

## Lieutenant Thomas James Berry

Charter Member of Rocky Mountain Lodge No. 205 A.F.&A.M.

by George F. Winters, Historian

Thomas James Berry was born on October 28, 1835, at Newnan Georgia. The son of Andrew Jay Berry (1798-1883), and Eliza Emily Parks (1808-1857), a wealthy family owning a large Georgia plantation. Thomas has three siblings, William Byrd Berry (1831-1902), Joel W Berry (1840-1869) and Edwin Theodore Berry (1845-1855)<sup>1</sup>.

Not yet 18, Thomas enters the military academy at West Point New York on July 1, 1853<sup>2</sup>, graduating on July 1, 1857, 11<sup>th</sup> in his class<sup>3</sup> and just shy of 21 years old. Upon graduation he is breveted 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant



and assigned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dragoons. He takes a short military leave before traveling to his assignment at Carlisle Barracks.

T. J. Berry is listed on the Rolls of the Grand Lodge of Georgia, Coweta Lodge No. 60, Newnan, Georgia 1858 through 1865<sup>4</sup>.

While stationed at Carlisle Barracks Carlisle, Pennsylvania for additional training early 1858, Thomas, in a letter to his brother Joel remarks on the duties he performs, such as drilling a regiment of troops headed for Utah (whom he wishes to join)<sup>5</sup>.

The young 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant gets his wish and is ordered west to Fort Bridger and then Camp Floyd arriving on August 28, 1858.

He is transferred to Fort Kearny Nebraska<sup>6</sup> with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dragoons. And took leave starting late in 1860 and returned to Georgia. He resigned his commission on 28 January 1861 when Georgia Seceded from the Union.

He volunteers for service on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1861, and is entered as a Major with the CSA. Eventually he is assigned to the 60th Infantry Regiment as a Lieutenant Colonel. This battalion had been formed during the summer of 1861 with six companies and served at Hilton Head. The men were recruited in the counties of Walker, Fannin, Whitfield, Bartow, Gilmer, and Dooly. Ordered to Virginia in May, it was placed under the command of Generals Lawton, John B. Gordon, and C.A. Evans. The 60th was active in the campaigns to the Army of Northern Virginia from the Seven Days' Battles to Cold Harbor, then was involved in Early's Shenandoah Valley operations and the Appomattox Campaign. This regiment reported 42 casualties at Second Manassas, 59 at Sharpsburg, 78 at Fredericksburg, and 35 at Chancellorsville. It lost 6 killed and 16 wounded at Second Winchester and about fifteen percent of the 299 at Gettysburg. On April 9, 1865, it surrendered with 5

officers and 85 men. The field officers were Colonels Waters B. Jones and William H. Stiles, Sr., and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas J. Berry.

He was wounded as many as 7 times over the course of his service, eventually he is paroled, retired, and returned to Newnan Georgia in August 1865.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 1865, He applied for a Presidential pardon and signed a loyalty oath, (No. 759), on September 7<sup>th</sup>, 1865.<sup>7</sup>

He died on October 16, 1865, and is buried at Oak Hill Cemetery<sup>8</sup>, Newnan, Coweta County, Georgia.

In a letter dated 16 Oct. 1865, Thomas's brother William informs their brother Joel of Thomas's death: *"It is my melancholy duty to inform you of the death of our brother Tom this morning at 4 Oclk, he has been confined to bed for about three weeks suffering from hemorrhage of the bowels & general debility & exhaustion superinduced from the use of liquor."*<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ancestry.com, Barry, Andrew Jay of Newnan Georgia Family Tree, [https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/34351766/person/18804298711/facts?\\_phsrc=dtU458&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/34351766/person/18804298711/facts?_phsrc=dtU458&_phstart=successSource) visited July 24, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Military and Naval Academies, Cadet Records and Applications, 1800-1908, 1853; File #001-88

<sup>3</sup> <http://civilwarintheeast.com/west-point-officers-in-the-civil-war/class-of-1857/> visited July 24, 2019

<sup>4</sup> Grand Lodge of Georgia, office of the Grand Secretary, email dated August 6, 2019

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.jamesarsenault.com/pages/books/4602/andrew-j-berry-william-b-berry-thomas-j-berry-joel-w-berry/letters-of-the-berry-family-of-georgia-with-slavery-and-reconstruction-content/?soldItem=true> visited July 24, 2019

<sup>6</sup> U.S., Returns from Military Posts, 1806-1916, Nebraska Kearny, Fort 1846 May - 1860 Dec, August 1860

<sup>7</sup> Confederate Applications for Presidential Pardons, 1865-1867, Georgia Main Series Ab-By

<sup>8</sup> Find A Grave, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/14010109> LTC Thomas James Berry, visited 6/20/2012

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.jamesarsenault.com/pages/books/4602/andrew-j-berry-william-b-berry-thomas-j-berry-joel-w-berry/letters-of-the-berry-family-of-georgia-with-slavery-and-reconstruction-content/?soldItem=true> visited 24 July 24, 2019