



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Reuben Alexander McKenzie

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Reuben Alexander McKenzie was one of only a handful of our veterans who was a native Texan. The son of a San Jacinto veteran, he was living in northeast Tarrant County at the time the 1880 census was taken. He later moved to McLennan County where many other members of his family lived. He died just before the turn of the century and lies buried there.

Mr. McKenzie was born about 1843 in Nacogdoches County, Texas, and was a son of Alexander McKinza (1815-1874) and his wife, Clarissa (Brewer) McKinza (1817-1903). Alexander was a veteran of the Texas Revolution and the Battle of San Jacinto. Reuben's parents were married in Nacogdoches County, Texas in 1839.

Reuben appears in the 1850 census of Nacogdoches County, Texas as a nine-year-old boy in the family of his father, Alexander "McKnight." Their next-door neighbors were the family of Henry Brewer, who was Reuben's maternal grandfather. The McKinzas were farming on their own land, which was valued at two thousand dollars.

When the 1860 census was taken, the McKinzas lived in Beat 6 of Anderson County, Texas. Reuben was eighteen years old and the eldest child living in his father's family.

They lived in the area served by the post office at Ioni, Texas.

It seems likely that Reuben started using the name "McKenzie" about the time the War began. His war records are obviously incomplete, and those that remain are contradictory. His widow had in her possession an original discharge given Mr. McKenzie when he was discharged from Nichols' 9th Texas Infantry, a six-months command which served at Galveston. When she applied for a pension she mailed the original discharge to Austin and it remains there in his file. It is extremely difficult to read in the scans available at ancestry.com. He enlisted on December 10, 1861 at Jacksonville, Texas, and was mustered into the service at Galveston, Texas on December 17. He

was originally a private in Captain J. C. Maples Company of Nichols' Regiment of Texas Volunteers. This organization subsequently became Co. B of the 9th (Nichols) Texas Infantry. He was mustered out of this organization on April 24, 1862 at Galveston. An original signed discharge from this regiment, on a different printed form than that one Mrs. McKenzie had, shows him to have been nineteen years old and a native of Nacogdoches County, Texas. He was five feet five inches tall, with a fair complexion, blue eyes, and black hair. He was allowed fourteen dollars for travel expenses from Navasota, Texas to Jacksonville, Texas. He obviously reenlisted in the Confederate service, but his enlistment in his later regiment is shown taking place before he was discharged from his first.

Mr. McKenzie enlisted for a term of twelve months in the Confederate service at Centerville, Leon County, Texas on March 13, 1862. He became a private in Co. D, 3rd Battalion Texas Cavalry. This organization was also known at various times as the 6th Battalion Texas Cavalry and as Gould's Texas Cavalry. He presented himself riding a horse worth one hundred sixty dollars and with equipment worth twenty-five dollars. The records give the same date for his mustering in at Camp Burnett at Houston, Texas. His name appears on a list of receipts for pay dated July 12, 1863, at which time he was receiving twenty-five cents per day.

No further traces of his service have survived in his compiled military service file in the National Archives. A few more details of his service were supplied by his widow when she applied for a pension, and by a comrade of McKenzie's who was trying to help Mrs. McKenzie fulfill the requirements set by the pension board. Mrs. McKenzie said her husband served four years. At the time she applied, she still had Mr. McKenzie's original discharge, which she mailed to Austin and which remains in his file there.

John G. Wright of McLennan County made an affidavit in which he said he had first known Mr. McKenzie at Crockett, Texas, and knew him during the War until they parted company in 1865. They served in the same company. Mr. Wright said Reuben enlisted at Crockett, Texas in the spring of 1862 and served until he surrendered at Navasota, Texas in May 1865. While Mr. Wright's records reflect that he did enlist at Crockett, Mr. McKenzie's do not. Mr. Wright's recollections seem to mix details of both Mr. McKenzie's terms of service in the two different regiments.

Mr. McKenzie married Emily Hodges on October 8, 1868 in McLennan County, Texas. Her death certificate shows her date of birth as June 14, 1844. She was born in Tennessee. When she applied for a Confederate widow's pension in 1912, she said she had lived in Texas since 1850.

