



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

Barbara Knox and Rob Yoder, County Coordinators

Copyright © 2008-2012. All rights reserved.

Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

William Franklin Burton

Compiled by Michael Patterson
Copyright 2008-2012. All rights reserved.

William Franklin Burton was a Confederate veteran who lies buried in Grapevine Cemetery. Thanks to a generous and interested descendant of the Burton family, Maria Schisel, we have an excellent account of his life, along with some outstanding photographs of the family.

William Franklin Burton was born May 2, 1830 in Haywood County, Tennessee, a son of James Burton (c1800- c1832) and Sarah Oliver (1803-1895). James was born in Tennessee and Sarah was born in Virginia. They are listed in the 1830 census of Haywood County, Tennessee. William's father died about 1832 and Sarah married Alexander Henry (1787-1874) who became guardian for the three Burton children. The Henry family is listed in the 1840 Haywood County census. Sarah and Alex had an additional five children together.

About 1842, Alexander Henry moved the family to Graves County, Kentucky where he bought some land. By 1860, the family had moved a little further west to Hickman County, Kentucky where they are listed in the 1860 (Hays District) census.

When Mrs. Burton filed an application for a Confederate widow's pension, she said her husband served four years in Co. D, 2nd Kentucky Infantry, and that he was discharged May 6, 1865. A statement from the National Archives in her file adds that he was captured near Jonesboro, Georgia, August 31, 1864.

William F. Burton's records in the National Archives show that he enlisted July 13, 1861 at Camp Boone, Tennessee and became a soldier in Captain S. Slayden's Company of the 2nd Regiment of Kentucky Infantry. He enlisted for the term of the War. This company subsequently became Co. D, 2nd Regiment of Kentucky Mounted Infantry. Mr. Burton was mustered into the Confederate service at Camp Boone, and his name appears on a roll made there on August 19, 1861. He told recruitment officials he was thirty years old. He traveled one hundred fifty miles from his home to the regimental rendezvous.

He seems to have been present with the regiment until August 31, 1864 when he was captured at Jonesboro, Georgia. On that same day he and other prisoners were forwarded to the Provost Marshall General of the Union Department of the Cumberland. Oddly, a company muster roll shows him back present with the regiment during September and October, 1864. Nothing further of his service has been found.

William F. Burton appears in the 1870 Kentucky census at Hays, Hickman County. He was thirty-eight years old (hence born about 1832), and born in Tennessee. He is in a household with several other people of different surnames. The microfilm quality is such that the surnames of the other people cannot be read. He was the only Burton in the household. It does not appear that he was married at the time.

Burton and his wife, Louise Elizabeth Hundley, were married on June 14, 1876 in Hickman County, Kentucky. She was born in Hickman County, Kentucky, on October 12, 1849. She has a headstone in Grapevine Cemetery, but it has no death date engraved on it.

The W. F. Burton family appears in the 1880 census of magisterial district 3 at Hays, Hickman County, Kentucky. Mr. and Mrs. Burton had two children living with them at the time: Mary E. Burton and Eliza A. Burton.

Eliza "Attaway" Burton Ashlock, a daughter of William Franklin Burton, wrote a narrative about her family's life in 1970 when she was ninety years old. It is quite lengthy and mostly talks about her experiences growing up in Kentucky and Tennessee. Members of the Burton family have graciously shared the following excerpts with us: ***"I am writing this story as told to us by our Mother and as I remember our life in Kentucky and on through the years. Our Grandfather [James Burton] and Grandmother [Sarah Oliver] Burton had three children, Robert, Mary, and William.***

Our Grandfather Burton died young and our Grandmother married Joseph (sic) [Alexander] Henry when our Father, William Burton, was three years old. There were four Henry children - Joseph, Louisa, Martha, and Sally.

Our Father was a Southern soldier in the Civil War for four years. When he came home from the War, all the slaves were free and he had to take care of his Mother and two sisters until he married ten years later. Aunt Mary was crippled in one knee. A cow kicked her and she had to walk with a crutch. Grandma was almost helpless and Aunt Sally was an epileptic. Poor Aunt Mary had a hard time. Our Father and Mother would look after them.

Our Father and Mother met and were married in 1876. Unto them were born eight children. Father owned some land and built a nice house on it before they were married. We three girls were the oldest. We lived there until our oldest brother, John, was born. I don't remember much about that place except sitting out in the yard under a cedar tree and tearing my doll up to see what it was made of and my Mother scolding me....

