



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

Barbara Knox and Rob Yoder, County Coordinators

Copyright © 2011. All rights reserved.

Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Samuel B. Murphy

Compiled by Michael Patterson
Copyright © 2011. All rights reserved.

Samuel B. Murphy was a native of Illinois who served in two local Confederate units. He settled in northeast Tarrant County for a few years after the War, then moved to Cooke County in the early 1870's and remained there.

Samuel was born in Illinois in March 1832, based upon a statement he made to a census taker in 1900. There was one Samuel B. *Murphey*, born about 1831 in Illinois, who appears in the 1850 census of Perry County, Illinois in the family of William C. Murphey (born about 1800 in Tennessee) and Caroline Murphy (born about 1813 in Illinois). It is known that the Samuel B. Murphy who is the subject of this sketch was born in an Illinois county whose name begins with a "P."

Seven Illinois county names begin with the letter P: Peoria, Perry, Piatt, Pike, Polk, Pulaski, and Putnam. No one named Samuel (or its variations) Murphy (or its variant spellings) appears in any of those seven counties in 1850 except the Samuel B. *Murphey* in Perry County.

Quite a bit more could probably be learned about the backgrounds of Mr. and Mrs. Murphy but for the illegibility of a crucial part of the death certificate of one of their children. The informant knew not only the full names but also the exact birthplaces of both Mr. and Mrs. Murphy, and they were recorded on the death certificate. It appears in the microfilm copy that the original record was probably written in pencil. If the original could be located and examined in Austin it would probably be decipherable.

One S. B. Murphy appears in the Illinois state census of 1855 in Perry County. He was in his twenties, and was apparently married with two young daughters. When the 1860 census was taken, William C. Murphey and his family were still there, but Samuel B. Murphy was no longer in the county. If this is the Mr. Murphy who came to Texas, he may have lost his wife or left his family in Illinois for some reason. The 1860 federal census records do not list the marital status of persons.

There exists a marriage record for one Samuel B. Murphy and Martha Jane Owen(s) in adjacent Jackson County, Illinois on March 30, 1851.

None of this is presented as proof that the Samuel B. Murphy who was in Dallas County in 1860 was the same man as the one in Perry County, Illinois in 1850, the one who was married in Jackson County, Illinois in 1851, or the one who was married with a family in Perry County in 1855. Further research might prove them to have all been the same man.

When the 1860 census was taken in Dallas County, Texas Samuel Murphy was working as a farm laborer in the Farmer's Branch area with the family of Wade Hampton Witt (1822-1912). Witt was a wealthy farmer and merchant who had moved from to Texas from Illinois about 1845. He owned and operated a mill, for which the Witt's Mill area of Dallas County was named. He was later Captain of Witt's Company, of which Samuel Murphy was a member.

Samuel B. Murphy was married to Martha Elizabeth Wolff, probably in 1861. She was born in North Carolina in April 1840.

Samuel B. Murphy joined the Confederate service in Dallas County, Texas on February 24, 1862. He became a private in Captain John T. Coit's Company of Darnell's Regiment of Texas Volunteers. He enlisted for a term of twelve months, and presented himself for service riding a horse worth one hundred twenty-five dollars and with equipment worth twenty dollars. This company subsequently became Co. E, 18th Texas Cavalry. He was transferred to Captain Witt's Company on March 10, 1862. He was mustered into the Confederate service on March 15, 1862 at Dallas. Not long into his service he became 3rd lieutenant of the company. By that time his horse's value had risen to one hundred thirty dollars and his equipment had risen ten dollars in value.

Still later Captain Witt's Company was made a part of Wells' Texas Cavalry. On a roll for June 30, 1862 through June 30, 1863 Mr. Murphy appears as a second lieutenant in Co. B, Scanland's Squadron of Wells' Battalion of Texas Cavalry.

Several original documents have survived in Murphy's compiled military service file in Washington, D.C. One document, written and signed by Murphy at McIntosh Spring in the Creek Nation on July 12, 1863, was his resignation as third lieutenant of his company.

Another document, the bottom portion of which is missing, was made at the same place on the same day and reads in part "...I certify that I have examined Samuel B. Murphy Senior 2nd Lieutenant Co. B Scanland's Squadron Texas Cavalry and find him incapable of discharging the duties of his office because of leprosy of some thirteen years standing. I therefore recommend that his resignation be accepted as in my opinion he is thereby rendered unfit for the proper discharge of his duties. [signed] Geo. G. Duggins..."

S. B. Murphy appears in the 1870 census of Precinct 2 of Tarrant County. The names of his nearest neighbors suggest he may have been living in the Keller area. Since several other men from this area served in the same company with Murphy, it seems possible he may have settled here because of friendships he made during his service. He owned personal property worth one hundred thirty dollars. He and Mrs. Murphy had three children with them in that year, a daughter and two sons.

