

CSA Headstone Dedication Text

WILLIAM B. JAMES (October 22, 1839 - July 17, 1911)

Plot B-048 N¹/₂

Private, Co. C, 4th Texas Cavalry

William Bradley James, son of John James and Sarah Ann Cowan James, was born on October 22, 1839 in Brazoria County, Republic of Texas. In 1860 he lived on a farm at Victoria, Texas with his widowed father and his three surviving siblings.

On August 22, 1861, William James enrolled at Victoria, Texas in Captain George Hampton's company of Texas Mounted Volunteers. This company had first been organized in June 1861 as a state militia unit called the "Victoria Invincibles". In September 1861, it was taken into Confederate service as Company C, Fourth Regiment Texas Cavalry; also known as First Regiment, Sibley's Brigade, Texas Mounted Volunteers. William was mustered in at San Antonio on September 11, 1861, with a horse valued at \$120 and equipment worth \$20. His Confederate pension application and Compiled Service Record show that he served the entire war in this company, and was paroled at Victoria in June 1865.

The Fourth Texas Cavalry saw more action than most units serving in Texas and Louisiana. Their first major action was Sibley's disastrous New Mexico Campaign, which occupied them for most of a year. Following the Battles of Val Verde and Glorietta Pass in February and March 1862, and the subsequent loss of their supply train, Sibley was forced to give up the campaign, and retreat to El Paso, arriving there during the first week of May 1862. On May 16, 1862, William was hospitalized with Rubeolae (measles), as were others in the regiment. The shortage of horses led to the Fourth Cavalry being dismounted, forcing the men to walk most of the way back to San Antonio. After some furlough to recover, the unit was reorganized, and took an active part in the Battle of Galveston on January 1, 1863. It was then transferred to Green's Brigade and was in seven battles in Louisiana in 1863. Finally, it was engaged in the Red River Campaign, including the Battles of Mansfield and Pleasant Hill in April 1864.

On September 12, 1865, William married Elvira Jessie Patterson in Victoria, Texas, and they had five children, two of whom died in infancy. By 1870, they had moved to Austin, where he worked as a teamster. Jessie died in December 1877, and on January 9, 1881, he married Sophronia Overstreet in Austin. They had nine children, two of whom died young. In 1895, William and Sophronia moved to Houston, where she died on September 7, 1898, leaving him with eight children at home, ages 2 to 16.

William joined the Dick Dowling Camp, United Confederate Veterans on December 4, 1904, and was its Second Lieutenant Commander at his death. He was also a member of the Ancient Order of United Workmen. When he died on July 17, 1911, at age 72, he was survived by four sons, three married daughters, and nineteen grandchildren. Additional grandchildren were born after his death. At least four of his grandsons have surviving widows, but there are no known surviving grandchildren. There are 12 descendants of William James here today.