

TINSLEY, JAMES W. - Born in New York. In Headright Certificate No. 5 issued to him in 1838 for one-third of a league of land by the Board of Land Commissioners for Bexar County it is stated that he came to Texas before March 2, 1836. He enlisted in Captain Sidney Sherman's Company of Kentucky Riflemen, December 18, 1835 and arrived in Texas in January, 1836. He was elected First lieutenant of Captain William Wood's Company (formerly Sherman's Company) March 13, 1836. At San Jacinto he was Adjutant on the staff of the First Regiment of Texas Volunteers. Donation Certificate No. 638 for 640 acres of land was issued in his name, but delivered to his heirs, March 26, 1839 for having participated in the battle. He was appointed a Major in the Cavalry on about July 6, 1836, the Senate of the Congress of the Republic approving May 22, 1837. Bounty Certificate No. 8049 for 1920 acres of land was issued in his name March 18, 1839, for his services in the army from July 6, 1836 to May 6, 1838, when he was killed in San Antonio.

The following is extracted from a letter written by S. M. Frazier in October, 1836 and published on pages 481, 482, Volume 1 of the Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar:

"A report reached here yesterday of a duel fought at Velasco, between Maj. Jas. W. Tinsley, from New York, of Sherman's Cavalry and Maj. (George) Stiles from Baltimore, of the Regular Infantry, in which the former was mortally and the latter dangerously wounded.-- These events are too frequent occurrence here of late."

Major Tinsley killed Eugenio Navarro and was himself killed by

Navarro in a duel at San Antonio. William Tinsley was appointed administrator of his estate. John J. Linn on page 345 of his Reminiscences of Fifty Years in Texas had the following to say about the duel:

"There was a Major Tinsley, who fought at San Jacinto and afterwards went to San Antonio to reside. He had the reputation of being a gentleman and a gallant and brave fellow. Soon after his arrival in San Antonio some malicious person shaved the tail of his horse. Without cause, Tinsley accused (Eugenio) Navarro, a respectable merchant of the city and a brother of Antonio Navarro, of the misdemeanor.

"Navarro promptly and unequivocally denied the accusation, and Tinsley departed apparently satisfied, but soon returned and renewed the charge in more emphatic terms, and volunteered a little gratuitous abuse in addition thereto.

"Navarro stated that he had done all that a gentleman could offer in the premises, denied the accusation, and concluded by ordering Tinsley off his premises. Tinsley drew a knife and stabbed at Navarro, who, avoiding the stroke, seized a knife that lay on the counter and plunged it into Tinsley, who, though mortally wounded, with a determination evincing a will-power truly wonderful, drew a pistol and fired upon Navarro who fell and died in a few minutes. Tinsley was borne to his room, but died before reaching it."