According to his own statement, Mr. Murphy moved to Cooke County in 1873. He spent the rest of his life there.

The census taker in 1880 found the family living in District 112 of Cooke County. Mr. Murphy was working as a laborer and said he was the son of two native Tennesseans. Mrs. Murphy said she was born about 1840 in North Carolina; both her parents were also North Carolinians. They had seven children with them: Fannie, Richard E., William R., Mary M., Samuel B., Lillie, Maude, and Jane Murphy.

In 1900 Mr. and Mrs. Murphy were living apart in Cooke County. Mrs. Martha E. Murphy lived at 321 Mary Street in Gainesville. She told the census taker she was a widow. She said she was born in April 1840 in North Carolina, and that she had given birth to eight children, seven of whom were still living. She made her home with her son-in-law, Frederic J. Bush, and her daughter, Jane Bush. Their next-door neighbors were Martha's son, Samuel H. Murphy, and his family.

In 1900 Samuel B. Murphy said he was divorced and was living in Gainesville in Ward 5 of Gainesville at 15 Morris Street. He was working as a day laborer for the family of Dr. Shelby C. Post.

Samuel B. Murphy applied for a Confederate pension early in 1904. He gave his address as Gainesville in Cooke County. His file contains two affidavits made by men who served with him...John Scanland and John C. Ashlock. Both men said Mr. Murphy was a faithful soldier and that he was completely destitute at the time he applied for his pension. They affirmed that they had served in both Darnell's and Wells' Regiments.

Dr. F. H. Johnson examined Mr. Murphy in January, 1904 and found that he suffered from an abscess on his left side from a long spell of fever contracted in 1903. He was totally incapacitated for labor.

We have found no records of Mr. Murphy after 1904. It seems likely he died in Cooke County between 1904 and 1910. Neither he nor Mrs. Murphy have death certificates on file in Texas. They probably lie in unmarked graves in Fairview Cemetery.

By the time of the taking of the 1910 census, Mr. Murphy had apparently died. Mrs. Murphy and her son, Will, were living in Gainesville at 511 Mill Street. Sam and Lillie Murphy were their next-door neighbors. Will was single and worked as the driver of beer wagon. Sam was a bartender in a saloon.

When the 1920 census was taken, Mrs. Martha Murphy and her son, Will, were still together, living at 403 May Street in Gainesville. By the time of the taking of the census in 1930, Will was living alone.

We have discovered the names of eight of Martha E. Murphy's children. According to her statement in 1900 she gave birth to eight.

Fannie Murphy was born April 18, 1862, in Denton County, Texas according to her death certificate. She was married to a Mr. Blair. She died on Mary Street in Gainesville's Third Ward at 8 a.m. on February 4, 1911. Her death certificate says her father was born in a county in Illinois whose name begins with P, but it is illegible. It says her mother's name was Martha Elizabeth Wolff, and gives her complete birthplace in ____ County, North Carolina, which is also illegible.

Richard E. Murphy was born about 1864. He was still alive with the family in 1880.

William Robert Murphy was born, according to his death certificate, in Tarrant County in 1864. In 1930 he lived alone in Gainesville where he worked as a city inspector. A single man, he died at his home at 403 Mary Street in Gainesville on May 24, 1940. He was buried in Fairview Cemetery. The informant for the death certificate was a Mrs. Cleavenger of Hollis, Oklahoma.

Mary M. Murphy was born about 1869. She was still with the family in 1880.

Samuel H. Murphy's death certificate shows his name as Samuel W. Murphy, and his birth date as February 28, 1870. He and his wife, Lillian S. Woods (1888-1969) were married January 13, 1910 in Cooke County. He died at 4:30 p.m. on February 15, 1962 at his home at 1602 Rice Avenue in Gainesville. He was buried in Fairview Cemetery there. He was a retired construction laborer.

Lillie Murphy was born about 1873. She was still with the family in 1880.

Maude Murphy was born about 1875. She was still with the family in 1880.

Jane Murphy was born January 20, 1877. She married Fred J. Bush (1871-1939). She died August 27, 1951 and lies buried in Fairview Cemetery in Gainesville.

McIntosh Spring Creek Station
July 12th 1863

Sir

I resign the Commission of 2nd Lieut of Capt
William Jackson's Company (B) in Capt John Seaborn's
Squadron of Texas Cavalry

Secretary of War } Samuel B Murphy 2nd Lieut
Dept of War } Comp (B) Capt Seaborn's Squadron
Texas Cavalry

Residence
Wallata Ranch
Denton County Texas

