



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

Barbara Knox and Rob Yoder, County Coordinators

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

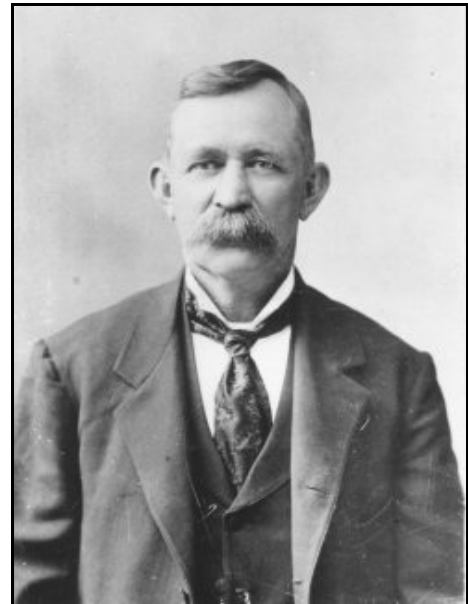
Dr. William Calloway Dobkins

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Dr. William Calloway Dobkins was a popular pioneer doctor in Tarrant and Dallas Counties for decades. He was a Confederate veteran, and the father of seventeen children. Dobkins came to present-day Euless with his parents in 1852.

He was born in the Cedar Fork area of Claiborne County, Tennessee, a few miles northeast of Tazewell, on November 11, 1842. He was a son of Rev. Alexander Dobkins and his wife, Mary Ann Neil. William's parents were married in Claiborne County, Tennessee on March 18, 1839.

Family researchers have documented proof that Alexander and his family lived for a time in the 1840's in Buchanan County, Missouri before they settled in Tarrant County. Dr. Dobkins paternal grandfather, Solomon Dobkins, a veteran of the War of 1812, also immigrated to Texas and died in 1852 in Kaufman County, Texas.



William served the Confederacy in Co. K, 7th Texas Cavalry. He enlisted at Mansfield, Texas on October 26, 1861, under Thomas O. Moody. He was mustered into the Confederate service at Camp Pickett, near San Antonio, Texas, on November 15, 1861. He brought with him a horse worth \$150 and equipment worth \$30. He had traveled three hundred miles to the rendezvous. He was listed as present on the regimental muster roll for January and February, 1862. His file contains an original requisition, dated May 22, 1863, signed by Dobkins, for "one small sack...not elsewhere procurable." His name appears on a roll of prisoners of war, captured at Bayou Teche, Louisiana, on April 15, 1863, and paroled on May 11, 1863. In his later years, he was a member of the Robert E. Lee Camp of United Confederate Veterans in Fort Worth.

A descendant of William Calloway Dobkins, Cecil Smyth, has written a small book on this family entitled The Dobkins Family in America, 1730-1978. It contains several family photographs. The genealogy section of the Fort Worth Public Library owns a copy.

Family sources state that William Calloway Dobkins was married 3 times: first to Nannie J. Yeager on April 8, 1868 in Collin County, Texas. She was born March 12, 1850 in Podspoint, Kentucky; and died August 13, 1887 at Lebanon in Collin County, Texas. She lies buried in the Alexander Dobkins Family Cemetery in Euless. They had seven children: Emma Dobkins (January 17, 1870-1935, married J. Scott Boyd); Joe S. Dobkins (October 20, 1871-September 26, 1897); William Marinus Dobkins (September 6, 1875-December 14, 1916); Alexander Dobkins (October 1, 1877-July 1957, whose wife's name was Pearl); Mary Safronia Dobkins (born August 4, 1879, married John J. Robertson); Sarah Frances Dobkins (born August 27, 1882, married W. L. Grantham); and Berry Sanders Dobkins (October 27, 1885-April 6, 1965).

When Dobkins registered to vote on November 16, 1869, he said he had lived in Texas for 18 years, and in Precinct 3 of Tarrant County for sixteen years; thus he moved from Tennessee to Texas about 1851, and lived outside Tarrant County for about two years before settling here with his parents.

Dr. Dobkins and his second wife, Josephine Elizabeth Roberts, were married on June 20, 1889 in Granbury, Hood County, Texas. She was born December 12, 1862 in Montague County, Texas, and was a daughter of Nathan Jackson Roberts and his wife, Mary Hewitt. Josephine died at Grand Prairie, Dallas County, Texas on March 10, 1902, and was buried at Grand Prairie. She and Mr. Dobkins were the parents of seven children: Veda Dobkins (September 8, 1891-1974, married Richard H. Moore); Aline Dobkins (December 9, 1893-November 9, 1978, married Cecil Britton Smyth); Leroy E. Dobkins (December 2, 1899-1976, married Lillian Eskew Hightower); Reagan Miller Dobkins (April 9, 1896-October 15, 1898); and twins born on February 17, 1902, W. C. Dobkins (died July 31, 1902); and J. E. Dobkins (died June 21, 1902).

