



CHARLES NICHOLS SERVED AS A CONFEDERATE COLONEL DURING THE CIVIL WAR.

Confederacy, experienced the lawlessness firsthand. He was to serve a warrant on John Younger, the brother of outlaws Cole, Bob, and Jim, who famously rode with Jesse

James and were responsible for multiple bank, train, and stagecoach robberies, murders, and other crimes across the country. Younger, according to the *Dallas Morning News*, had committed an "offense against the good order of society," and Nichols assembled a posse, deputizing his friend James McMahan, a blacksmith, to bring him in.

The lawman must not have expected much trouble that morning, because he knew Younger from having fought together against the Union in Missouri. In fact, Nichols let the outlaw finish his breakfast before arresting him. But when Nichols spoke with McMahan by his stakeout at the community store, Younger seized the lull and made a break for it with an accomplice. Nichols had placed men near the stables to cut off escape, so the fugitives quickly retreated to the store, after seeing that they were surrounded. That's when all hell broke loose.

The outlaws fired first, hitting McMahan and killing him instantly. Nichols was shot but returned fire and struck Younger in the arm. The outlaws mounted the deputies' horses and escaped. Nichols died four days later, leaving behind a wife and child, while McMahan was survived by his wife. The two men were Dallas County's first peace officers killed in the line of duty. Younger escaped into Missouri but was later shot and killed by a deputy sheriff and Pinkerton detective investigating a train robbery.

A monument to Nichols and other sheriff's deputies who have lost their lives in the line of duty stands today at Founder's Plaza in downtown Dallas. —Sean Chaffin

It Happened Here: Dallas County

1871 shootout results in first Texas officers killed on duty.

► Deputy Charles Nichols and his family are buried in Dallas' Pioneer Cemetery.

Make no mistake, Dallas was the Wild West in the 1870s. Cheap land and railroad expansion had ballooned the city's population from just 600 residents in 1860 to more than 3,000 by 1872. Not all of these new citizens, however, were looking for a peaceful life.

Southeast of Dallas, the community of Scyene was home to rough riders and burly rowdies. On Jan. 16, 1871, Deputy Charles Nichols, a Missouri native who had moved to Dallas after serving as a colonel for the

SnapShot



◀ **Spin City:** Named after 19th century Captain John C. Frémont, Fremont Street was one of the original streets in Las Vegas. After the coming of the railroad in 1905, the city's first railroad depot was on Fremont. This photo is from 1909 and looks West towards Second Street.



▲ **Skywalker:** Today, the shops, restaurants, and casinos of Fremont Street Experience pedestrian mall are crowned by a four-block long, 90-foot tall barrel vault canopy that displays intricate digital images choreographed to music. The Experience will also be the location of the city's official New Year's Eve celebration.