

# Hogg Family

Have you ever heard a name and thought, “wow, that was an unfortunate choice...”? A famous family from Texas, particularly the daughter, experienced the life of an undesirable name. But the name did not stop the political and philanthropic contributions that came from the family and enriched the lives of so many Texans. Let’s travel back to the early 1900’s and unfold the story of the Hogg family.

James S. Hogg, father and family cornerstone, was a very successful man in many ways. From his beginnings working for a newspaper, which led to his own newspaper businesses, he soon found his calling in politics. As a district attorney he became known as the most aggressive and successful DA in the state. This propelled him to become attorney general of Texas where he encouraged new legislation to protect education funds, and instituted lawsuits that finally returned over a million and a half acres to the state. Hogg forced the restoration of Texas railroad headquarters and shops and advocated the establishment of the Railroad Commission. On this platform he was elected governor in 1890, becoming the first Texas-born governor.

Hogg’s passion for justice made him a strong champion of the people. In a nut shell, his political legacy was the implementation of good government and strengthening public respect for law enforcement. A railroad accident at age 53 left Hogg in poor health, from which he never recovered. His smart investments and oil left the family extremely wealthy after his death; paving the way for the family to create an even more lasting legacy.

In 1882 a new Hogg name was showcased in Mineola, Texas. James Hogg and Sarah Stinson bore their only daughter, Ima Hogg. Yes, you heard it right. Ima Hogg was the legal name on the birth certificate with no middle name, which was unusual for the time. Her parents said the first name was taken from her uncle Thomas Hogg’s epic Civil War poem, The Fate of Marvin, but many people believed the name was to attract attention to the family name during election time. Even Ima’s grandfather opposed the name and when he heard of the news only 15 miles away, he traveled as fast as he could to protest, but he was too late. Ima recounted her childhood years and said she remembered her elder brother William often coming home from school with a bloody nose as a result of defending her "good name". Throughout her adult years, Ima’s personal stationery was usually printed "Miss Hogg" or "I. Hogg.”

Ima did not let the name inhibit her role in the limelight for philanthropy and the arts, her passions. Texas reaped enormous benefits from Miss Hogg’s generosity and her devotion to giving back to society and advocating for historic preservation. She served on school boards and high class societies in Texas where she enriched and enlightened the people with her knowledge and desire to create change.

Besides James and Ima, the rest of the Hogg family served as civic activists and supported causes like city planning and mental health care. Their volunteer work and philanthropic hearts have inspired others to support social service, educational, and cultural programs. They built

charitable institutions that have long outlived them; some of these include the Houston Symphony, the Museum of Fine Arts, Memorial Park, and the Hogg Foundation. If you find yourself in the city of Rusk, stop by Jim Hogg State Historic Park. The 177-acre park includes portions of the old Mountain Home Plantation and the birthplace of James S. Hogg.

Whatever your name may be, keep in mind Ima Hogg –no I am not a Hogg – Ima Hogg and the rest of the Hogg family, and remember that from our ancestors come our names, but from our virtues, our honors.

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**Author(s):**

Written by Maggie Pottkotter, Intern with the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences at Texas A&M University, as part of a National Park Service Trails and Rails project funded by Amtrak, 2011.