Dr. Dobkins' farm in northeast Tarrant County is shown on the 1895 Sam Street map of Tarrant County in present-day Euless. State Highway 360 now runs only a few yards from the family cemetery. The farmhouse in 1895 probably sat in the present-day right-of-way of Highway 360, about where the short road to Bear Creek Cemetery leaves the Highway 360 access road.

Dr. Dobkins married his third wife, Emma Thurman, in Fort Worth on October 13, 1904. She was born January 4, 1875 (she said 1876 in her pension application) in Quebec, Van Buren County, Tennessee. She died May 11, 1948 in Fort Worth. She and Dr. Dobkins had three children: Olan Searcy Dobkins (January 20, 1907-1983, whose first wife was named Polly and whose second wife was named Haley); Estelle Thurman Dobkins (born August 16, 1909, who married Ben G. Smith); and Joe Winfred Dobkins (born November 6, 1912, who married Nadine Womack).

This writer and his wife cleared a half-mile-long road from Fuller-Wiser Road, then the closest public road to the Dobkins Cemetery, cleared the underbrush from the cemetery, obtained a Texas Historical Marker for it, and planned and conducted a marker dedication ceremony in 1981. As a personal aside, it was during this project that we our first experience with imported fire ants which are such a scourge here now. We found old can of DDT in the Hurst garage of one of Dr. Dobkins' sons, Searcy, and used it with excellent results on the ants in the cemetery.

The marker inscription reads: "*ALEXANDER DOBKINS FAMILY CEMETERY. "Pioneer area settlers Alexander Dobkins (1815-1869) and his wife Mary (1818-1880) migrated to Texas from Tennessee in 1852. Ordained as a minister in the nearby Bear Creek Baptist Church, Alexander also served as postmaster for the local community of Estill's Station during the Civil War. His grave is the earliest marked at this site. Originally part of his 200-acre farm. Also buried here is his son William C. Dobkins (1841-1928), who served the area as a Physician, Businessman, and Civic Leader. Other graves include those of family members and Friends. (1981)"*

Getting to the Dobkins Cemetery today is somewhat difficult. It is within sight of Highway 360 and its access road, but one must know exactly when and where to look to see it. This is probably good, since it helps protect the cemetery from vandalism. To reach it, one must take the Amon Carter Boulevard exit off Highway 183, just east of Highway 360. Go to the access road on the north side of Highway 183 and drive west, always staying as far north and east as possible. The access road will curve to the north, following Highway 360 as it goes toward Grapevine. Continue looking east into the mesquite brush, and the cemetery will be briefly visible at the end of a short, unmaintained lane. If you get to Harwood Road, you have gone too far and will have to start over at the Amon Carter Boulevard exit. At the end of the lane a small enclosure of chain-link fence will be seen, and some of the monuments should be visible. Usually the gate is bent enough that one may squeeze through it. Getting "official" permission from the Airport Board would be long and tedious, and the bureaucracy involved might keep it from ever happening at all.

This writer personally knew three of Dr. Dobkins' children, and he was shown and allowed to handle Dr. Dobkins's treasured madstone which the doctor used during his practice to treat patients suspected of being bitten by rabid animals.

Dr. William C. Dobkins died in Fort Worth on February 15, 1928. An obituary for him appeared in the Fort Worth Record-Telegram on Feb. 16, 1928, page 4: "*FUNERAL TODAY FOR DR. DOBKINS. 76 Years County Resident; First Registrant Under Medical Practice Statute. Seventy-six years of residence in Tarrant County were broken Wednesday morning with the death of Dr. W. C. Dobkins, 86, pioneer physician, for whom funeral services will be conducted at 2 o'clock this afternoon at the Grapevine Methodist Church. Dr. Dobkins died at 2:15 a.m. at his residence, 3001 West Twenty-Fourth Street. Dr. Dobkins observed his 86th birthday last Nov. 11, when 45 friends and family members gathered at his home. The pioneer led an active life until two weeks before his death. He bore the distinction of being the first physician to register his medical license with the State when the medical practice act went into effect. As a boy of 10, Dr. Dobkins settled in this county in 1852 with his parents, Rev. and Mrs. Alexander Dobkins. His father was a pioneer Baptist preacher of this county and organized several churches. After serving four years in the Confederate Army during the Civil War, Dr. Dobkins studied medicine in Collin County and later attended the Galveston Medical College. In the early days of Polytechnic College, Dr. Dobkins was its physician for seven years. Funeral services will be conducted by Rev. D. A. McGuire, pastor of the Weatherford Street Methodist Church, assisted by other ministers. Burial will be in the family plot at Eules. The Masonic Lodge will have charge of the services at the grave. Dr. Dobkins was a charter member of Tarrant Masonic Lodge No. 942. Survivors are his wife, Mrs. Emma Dobkins, and the following children: Mrs. J. S. Boyd, Denton; Alexander Dobkins, Grapevine; Mrs. J. J. Robertson, Denver, Colorado; Mrs. W. L. Grantham, Fort Worth; B. S. Dobkins, Grapevine; Mrs. R. H. Moore, Mrs. Cecil B. Smyth, Leroy Dobkins, Searcy Dobkins,*

