

TOM, JOHN FILES -- Born at Columbia, Maury County, Tennessee April 22, 1818. When he appeared before the Board of Land Commissioners for Washington County January 15, 1838 to apply for a headright certificate he stated that he came to Texas in 1834. He received Headright Certificate No. 80 for one-third of a league of land. He was the eldest son of William and Mary (Files) Tom. According to the Tom family records, William Tom, his children, and his second wife, arrived at Velasco in February, 1835 and settled in Washington Municipality.

Mr. Tom received Bounty Certificate No. 1762 for 320 acres of land _____ for having served in the army from March 1 to May 30, 1836. He was a member of Captain William W. Hill's Company at San Jacinto and on page 6 of the San Jacinto rolls printed in 1836 he is shown as having been killed in the battle. He was badly wounded and crippled for life but lived to be an old man. On May 24, 1838 he received Donation Certificate No. 35 for 640 acres of land for having participated in the battle. On an original roll of Captain Hill's Company at muster April 11, 1836, the following information concerning Mr. Tom is given: He was five feet, five inches in height, of dark complexion with black hair and black eyes. He was enlisted at Asa Mitchell's home in Washington County by Captain Joseph P. Lynch. (Note: HRNo. 267 1 league By Special Act of Congress)

Colonel John M. Swisher in his published memoirs has this to say about Mr. Tom:

"The pursuit of the fugitive Mexicans was continued until dark. On my return to the battle ground, I found that one of my comrades of Hill's Company, Mr. John Tom, had been wounded and had not been carried

off the field. A blanket was obtained upon which the wounded soldier was laid. A man at each corner of the blanket had not difficulty in bearing the weight, but as soon as it was raised the poor fellow gave a cry of agony; his leg had been shattered just below the knee and the foot was dangling, which gave the most excruciating pain to every movement. It fell to my part to support the foot, and in doing this I had to stoop nearly to the ground; if I raised or lowered it an inch it caused a groan. This was the most tiresome task I ever undertook. It was impossible for me to go over a hundred yards without stopping to rest, consequently it was near ten O'clock when we reached the camp.

"In some of the lists of Mr. Tom's name is published among the dead. This is a mistake. He recovered entirely, and the only evil effect resulting from this wound is a crooked leg. He lived many years in Washington County and moved west. He was for several years sheriff of Guadalupe County. He is at present a citizen of Atascosa County and two or three years ago represented his district in the lower house of the State Legislature."

Mr. Tom moved to Guadalupe County in 1846 and from 1856 to 1860 he served as sheriff of the county. In 1862 he moved to Atascosa County, which was then just being settled. The Indians were very hostile and made many raids through this country, and in 1863 John F. Tom received a commission to raise a company of rangers for frontier protection. While acting in this capacity the Indians made a raid and killed some of the people besides carrying off a lot of stock. Captain Tom pursued them with his rangers and came upon the Indians at the head of San Miguel

Creek, and a fight ensued. Both parties tried to get to a mound of rocks for protection during the battle and the Indians beat the rangers to the coveted spot. In the fight which followed, the Comanches were defeated with loss. Of the men in the fight only the names of Calvin Turner, Lott Miller and one of the McCombe boys can be remembered. After the fight the rangers followed the Indians to the Frio waterhole on the divide, but could not again bring them to battle and the pursuit was abandoned.

Mr. Tom was twice married. He was married to Mary Ann Moffitt, July 2, 1840. After her death he, in 1873, was married to Nancy Henderson. Mr. Tom died March 26, 1906 while a member of the Texas Veterans Association. Mrs. Tom died February 25, 1923. Both are buried in marked graves in the cemetery at Leakey, Edwards County. Mr. Tom was a member of the Methodist Church and was made a Mason in 1867, Pleasanton Lodge No. 383.

Children of Mr. Tom by his first marriage were: Mary J., who married Edward Campbell; Sarah C., who married W. G. Winsett; Harriet L., who married Charles H. Long, and Emily Tom, who married Thomas Dewese. By his second marriage his children were: William, who married Isabel Wilson; Ida, who married John Howell; Annie, who married H. Godbold; Ireland, who married Ora Bonner; Burges, who married Ola Cooper; Ola, who married L. L. Orrell; and Vesta Tom who was married twice. Her first husband was Amory K. Bonner, who died in 1950. She next married Asa Godbold and in March, 1954 was residing at 1819 West Ashby Place, San Antonio. All of the children of Mr. Tom are deceased except William Tom, who resides in Leakey; Mrs. John Howell, Marfa; Mrs. H. Godbold, Leakey; Burges Tom, Leakey; Mrs. L. L. Orrell, Leakey; and Mrs. B. Godbold, 1702 Woodlawn Street, San Antonio.

Surviving grandchildren of John F. Tom, the San Jacinto veteran, are John F. Campbell, San Saba; Peter Campbell, Mrs. R. Lancaster, San Antonio; John Y. Long, Del Rio; Miss Willie Long, Del Rio; Mrs. J. V. Blake, Del Rio;

Charles Edward Long, Del Rio; Leo T. Howell; Benton Howell, Midland; Weldon Howell, 3202 Drexel Street, Dallas; Mrs. Marshall Bivins, Dallas; Mrs. J.L. Blackwell, Marfa; Carlton Godbold, Leakey; Herman Godbold; Leakey; Mrs. Kenneth Taylor, Okmulgee, Okla.; O. P. Gill, 3524 Amherst Street, Houston; Edward Tom, Leakey; John Tom, Leakey; Mrs. Mary Pendley, Leakey; Mrs. Stella Merrit, Leakey; Carroll Tom, Leakey; William T. Orrell, Leakey; Mrs. Myra Dismukes, 1702 Woodlawn Street, San Antonio; and Mrs. Darlene Mayes, 1702 W. Woodlawn Street, San Antonio.