



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

Barbara Knox and Rob Yoder, County Coordinators

Copyright © 2008-2009. All rights reserved.

Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Rayford E. Autrey

Compiled by Michael Patterson
Copyright 2008-2009. All rights reserved.

Rayford E. Autrey, a younger brother of James A. Autrey, was born April 4, 1842 in Abbeville County, South Carolina. By 1850, the family had moved to Walker County, Georgia. He was a son of Philip and Elizabeth Autrey.

Rayford first served in the Confederate Army as a member of Barry's Tennessee Light Artillery Company. Rayford volunteered July 1, 1862 at Chattanooga, Tennessee for 3 years; some record cards say he enlisted at Knoxville; and some records say he transferred on that day to Second Co. I, Barry's Co. Tennessee Light Artillery (Lookout Artillery) from Company H of the 26th Tennessee Infantry. He is shown present for duty on most of the surviving rolls of his regiment. He was promoted to corporal on December 1, 1863. He was captured by Union forces on September 2, 1864 at Atlanta, Georgia.



Rayford E. Autrey

The records give conflicting dates for his movements while a prisoner of war. Some say he was forwarded to Louisville, Kentucky on both October 27 and October 31, 1864. He was sent from Louisville to Camp Douglas, Illinois to a military prison there on October 29 (sic), 1864.

Autrey became one of the Galvanized Yankees, agreeing to serve with the Union forces in Co. E, 6th U. S. Volunteer Infantry, in which he was a sergeant. Autrey was mustered into Union service on March 25, 1865 at Camp Douglas, Illinois. He had hazel eyes, black hair, a dark complexion, and was 5'8" tall. He was appointed to the rank of sergeant on the same day he enlisted. In July, 1865 he was absent from his company on guard duty on the Overland Stage route between Ft. Kearney and Big Sandy. In October 1865 he was on detached service as an escort for engineering party at the Republican River since October 12. He was promoted to First Sergeant on May 1, 1866, and was mustered out on October 10, 1866 at Fort Kearney, Nebraska Territory.

On March 17, 1867 in Walker County, Georgia, he married Mary Elizabeth Garrett, a daughter of Benjamin Franklin Garrett of Walker County. She was born November 11, 1852 and died February 20, 1918. According to family sources, Rayford and his family moved from Georgia in 1877 and first stopped at Sulphur Springs in Hopkins County. There Rayford contracted malaria which was treated with quinine, measured out on a knife blade. The medicine rendered him blind for a time. Next the Autreys moved to the Arwine community in present-day Bedford where they stayed two or three years. When they finally settled at Smithfield, they lived in a tent until they completed their house with the help of their neighbors.

In 1895, Rayford Autrey was living north of Smithfield on the N. A. Roberts survey, in present-day Keller in the neighborhood of Meandering Woods Drive between Silkwood Court and Briar Ridge Drive. He died of senility on November 17, 1922, at his home at 2416 NW 27th Street in Fort Worth. He lies buried with his wife in Smithfield Cemetery. An obituary appeared for him in the Fort Worth paper, but it did not mention his service in either army during the Civil War.

Rayford Autrey and his wife were the parents of fourteen children: Cecilia Ida (Seelie) Hukill; Sarah E. (Sallie) Scott; Martha V. J. (Mattie) Cowart Hedges Perry; William Lee Autrey, Melissa Alice West, Virgil Clark Autrey, Robert Alexander (Bob) Autrey, Cora Bell Shaw; James Gilbert (Doc) Autrey, Thomas Floyd Autrey, Cecil Elbert Autrey, Guy Buckner Autrey, John Willis Autrey, and one other child whose name has not been found.

His obituary in the Fort Worth newspaper reads as follows: ***“Rayford E. Autrey. Funeral services for Rayford E. Autrey, 80, who died at the residence, 4417 West Twenty-seventh street, Friday morning at 5 o’clock, will be held Saturday afternoon at 2:30 o’clock at the Smithfield cemetery. Rev. J. F. Murell of the Rosen Heights Baptist church will officiate and the procession will leave overland from the residence at 1:30 o’clock, conducted by the North Fort Worth Undertaking company. Deceased is survived by four daughters, Mrs. J. E. Hukill, Mrs. D. W. West, and Mrs. M. Perry of Fort Worth; and Mrs. H. L. Shaw of Phoenix, Ariz.; four sons, L. W. Autrey of Hildreth, Tex.; R. A. of Quanah; C. E. of Fort Worth and J. W. of Phoenix, Ariz.; twenty-one grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren. Autrey had been a resident of Texas for forty-eight years, coming here from Georgia.”***

