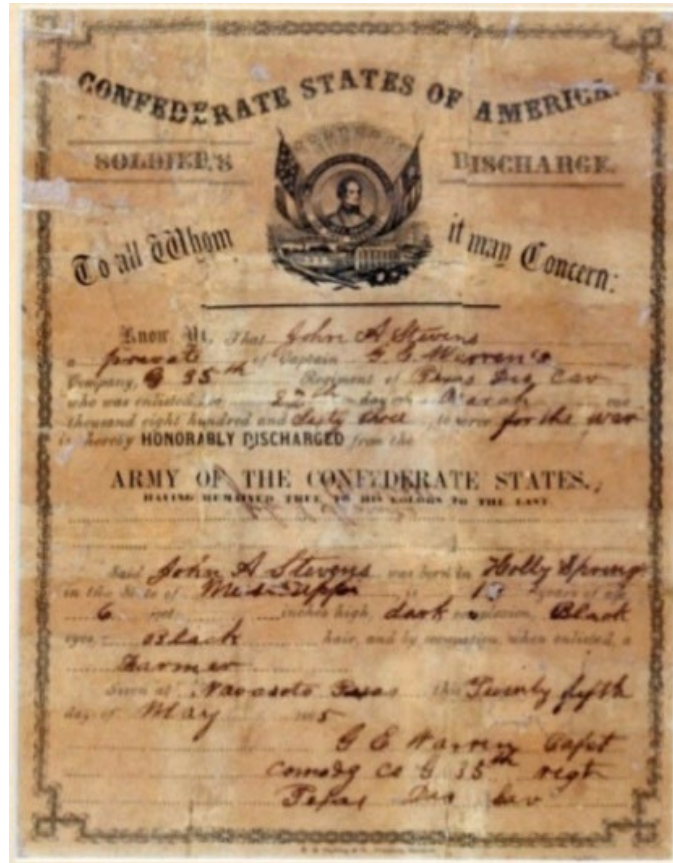


JOHN ALBERT STEVENS was born March 25, 1846, in Holly Springs, Mississippi. In the mid 1850's the family migrated from Mississippi to Upshur County in Northeast Texas. Two days after his 17<sup>th</sup> birthday JOHN took his father's place as a substitute in a Upshur County company of Texas State Troops. In 1863, the company was organized into a new battalion for Confederate service. They were to take part in repelling the expected invasion by Federal forces on the Texas coast. Since danger was imminent, JOHN's father replaced his only son and sent him home. Not to be deterred, JOHN traded his father's best mule for a horse, returned, and enlisted under his own name. In November 1863, LIKENS' Regiment was activated in Houston, Texas and JOHN was a private in Company G, 35<sup>th</sup> Texas Cavalry. John received a Soldier's Discharge on May 25, 1865.



Prior to 1869, JOHN and his parents moved to Hill County, Texas. During reconstruction, four of JOHN's mules were stolen. Alone, he took to the trail and was gone for weeks before returning with the mules. He became one of the local leaders in The Anti-Horse Thieves Association to rid Hill County of the lawless element. Ellis Baily, a Hill County historian and author wrote the following in a letter.

*"I will never forget the words the preacher used at Mr. STEVENS funeral; 'nobody but JOHN STEVENS and God knew what JOHN STEVENS' gun did to make this county safe for the law abiding, that they might lay down at night to rest and not be worried about being called out and killed before daylight.'"*

After reconstruction ended, JOHN served as a deputy sheriff and Special Deputy U. S. Marshal. He was considered an expert tracker who would be called upon to aid in the search for outlaws.

John A. Stevens 1878 Colt 45, Pocket Watch, and Money Clip



In 1903, the Trinity & Brazos Valley Railroad built rails through his land near the town of Osceola. JOHN A. STEVENS laid out 37 acres in lots and streets near the railroad and the town relocated.

In politics, JOHN A. STEVENS was described as a Noble Democrat. For several years he held an annual BBQ at his home for democrat politicians who came to make speeches and campaign. JOHN was a delegate to several state conventions.

Digitized newspapers reveal scores of articles written about JOHN A. STEVENS. They detail activities he was involved in such as politics, law enforcement, various social events, raising prize stock, land speculation, and innovative farming. From 1880 until his death, the census lists JOHN'S occupation as "farmer" but it's obvious he wore many hats.

In November 1917, JOHN presented Brigadier General JOHN A. HULEN commanding the 72<sup>nd</sup> Brigade of the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division with a beautiful horse called "Hinky Dink," the title of a popular WWI song.

Found in the San Antonio Express



Left, Gen. John A. Hulen. Right, John A. Stevens and "Hinky Dink." Mr. Stevens gave this war horse to General Hulen.  
Special Telegram to The Express.  
FORT WORTH, Tex., March 3.—Gen. John A. Hulen has a new saddle horse, "Hinky Dink," the gift of John A. Stevens. "Hinky Dink" was ridden by General Hulen the first time last week during the review of Camp Bowie troops, and General Hulen says he also expects to ride him in France.

JOHN A. STEVENS died on July 21, 1922. Newspapers around the state published obituaries with extended biographies of his life and service to Texas. A few days after his death, a column was written in the Port Author News that said, "*The democratic old guard of Texas turned aside to shed a tear for JOHN A. STEVENS.*"

Sources:

"A Memorial & Biographical History of Johnson and Hill Counties,"

100+ articles found in digitized newspapers at The Portal to Texas History

"A History of Hill County, Texas, 1838–1965" by Ellis Bailey, Texian Press, 1966

Personal letters from people who knew JOHN A. STEVENS

Between 1871-1919, 250 land transactions are found in the Deed Books of Hill County, Texas