

Descendants of Thomas J. Clark

Generation No. 1

1. THOMAS J.³ CLARK (*DAVID*², ?¹) was born between 1834 and 1835 (based on census records) in Jefferson County, Georgia, and died 11 November 1862 in Shepherdstown, Jefferson County, West Virginia. He married MARTHA ANN LAW 21 January 1858 in Hamilton County, Florida, daughter of JOSEPH ELLIOTT LAW and SARAH KNIGHT. Martha was born 16 September, 1841, in Hamilton County, Florida, and died between 1881 and 1886 in Hamilton Co. Florida.

Notes for THOMAS J. CLARK:

THOMAS J. CLARK, PVT. CSA

Thomas J. Clark was born and reared in Jefferson County, Georgia, the oldest son of David and Elizabeth Clark. He married Martha Ann Law on January 21, 1858 in Hamilton County, Florida. They had one child, Eliza Irvin Clark, born October 10, 1861, who married Joseph L. Altman in Hamilton County on November 23, 1876. This couple later moved to Texas.

According to the 1860 census of Hamilton County, Florida, Thomas Clark was born about 1836. That would make him about twenty-five or twenty-six when he enlisted in Company F, 5th Florida Infantry, probably along with several of his friends from Hamilton County. Company F was commanded by Captain John Frink, and it was under Frink's command that Thomas saw action that summer in 1862.

According to letters written to his wife, Martha Ann, Company F was ready to fight and marched forward to participate in several major battles, one being on August 30, 1862, called the Second Battle of Manassas, and the other being the Battle of Sharpsburg (called Antietam by the Federals). The Confederates generally named their battles after the nearest village or community; the Yankees named theirs after the nearest river or stream of water.

The only battle fought on Maryland soil, the Battle of Sharpsburg was Lee's decision to make a stand and his conduct of the battle was magnificent. During the 16th his force managed to coalesce among the low ridges east and north of the town, although when the Federals attacked at dawn on September 17, Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was still under-strength by thousands of troops.

At the end of the day Lee's Army had held its ground but at tremendous cost, and the battle was reported to be the bloodiest, deadliest one-day engagement in American

military history. It also marked the first time in our annals that photographs were taken of the dead on a battlefield.

The fierce and desperate battle started at daylight. It was reported that in the first three hours of fighting, 12,000 were dead. In just twenty-four hours, the pastures around the horrified town of Sharpsburg were strewn with 23,000 dead and wounded soldiers. It was almost too grisly to believe. The fields around Sharpsburg, Keedysville and Boonsboro were blanketed with tent hospitals and makeshift graveyards. Thomas Clarke became one of the war casualties when he was wounded in his leg and breast. The young soldier was moved into the town of Shepherdstown, Jefferson County, West Virginia, just across the Potomac, nine miles from Harper's Ferry, and was cared for there by Ellie Reustch, until he died three weeks later on November 11, 1862.

Thus Thomas J. Clark did not live to get home and see his young daughter, Eliza Irving Clark, who was about thirteen months old when her father died in far off Shepherdstown, West Virginia, where he was buried in a Confederate cemetery (Elmwood).

Typed transcripts of very faded ink handwritten letter from Civil War soldier, Thomas J. Clark, to his wife, Martha Ann (Law) Clark, were given to me by my great-aunt, Gladys Altman. Thomas J. Clark was her grandfather. Thomas and Martha Ann Law married in January 1858 in Hamilton County, Florida. Four letters and a poem that Thomas wrote to his wife follows. Three were written while he was in Florida camps; the fourth letter was written from Fredericksburg, Maryland:

State of Florida, Duvall Co.
June 30, 1862

Dear Wife.

I tak my pen in hand to let you know I am well at this time and I hop this few lines come to hand that may find you the same. Have got a place for you to bord at about half mile from camps and I want you to get Tom to brang you to Lake Citey next Monday. The tran leaves ther at eighth o'clock in the morning. you can com to your aunt Sarah Roberds next Sunday and com next morning to the tran by eighth o'clock in the morning and some of them to meet you thear that day weak that you may go back hom. I want you to brng twenty dollars of State money if you have got hit and if you have not got hit brang other and brang ten pouns of bacon. You never will be sorey of your trip. You will larn a heap. I will git the conduktor to see you com to the rit plase. We moved agin in three mils of Jacksonvill.

Thomas J. Clark

One month later, Thomas wrote a second letter:

State of Florida, Jefferson Co
Camp Bailey
July 29, 1862

Dear Wife.