Estelle Dobkins, and Joe Wintford Dobkins, all of Fort Worth. Active pallbearers will be R. H. Moore, C. R. Smyth, J. S. Boyd, Weaver Birch, C. R. Raley, and Walter Cunningham. Honorary pallbearers will be W. L. Brantham, N. Hodgkin, Walter Hunter, S. W. Axtell, Willie Charbonneau, Ira Wood, Dr. W. R. Stovall of Dallas, Joe Lucas of Grapevine, J. R. Fuller of Euless, Ed Millican of Estelle, J. W. Robertson of Denver, Colo.; Oscar George, K. M. VanZandt, C. Y. Bowman, L. B. Rogan, and W. W. Cromer.”

Another newspaper clipping, containing a handwritten note “Wed. Feb. 15, 1928” is reproduced in Cecil Smyth’s book. It contains a studio bust photograph of Dr. Dobkins. It says: “*DR. W. C. DOBKINS, 86, PIONEER FORT WORTH PHYSICIAN, DIES. Dr. W. C. Dobkins, pioneer physician and the first to register his medical license with the State of Texas when the registration law was passed, died Wednesday morning at 2:45 o’clock at his residence, 3001 West Twenty-fourth Street. On last Armistice Day he was honored with a party attended by 4 persons, mostly relatives, in honor of his eighty-sixth birthday.*

“Funeral service will be held Friday afternoon at 2 o’clock at the Grapevine Methodist church. Rev. D. A. McGuire, pastor of the Weatherford Street Methodist Church, assisted by other ministers, will officiate. Interment will be in the family burial plot near Euless. Services at the grave will be in charge of the Masonic Lodge, of which Dr. Dobkins was a member or many years. He was a charter member of the Estelle Lodge and when the Tarrant Lodge No. 942 was started on the North Side he became one of the charter members of that lodge.

“Came to County in 1852.” Dr. Dobkins attended to his agricultural interests in Dallas and Tarrant Counties until recently. He had been ill less than two weeks before death.

“In 1852 Dr. Dobkins came to Tarrant County with his parents, Rev. and Mrs. Alexander Dobkins. His father was a Baptist minister and organized several churches including the Bear Creek Baptist Church, formed at Estelle before the Civil War, which still exists.

“In the pioneer family with Dr. Dobkins were four other children, all of whom are dead. The last to die before Dr. Dobkins was Mrs. Saphronia Shelbourne, who died in Denton a few days after she attended the birthday party in honor of him last Armistice Day.

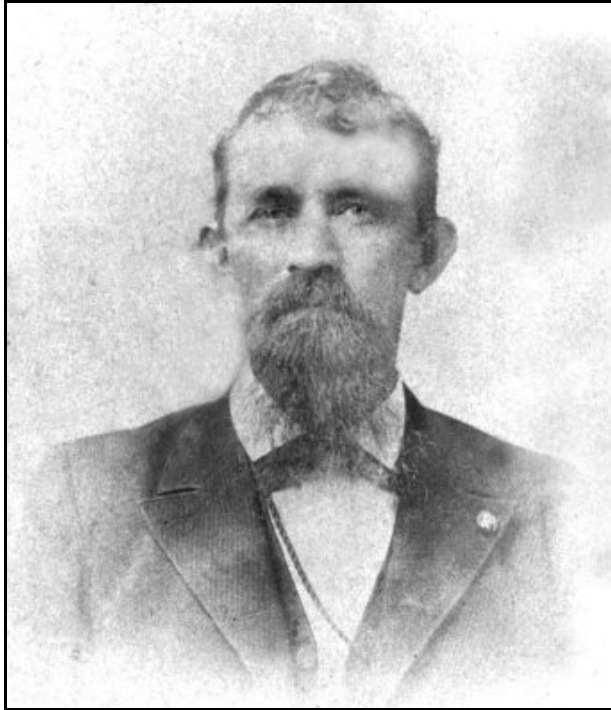
“After serving four years in the Confederate Army, Dr. Dobkins studied medicine in Collin County and later entered the Galveston Medical College. During the early years of Polytechnic College Dr. Dobkins was physician for that institution for seven years. The community of Polytechnic was then known as Manchester Mills.

