



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Mitchell Sylvester McKee

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Mitchell Sylvester McKee was a Confederate veteran of a Mississippi infantry regiment. He lived at Grapevine at least twice, and spent much of his life moving from place to place in north Texas. He died in the Confederate Veterans home in Austin in 1926.

Mr. McKee told his comrades in the Robert E. Lee Camp of United Confederate Veterans in Fort Worth that he was born in Marshall County, Mississippi. He told pension officials in 1900 that he was sixty-seven years old, so must have been born about 1833. He also wrote in his pension application that he had moved to Texas about 1841. Since he enlisted in the Confederate service in Mississippi, he must have moved back to Mississippi from Texas at least once.

Several genealogists have placed material on Mr. McKee and his family at ancestry.com. They say he was born in Hudsonville, Marshall County, Mississippi about 1836, and was a son of John McKee (1801-1871) and his wife, Elizabeth Lytle (1805-1897).

When the 1850 census was taken, Mitchell was a fourteen-year-old boy in his father's family in the Northern District of Marshall County, Mississippi. The census shows that John McKee had moved the family to Mississippi between the births of Mitchell and his next-older sibling, who was born about 1841 in South Carolina.

By 1860 Mitchell was living with his parents and siblings in Lafayette County, Mississippi in the area served by the post office at Lafayette, Mississippi. Mitchell was twenty-four years old and unmarried. John McKee had prospered in the ten years since the taking of the last census; in 1860 and had real estate worth eight thousand dollars and twenty-two slaves.

Mr. McKee served the Confederacy as a member of Co. C, 9th Mississippi Infantry. He enlisted at Oxford, Mississippi on February 23, 1861 for a term of twelve months. Other records say he enlisted on March 27. He was mustered into the service near Pensacola, Florida on April 17, 1861.

He traveled five hundred miles to the place of rendezvous, and was sick when he arrived. He was twenty-four years old at the time.

In December of 1861 he was discharged by order of General Bragg, and immediately re-enlisted in Col. Chalmers' Regiment on December 15. On April 2, 1862 he was admitted to the 1st Mississippi C.S.A. Hospital at Jackson, Mississippi. By order of Col. White, Mr. McKee was transferred to a Chalmers' Battalion of Sharpshooters on June 23, 1862. This battalion surrendered with the Army of Tennessee in April 1865.

By 1870 M. S. McKee was back in Marshall County, Mississippi in Township 3, Range 1. He was farming, and had two young white men living with him...John and Bugg Byrn, both natives of Mississippi. When Mr. McKee entered the Confederate Home in 1922, he said he had come to Texas in 1870.

M. S. McKee of Decatur, Wise County, Texas applied for a Confederate pension in 1900. He said he was sixty-seven years old, and had been in Texas fifty-nine years. He complained of bad eyes and general debility caused by old age. He served all four years of the War in Co. C, 9th Mississippi Infantry.

His pension application file contains an affidavit made by Thomas H. Lyman of Walker County, Georgia, who was at that time Assistant Superintendent of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. Lyman said he had known McKee since 1860. He said McKee was wounded at Shiloh, Tennessee and at Munfordville, Kentucky on September 14, 1862. He said he had heard that McKee's wounds made him unfit for the infantry and that he'd been placed in Forrest's Cavalry. Mr. Lyman had been major and lieutenant colonel of the 9th Mississippi Infantry.

An article appeared in the Dallas Morning News on April 7, 1907 entitled "Survivors of Shiloh. On Forty-fifth Anniversary of Battle Organization is Formed in This City." While he was unable to attend the organizational meeting, M. S. McKee of Grapevine, Texas requested that his name be placed in membership. On June 14, 1908, M. S. McKee of Grapevine was mentioned in an article in the same newspaper as being one of the justices of the peace in Tarrant County's Precinct 3. There are no readable McKee headstones in any of the older cemeteries in northeast Tarrant County.

Mr. McKee was living in Fort Worth at 2427 Ross Avenue when the 1920 census was taken. He was a boarder, eighty-five years old, and claimed to be a widower. This is an odd circumstance, since his widow applied for a widow's pension and said she and Mr. McKee had been married since 1883.

Mr. McKee entered the Confederate Home in Austin on September 10, 1922. He gave his home address as Grapevine, Texas. He died at the Home at 8:05 a.m. on November 28, 1926. His death was caused by pneumonia and old age. He was buried in the Texas State Cemetery the same day. His grave lies in the Confederate section, Section 1 (F) Row T Number 8. His death certificate shows he was a widower. However, within a short time a Fort Worth woman applied for a pension, claiming to be his widow.

Mrs. F. C. McKee applied for a Confederate widow's pension in 1927. She gave her address as 2900 Oakland Street in Fort Worth, Texas. She said she was seventy-four years old, and a native of Cherokee County, Texas. She said she and Mr. McKee were married February 14, 1883 in Montague County, Texas. She said she had been in Tarrant County for only one year, but had lived "just across the line in Parker County" for thirty-five years. Mr. and Mrs. McKee's movements, together or apart, continue to be something of a mystery to us.



Headstone in the State Cemetery, Austin, Texas