New York on February 29, 1820. Family members who have placed information at ancestry.com say he was the son of Eleazar Daggett (born 1787 in Vermont) and his wife, Elizabeth Crank (born 1790 in New York. He was a brother of Fort Worth founder Ephraim M. Daggett (1810-1883).

The Daggett family moved to Indiana in 1820 and to Chicago, Illinois in 1830, where Henry's older brother, Ephraim, became an Indian trader in 1833. In April of 1840 the Daggetts moved to Shelby County, Republic of Texas.

Henry was a veteran of the Mexican War. He served in Capt. Middleton Tate Johnson's Company; most of the men in it lived in Shelby County, Texas. The company was mustered into federal service on April 5, 1847, and was mustered out on August 8, 1848. Johnson's Company was a part of Peter H. Bell's Regiment of Texas Mounted Volunteers.

Henry enlisted on April 5, 1847 at Cartwright Mill in Shelby County for the duration of the War. He is shown present on all surviving muster rolls of the company. He was released from the service on August 8, 1848 at Kaufman Station, Texas.

During the years 1849-1853, Daggett and his partner, Archibald F. Leonard, operated a trading post located a mile north of the military camp, Fort Worth. Their store, located in a live oak grove, was a center of community activity. A Historical Marker was placed on this site by The Tarrant County Historical Society. The inscription reads: *"Historic Tree. Henry Clay Daggett & Archibald*

Franklin Leonard established a trading post on this site in 1849. The first election in Tarrant County was held under this tree in 1850 and Birdville voted the first county seat.”

When the 1850 Tarrant County census was taken, H. C. Daggett was living with the family of Daniel E. Norton and was working as a merchant. Since his next-door neighbors were the soldiers at Fort Worth, it may be inferred that he lived beside the fort and sold goods to the members of the garrison there.

Daggett is mentioned prominently in Julia Kathryn Garrett’s Fort Worth: A Frontier Triumph, published in 1972: “...From *Mary Le Bone Springs* [present-day Arlington] on an early May morning of 1849, men of good will rode together to find a site for a fort ‘somewhere near the confluence of the Clear and West Forks of the Trinity river.’” The party was comprised of Major [Ripley A.] Arnold’s escort of blue uniformed dragoons and Colonel Johnson in command of Rangers: Henry Clay Daggett, W. B. Echols, Simon B. Farrar, and Charles Turner...” Many more mentions are made of him in Mrs. Garrett’s book. He also appears in many other works on the history of Fort Worth.

Henry Daggett married Sarah Ellen Marsh in Dallas in 1851. She was born March 9, 1833 and died February 24, 1910, according to her headstone in Birdville Cemetery. Sarah was living in Dallas County, Texas in 1850 with her parents, Harrison C. Marsh (1805-1889) and his wife, Mary “Polly” Raymond Marsh (1810-1883). They came to Dallas County from Missouri in the mid-or-late 1840’s.

On September 18, 1856, Daggett patented the 320-acre George W. Flinchum survey in Tarrant County. Daggett’s wife, Ellen, was born about 1835 in Kentucky, according to the 1870 census. Family sources at ancestry.com say she was Sarah Ellen Marsh, born in Kentucky on March 9, 1833, and died in Texas on February 24, 1910. She lies buried in Birdville Cemetery.

During the Civil War, Daggett enlisted in Capt. Walker’s Company, but was discharged because of bad health. When he registered to vote in Tarrant County on August 31, 1867, he said he had been a resident of Texas for twenty-seven years, and of his present precinct for fourteen years.

By the time the 1870 Tarrant County census was taken, Daggett was living in the Birdville Community. He is listed between two households of the Hardisty family. In that year, both their children were living with them: Charley B. Daggett (born about 1853, died in Fort Worth on January 9, 1925), and Thomas Harrison Daggett (January 11, 1855-October 11, 1891, buried at Birdville Cemetery). When the 1900 census taker visited Mrs. Daggett’s home at Birdville, she said she had given birth to two children, only one of whom was still alive. She said she was born in 1833.

Daggett’s home appears on the 1895 Sam Street Map of Tarrant County. In modern-day terms, he lived in Richland Hills, south of Highway 10 in the rectangle defined by Highway 10 on the north, Rufe Snow Drive on the west, Rena Street on the south, and Matthews Street on the east.

In his later years, Henry was a member of the Robert E. Lee Camp of United Confederate Veterans in Fort Worth. Henry C. Daggett died on his farm near Birdville on October 29, 1887, and was buried in Birdville Cemetery.

