



# TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

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## Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

### William Michael Ward

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William Michael Ward

William Michael Ward was a native of Illinois who settled in Fannin County, Texas with his siblings and parents in the mid-1840's. He served in a local unit which was charged with keeping the southern plains Indians out of the border settlements. He lived for many decades in Tarrant County before dying at his daughter's home in Smithfield in 1915. His brother, James C. Ward, was another of our veterans.

William Michael Ward was born in Macon County, Illinois on November 29, 1826. He was a son of Jeremiah L. "Jerry" Ward (1788-1853) and his wife, Nancy P. (Freeman) Ward (1805-1886), both of whom lie buried in the Ward-Jolley Cemetery in Fannin County north of Honey Grove. In 1845 or 1846 the Wards arrived in the area north of Honey Grove, in Fannin County, Texas.

William Ward married Sylvia Maria Johnson on May 30, 1848 in Fannin County, Texas. She was born in Shelby County, Indiana on December 17, 1830. When the 1850 census of Fannin County, Texas, was taken, William and Sylvia Ward were living in the household of her parents, Nathan and Ruth Johnson.

Mr. and Mrs. Ward appear in the census of Beat 5 of Fannin County in 1860. They had six children living with them: William, Nancy E., Amanda, Rufus L., and Mary M. Ward. Mrs. Ward's father, Nathan Johnson, a millwright, was also living with them.

The only record of William M. Ward's Confederate military service comes from an affidavit he made in support of James C. Ward's application for a pension. W. M. Ward said that, like his brother, he had served in Bourland's Texas Cavalry Regiment. Much has been written about Bourland's Cavalry Regiment. It was organized during the spring of 1863 and served in the

Trans-Mississippi Department. The purpose of this unit was to guard the northern border of Texas and at times, therefore, was called the Border Regiment. It confronted the Federals in the Indian Territory and Texas, and saw duty on the Texas frontier working to keep the Comanches and Kiowas out of the settlements. On October 13, 1864 it took part in the Battle of Elm Creek in Young County, Texas, one of the most dramatic and stirring clashes of Texans and Southern Plains Indians which ever took place. Several accounts of the battle, from both Texan and Kiowa participants, have been recorded. On January 1, 1865, Bourland's Regiment reported four officers and five hundred sixty-four men fit for duty. The regiment surrendered in June.

We have been unable to locate William Ward and his family in the 1870 census. By the time the 1880 census was taken, Mr. and Mrs. Ward and their family lived in Precinct 6 of Tarrant County. They had three children with them: Robert, John, and Ruth Ward. The family does not appear in the 1880 agricultural census.

William Ward's home appears on the December 1895 Sam Street Map of Tarrant County, Texas. It is shown on the W. W. Wilburn survey, southwest of the old portion of Benbrook. It appears to have been located due south of where today's Highway 377 crosses Dutch Branch. No modern-day street appears to go to its location. It was probably more or less due west of the west end of Cartwright Street, a short street which goes west off Stevens Street.

In 1900 William Ward was listed as the head of a family in the census of Precinct 6 of Tarrant County, Texas. He said he was born in November 1826 in Illinois and was a widower. With him were several other relatives, including his son, John C. Ward. Also with them were his daughter, Martha M. Rose, who was born in March 1862, her husband James P. Rose, and seven of the Roses' nine children.

When the 1910 census was taken, William Ward was living with the family of his brother, James C. Ward, on the Granbury Road in Precinct 6 of Tarrant County. He was eighty-three years old and a widower. Family tradition says that in his later years William Ward was run over by a wagon, necessitating the amputation of one of his legs. He made his own wooden leg.

Mr. Ward died on Sunday, August 15, 1915 at Smithfield in northeast Tarrant County in the home of his daughter, Mrs. J. P. Rose. An obituary for him appeared on August 16 in the Fort Worth Record: *"Ward -- W. M. Ward, one of the oldest residents of Tarrant County, died at his home at Smithfield Sunday afternoon. He was 90 years old and had resided in the county for nearly half a century. The body was sent to Benbrook, his former home, for burial by the Gause Undertaking Company. Ward is survived by many relatives in various parts of the county."*

Family internet sources and public records list twelve children. The fact that there are complete dates for all of them, including the infants, seems to suggest that a Bible record for the family exists somewhere in the hands of descendants.

William Uriah Ward was born December 28, 1853 in Fannin County. Family internet sources say he died May 9, 1909 in Fannin County, Texas, but he lies buried in Benbrook Cemetery in Tarrant County.

Nancy Ellen Ward was born July 21, 1855. She married Charles Jacob Shellenbarger in Fannin County, Texas on January 7, 1875. She died in Marietta, Love County, Oklahoma on December 25, 1937, and was buried in Marietta Cemetery.

Amanda E. Ward was born December 15, 1856. She married J. T. Kelly (1858-1934). She died March 11, 1932 at Wellington, Collingsworth County, Texas, and was buried in Arlie Cemetery in Childress County, Texas the next day.

E. Rufus Leander Ward was born April 28, 1858. He married Martha Ellen Malone in Tarrant County on September 21, 1884. He died in Tarrant County, Texas on May 7, 1920.. Family sources say he lies buried in Benbrook Cemetery in Tarrant County.

Mary Minerva Ward was born October 18, 1859. Family sources say she married W. M. Campbell.

Martha Mariah Ward was born March 28, 1862. She married James Preston Rose (1855-1942). She died at her home at Smithfield on April 7, 1938, and was buried at Smithfield Cemetery.

Robert Leroy Ward was born March 12, 1868. He married Emma P. Brown (1874-1960). He worked for many years as a blacksmith. He died at Saginaw, Tarrant County, Texas on December 19, 1927, and was buried in Benbrook Cemetery the next day.

There was an infant Ward who was born and died December 28, 1865.

John Calhoun Ward was born in February 28, 1870. He lived with his father and sister in Tarrant County at the time the 1900 census was taken. He married Texana Paralee Rutledge in Walker County, Alabama. He died December 25, 1963 at Sayre, Jefferson County, Alabama.

There was an infant Ward who was born and died March 16, 1872.

Ruth Virginia Ward was born January 21, 1876 (her headstone says the year was 1877). Family sources say she was first married to John Phillips, from whom she was divorced. They report a marriage to John Carlile Clark (1865-1936), and a marriage to D. F. Webster. She is mentioned as Jennie Strayhand of Hugo, Oklahoma in her sister's 1938 obituary. She died September 26, 1951 in Oklahoma. She lies buried in Grant Cemetery in Choctaw County, Oklahoma beneath a headstone with the name Ruth V. Clark.



The two photos above are courtesy of Allen Wheatley at <http://teafor2.com/>



Headstone of William Michael Ward's parents in Ward-Jolley Cemetery in Fannin County, Texas. Pictured is Wes Hamilton, a descendant of William M. Ward's father, Jeremiah Ward.