

Born 1843
Killed 1865
April 6th

Colonel James W. Thomson
of
Chew's Battery,
by

Avirett, Rev. J.B.

Brother J. B. A. P. Thomson of Summit Point, W. Va.

James W. Thomson was born at Berryville, Clarke County, Virginia, on the 28th of October, 1843. He was a Cadet at the Virginia Military Institute, that Alma Mater of noble spirits, and pupil of Major (afterwards Stonewall) Jackson. At the beginning of the late struggle, he, with other Cadets, was ordered to Richmond to drill the men called into the field by his Mother State. Later, he was ordered to Harpers Ferry for the same duty, where he remained until the evacuation of that place. About the time of the movement of Manassas General Jackson placed him on his staff, and at the memorable first Manassas he was one of these efficient Aids whose coolness and promptness were said to have contributed so much to the success of the day. Returning home not long after he, R. P. Chew, and others raised the first Battery of Horse Artillery used in the Confederate service. Chew, and others raised the first Battery of Horse Artillery used in the Confederate service, Chew was elected Captain, Thomson, one of the Lieutenants. They had three guns and thirty-three men. This Battery as connected with the Ashley command, soon became the terror of the enemy, and the pet and the boast of the soldiers and people of the Valley, and did most excellent service until the close of the war. Upon Captain Chew's promotion, Lieutenant Thomson became Captain of the Battery. He was afterward made Major, and a few days before his death was promoted to a Colonelcy. He fell at High Bridge, near Farmville, Va., while leading a charge which he had volunteered to lead, although then on the sick list with his arm in a sling from unclosed wounds. Among the many young, brave, and illustrious patriots who fell in defense of Virginia, that Mother of heroes did not honor whilst living, nor mourn when dead, a nobler, braver, or more chivalric son than Colonel James W. Thomson.

From: "Memoirs of General Turner Ashby & his Compeers"
Rev. James B. Avirell, Baltimore
Selby & Dulany

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