



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

James Melvin Buffington

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James Melvin Buffington was a Confederate veteran and a Galvanized Yankee who lies buried in White's Chapel Cemetery in Southlake. He was born in Jackson County, Alabama on April 20, 1842.

Buffington enlisted in the Confederate Army on October 31, 1861 as a private in Co. E, 42nd Tennessee Infantry at Camp Cheatham for a term of one year. This company subsequently became Co. F of the 55th Alabama Infantry. He was captured in the fall of Fort Donelson, Tennessee on February 16, 1862. He was eventually imprisoned at Camp Douglas, Illinois and was left there in the hospital when others of his comrades were sent south to Vicksburg, Mississippi for exchange in September, 1862. His illness recorded at Camp Douglas looks like "Fibris Typhoidus" in the handwritten script.

Buffington served in at least two Confederate regiments, and then became a Galvanized Yankee, serving in the Union army against Indians in return for his release from military prison. His military gravestone records that he served in both Co. E, 42nd Tennessee Infantry, and Co. F, 55th Alabama Infantry. It makes no mention of his service in the Union army.

His Union file is fairly extensive and interesting. He enlisted in Co. C, 3rd U. S. Volunteers on October 14, 1864 at Rock Island Barracks, Chicago, Illinois. He was shown as a native of Jackson County, Alabama, and was a twenty-one-year-old farmer. He was five feet six inches tall, had blue eyes, light hair, and a fair complexion. He enlisted for a term of one year. He was placed on detached service on May 8, 1865 at Post Cottonwood, N. T. [Nebraska Territory]. Later, in August, 1865 he is shown "on daily duty in 2 M Dept cutting hay." He was mustered out at Ft. Leavenworth,

Kansas on November 29, 1865, with a notation on his paperwork that he had incurred “stoppages for damage to property of John Mattis and others \$290.00.” Two signed originals of Buffington’s enlistment papers remain in his file in the National Archives.

Buffington’s wife was Margaret J. Griffin, and they were married in Jackson County, Alabama on October 29, 1874. Buffington brought his family to Tarrant County, Texas about 1882. Beginning in 1893, he was pensioned by the federal government for this service to the Union.

He died February 25, 1911, and was buried in White’s Chapel Cemetery. His widow received a pension beginning in the same year he died. When the 1910 census taker came to their home, Mrs. Buffington said she had given birth to thirteen children, ten of whom were still living. Included among the thirteen children were Samuel Buffington, Elizabeth A. Buffington, Matilda Buffington, William Moses Buffington, James Allen Buffington, John Henry Buffington, Walter L. Buffington, Margaret Ann Buffington, George W. Buffington, and Ida Belle Buffington.