“Wife is Survivor. Survivors are his wife, Mrs. Emma Dobkins, whom Dr. Dobkins married at Edge, Texas, and the following children: Mrs. J. S. Boyd, Denton; Alexander Dobkins, Grapevine; Mrs. J. J. Robertson, Denver, Colo.; Mrs. W. L. Gantham, Fort Worth; B. S. Dobkins, Grapevine; Mrs. R. H. Moore, Mrs. Cecil B. Smyth, Leroy Dobkins, Searcy Dobkins, Estelle Dobkins and Joe Dobkins, all of Fort Worth.

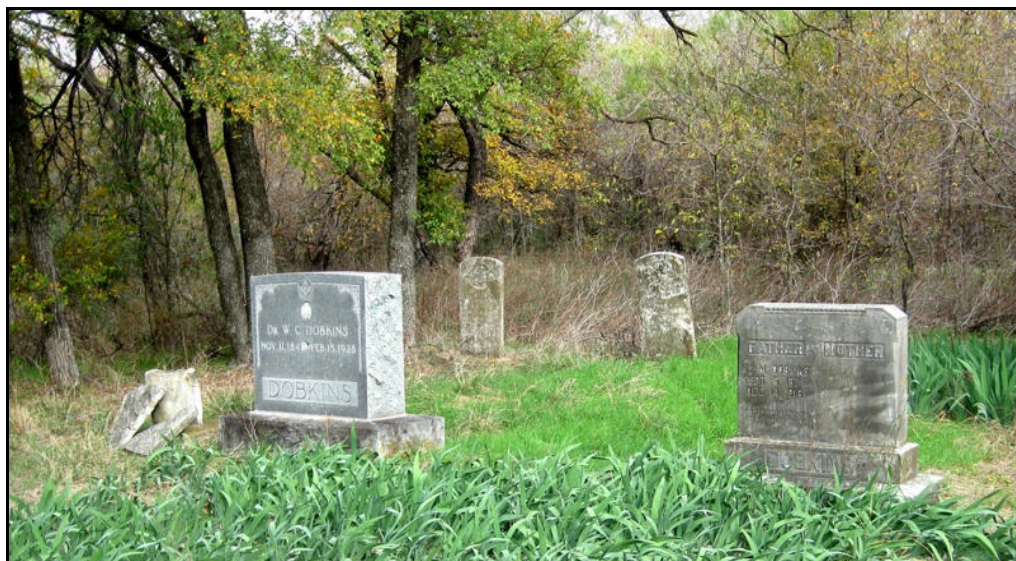
“Active pallbearers will be R. H. Moore, C. B. Smyth, J. S. Boyd, Weaver Burch, C. R. Raley and Walter Cunningham.