The 1870 census taker found "R. McKenney" and his wife, E. E., living in Beat 5 of Navarro County, Texas. He was born in 1842 in Texas; she was born in 1844 in Tennessee. With them was their son, W. A., who was one year old. Reuben had no real estate, but he owned personal property worth seven hundred dollars. A thirty-three-year-old farmer from Mississippi named Thomas Harper was living with them at the time.

When the 1880 census was taken, Reuben A. "McKinza" lived in the Grapevine area of northeast Tarrant County, north of Big Bear Creek. His wife, Emily E. McKinza, was born about 1844 in Tennessee. The children with them were William A. and Annie Lee McKinza.

In that year, Reuben was sharecropping on a farm consisting of thirty-five acres of improved land. The farm was worth three hundred dollars, and he owned farming equipment worth one hundred dollars. His livestock was valued at two hundred dollars. He estimated all his farm production in the year 1879 was worth two hundred twenty-five dollars. He owned four horses, three milk cows, and two cattle of other classes. Two calves had been dropped on his land in the last year. He had sold three cattle, and one had died or strayed. He owned ten chickens and estimated he had gotten twenty dozen eggs from them in the past year. He had two acres of apple trees with about one hundred trees on them, from which he had harvested eighty bushels of apples. He had twenty-five peach trees in a half-acre orchard which had made thirty bushels of peaches. He estimated he cut fifty cords of wood in 1879 which were valued at two dollars per cord.

Mrs. McKenzie told pension authorities she moved to a home on Route 8, Waco, Texas in 1892. Mr. McKenzie died December 12, 1897 in McLennan County, Texas, and was buried there in Bosqueville Cemetery the next day. His name is spelled "McKenzie" on his headstone. There are surviving funeral home records in Waco which confirm his death date.

Mrs. McKenzie was living with all four of her children in Precinct 3 of McLennan County, Texas at the time the 1900 census was taken. They were William A., Lela, Nealy, and Maggie McKenzie. Mrs. McKenzie said she had given birth to four children, all of whom were still alive.

In connection with her Confederate widow's pension application, Mrs. McKenzie was examined by Dr. A. R. Craven of McLennan County in 1914. He said she suffered from "...cataract in both eyes so affecting her vision she cannot do any thing that requires close observation can see better after night than in a bright light in work is guided more by touch than eyesight..."

Mrs. Emily McKenzie died at 12 p.m. on September 24, 1922 at her home two or three miles from Waco on the Dallas Road. The cause of death shown on her death certificate was general toxemia and "paralysis apparesis." She was buried the next day in Bosqueville Cemetery in McLennan County. Her surname is spelled "McKenzie" on her headstone. Dr. Craven signed her death certificate. The following four paragraphs give some short accounts of the lives of her children.

William A. McKenzie was born July 29, 1870. William was a blacksmith in McLennan County in 1900, a trade he followed most of his life. About 1904 he and his wife, Flora Maud (Henson) McKenzie (1876-1962), were married. In 1910 they lived at Rotan in Fisher County, Texas. In 1920 they lived in Precinct 4 of Lubbock County, Texas. By 1930 they had moved to Abernathy in Hale County, Texas. He died December 30, 1938 at Abernathy and was buried on New Year's Day 1939 in the Abernathy Cemetery.

Lela McKenzie was born January 29, 1872. Her death certificate says she was born at Grapevine, Texas. She married Rufus Archie Ausley (1860-1936). Her last permanent address was 3417 North 27th Street in Waco, Texas. She died in Hillcrest Hospital in Waco at 9:30 p.m. on February 4, 1964. She was buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Waco.

James Nealy McKenzie was born August 14, 1881 at Grapevine, Texas. He was a single man and worked as a contractor. He died at 11 a.m. on November 17, 1935 in a Waco hospital. He was buried in Bosqueville Cemetery.

Maggie McKenzie was born December 31, 1884 (census says 1885). She married Bea Hasha (1875-1952) on November 10, 1901. Descendants say she died July 6, 1974 at Victoria, Texas.