I tak my pen in hand to let you know I am well at this time and I hop thes few lines may find you and all the res of the family injoying the same blesin. Mi dear, I want you to live rit and pray for me that I may return hom from the fron lein to see you once mor. Don't be uneasey about me. We have orders to leave next Friday for gina (Virginia) and I don't know whether I will ever see you agin in this world. if I don't, I hop we will meet in a better world to com. mi dear I don't want you and the baby to stay at hom at knight if Ben(?) cant stay on that can proteck you. tell all of the family howdy for me. I sent \$15 dollars to you by William Hunter and send me that other undar shirt if you get any chance. when you rite, back your letar to me in care Capiten Frinks 5fifth regiment and hit will com to me any where I may be. nothing mor. your afection husban until deth.

Thomas J. Clark

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Two days later, Thomas Clark wrote a third letter to Martha, his wife:

State of Florida, gefferson Co
July 31, 1862

Dear Wife.

I take my pen in hand to let you know I am well at this tim and I hop when this few lines come to hand that may find you the same I want you to sen me under shirt and two par of pants to John Frinks an he will bring them to me. we are looking to march tomorrow morning. I would be glad to see you once mor but there is no chanch. you and all the rest must rit to me. you have a bettar chanch than me.

Thomas J. Clark

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Fourth letter to Martha Ann (Law) Clark, written about five weeks later:

Frederick Maryland
September 7, 1862

Dear wife, I take my pen in hand to let you know I am well as common except for bad cold and march most to death. we are in Maryland and see hard times and we was in enormase batel. we was blest with His power. we lost not a captain. shells and graf shot fell in bursted and hit som few of our regiment but God blest us. I don't know wether you will get this. if you do rite me as soon as you can and let me know how you and all the rest is.

Miles and William Hunter is well. Mi dear wife I want you to pray for me. I hop I will se you agin. we are a long ways a part. I would rite ofner but when we stopt I am down. we march day and nite sometimes. sleep one hour and sometimes all knight. I put mi trust in you that I will se you agin. nothing mor. your affection husband. back your letter Richmon, car G. C. Hatley, fifth regiment.

Thomas J. Clark

On the back of this letter was written:

"have not hear from you since I left _____. I have walked over more ded yankes than I ever want to do again."

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Next comes a typed transcript of a very faded ink, handwritten poem from Civil War soldier, Thomas J. Clark, written home to his wife, Martha Ann (Law) Clark in Hamilton County, Florida, where she lived with her eleven month old daughter, Eliza Irvin Clark, born October 10, 1861, as she waited for her husband to come home from the war.

A Solders Lief (Life)

Farewell to you my darling
oh farewell my dear
do not weap for my long absents
while I am presents hear.

Sents it has bin my misfortune
a soldier for to be
Dear darling, live contented
and do not weap for me.

To fight we are reminded
and I for one moust go
and for my life my darling
I dare not answer no.

She wrung her little white hands
and mournfully did cry
You will go and be a solder

and in the war you'll die.

As sentinel you'll be wounded
in the Battelfield be slane
My hart will brake like thounder
if I never see you a gain.

The Cannons loudly roring
the balls in showering fly
The fifes and drums are Beating
to drown the deadly cry.

Away up in the mountain
to teary there a while
Away from my dear darling
a thousand & thousand mile.

The Battle of Sharpsburg (called Antietam by the Yankees) was fought in Maryland on September 17, 1862 and is remembered as the "the bloodiest day" in American military history.

More About THOMAS J. CLARK:

Burial: Elmwood, Confederate Cemetery, Shepherdstown.

Notes for MARTHA ANN LAW:

Martha first married Thomas J. Clark, who fought for the Confederacy during the Civil War.

More About MARTHA ANN LAW:

Burial: Old Swift Creek Cemetery, Hamilton Co. Florida

Child of THOMAS CLARK and MARTHA LAW is:

2. i. ELIZA IRVIN⁴ CLARK, b. 10 Oct 1861, Hamilton Co. Florida; d. 11 Jul 1938, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas.

Generation No. 2

2. ELIZA IRVIN⁴ CLARK (*THOMAS J.*³, *DAVID*², ?¹) was born 10 Oct 1861 in Hamilton Co. Florida, and died 11 Jul 1938 in Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas. She married JOSEPH LEON ALTMAN 23 Nov 1876 in Hamilton Co. Florida, son of THOMAS ALTMAN and MARTHA GREEN. He was born 09 Sep 1855 in Hamilton Co. Florida, and died 25 Aug 1925 in Burleson, Tarrant Co., TX.

More About ELIZA IRVIN CLARK:

Burial: Burleson, Tye Cemetery, Tarrant Co., TX

More About JOSEPH LEON ALTMAN:

Burial: Burleson, Tye Cemetery, Tarrant Co., TX

Child of ELIZA CLARK and JOSEPH ALTMAN is:

i. BERTIE BERTRAM⁵ ALTMAN.