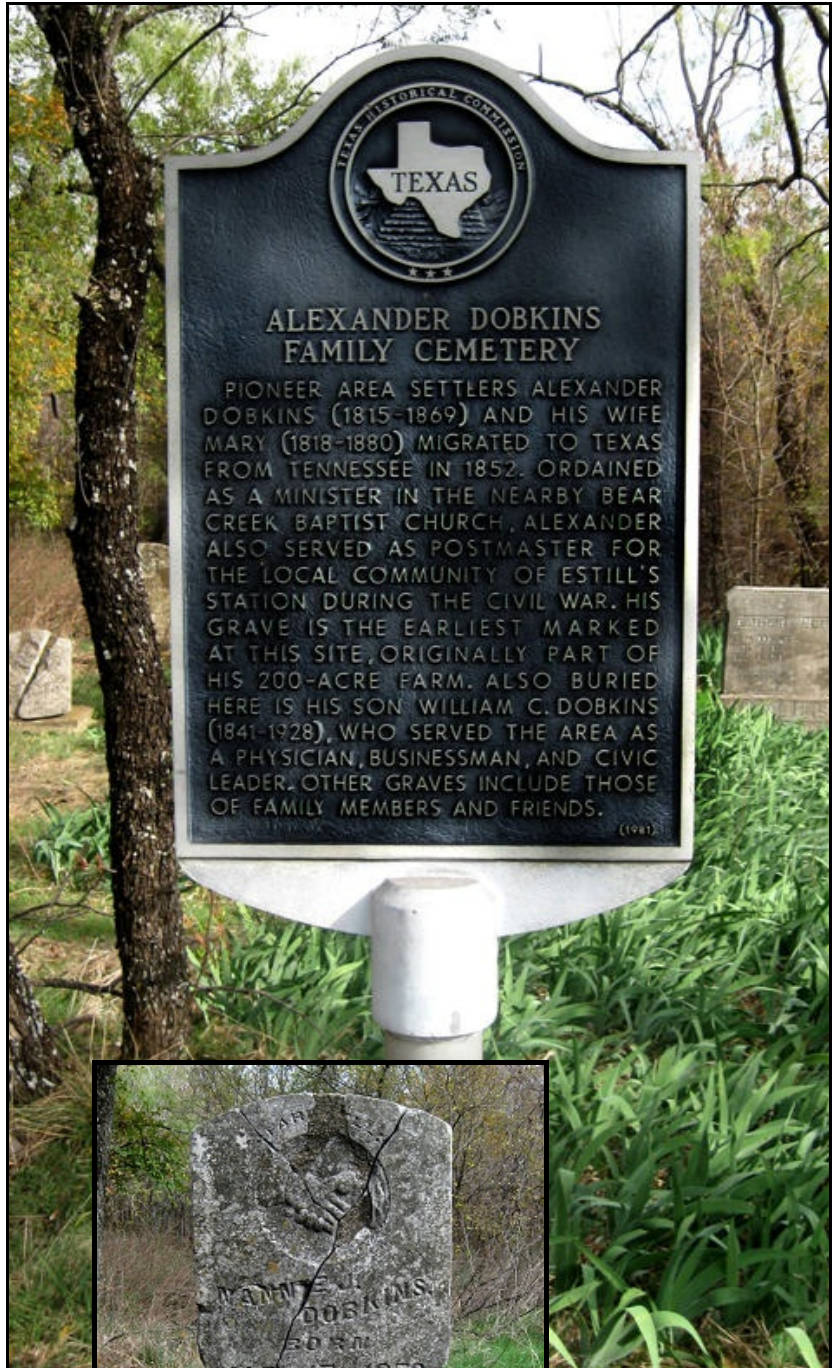
“Honorary pallbearers will be W. L. Brantham, N. Hodgkin, Walter Hunter, S. W. Axtell, Willie Charbonneau, Ira Wood, Dr. W. R. Stovall of Dallas, Joe Lucas of Grapevine, J. R. Fuller of Euless, Ed Millican of Estelle, J. W. Robertson of Denver, Colo., Oscar George, K. M. VanZandt, C. Y. Bowman, L. B. Rogan, and W. W. Cromer.”

Dr. Dobkins’ widow filed an application for a Confederate Widow’s Pension in 1936. Her address at the time was 2311 Macy Avenue in Fort Worth. She said she was born January 3, 1876, and had been living in Texas since November, 1881, and in Tarrant County since October 13, 1904. Her application for a pension was denied because she was not born before January 1, 1873.



Earlier photo of Dr. William C. Dobkins





**ALEXANDER DOBKINS
FAMILY CEMETERY**

PIONEER AREA SETTLERS ALEXANDER DOBKINS (1815-1869) AND HIS WIFE MARY (1818-1880) MIGRATED TO TEXAS FROM TENNESSEE IN 1852. ORDAINED AS A MINISTER IN THE NEARBY BEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH, ALEXANDER ALSO SERVED AS POSTMASTER FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY OF ESTILL'S STATION DURING THE CIVIL WAR. HIS GRAVE IS THE EARLIEST MARKED AT THIS SITE, ORIGINALLY PART OF HIS 200-ACRE FARM. ALSO BURIED HERE IS HIS SON WILLIAM C. DOBKINS (1841-1928), WHO SERVED THE AREA AS A PHYSICIAN, BUSINESSMAN, AND CIVIC LEADER. OTHER GRAVES INCLUDE THOSE OF FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS.

(1941)



ALEXANDER
DOBKINS
BORN
NOV. 11, 1815
DIED
JAN. 10, 1869



MARY J.
DOBKINS
BORN
MAR. 17, 1850
DIED
AUG. 13, 1887



WILLIAM C.
DOBKINS
BORN
OCT. 27, 1818
DIED
NOV. 4, 1880