Our Father and Mother decided they needed more land, so they sold that place and bought a place called The Cross Roads. There was quite a bit of traveling on the Clinton and Mayfield road.

People coming by with two to four oxen to a big heavy wagon, hauling first one thing and another. They would stop and buy things from our Mother's little store. Fish peddlers would come from the Mississippi River selling fish. Once our Father bought a "cat fish" that weighed sixty pounds. We had fish for the whole neighborhood. We didn't have refrigerators to keep food from spoiling like we do now. Clinton was the County Seat of Hickman County. Our brothers Bob and Ed were born while we were living at The Cross Roads....

Our Father was a tobacco farmer. He raised some wheat, oats, and corn, too, but tobacco was the main crop. I will try to tell you how tobacco was raised. First, a big brush pile was burned where the seed were to be planted. That was to enrich the ground and kill the insects. When the plants were about six inches high they were pulled up and set out in rows in the field. We had to set them out by hand. We would make a hole in the ground with a peg and set the plant in and pull the dirt around it. That was a back-breaking job by the time we set out five or ten acres and if it didn't rain right away our Father would hitch a horse to a sled and put a barrel of water on it and go between the rows and we kids would put a dipper of water on each plant. When the plants were three or four feet high we would start pulling the suckers off where every leaf grew and worming it. If you don't know what a tobacco worm looks like, it is just like a tomato worm. We would pull the big ones off and pull them in two and mash the little ones on the leaf. Once we pulled a trick on our Father and Mother. They had to go somewhere, so they left us kids to work in the tobacco, so we suckered and wormed both ends and left the middle. I think I was the instigator of that trick, but they didn't find it out until the next week when our Father started to work the field over again and the middle was about eaten up by worms, but what could you expect of an eight year old kid? I was the oldest one to help in the field. Etta had to stay in the house to help our Mother with the younger ones. There is more about the tobacco raising - when the leaves began to turn yellow, the men would take a knife with a handle about two feet long and split the stalk and cut it off above the ground. They would hang it on a tobacco stick until there were eight or ten stalks on a stick and lay them on the ground until they wilted and then haul them in and hang them in a tobacco barn until the barn was full. They would build a slow fire under the tobacco and cure it until it was a beautiful brown, then it would hang in the barn until a damp spell, when it would be taken down and stripped off the stalks and made into what they called hands and then it was stacked in ricks until another damp spell when it would be hauled to market. It had to be damp when handled or it would crumble. When we worked in the green tobacco we would get a black gum on our hands that was hard to wash off. Some of the time tobacco didn't bring much - some of the time it didn't bring over three cents a pound.

Our Father had to walk and use a turning plow with two horses hitched to it to break all the ground for planting and then harrow it and put it in rows. Farming in those days was hard work. Our Father and Mother decided to sell the farm and the Cross Roads and buy close to his Mother, so he could farm her land. They had to build a house on that land before we could move. The neighbors would help each other build their houses and barns. We Kids were getting old enough to help quite a bit with the farm work, so they wanted more land. We three girls were the oldest. Etta had to help our Mother with the housework and the younger children. There was always a baby to take care of. I was our Father's boy. I helped him get wood out of the woods and saw it up in fireplace lengths. A neighbor boy, Jim Gardener, would come by on his horse and say to me "Let her go, Johnny"; and, of course, that would make me mad. My Father would say, "Don't pay any attention to him, he is just a smart aleck". My Mother told me to call him Susie

the next time he called me Johnny. I wasn't but eight years old and still liked to play with dolls and in playhouses. One day Ella and I were out in the corner of the yard playing in our playhouse and he rode by and up close to the fence and peeped over and said "Oh, Johnny", so I said "Oh, Susie". That was the last of him calling me Johnny.

When we moved to the new place, there had to be some fencing done, so I helped my Father saw logs to make rails. He would split the rails out and then I would help him build the fence. He would say, "This is a hard way to serve the Lord, isn't it? I didn't mind it. I wasn't but eight years old, but strong as any boy my age. This may all sound like the "Back Woods" of Kentucky, but it wasn't. We lived in the beautiful hills of Hickman County in which grew many wild fruits and nuts. There were several kinds of grapes and dew berries and black berries, goose berries and currents, persimmon and papaw trees. The fruit of the papaw was something like a banana only the seed were more like the persimmon and the pulp mushy. There were black walnuts, hickory, acorn, and hazel nuts. There were many more edible things that grew wild in those woods such as opossums and coons. Ha! We had a beautiful woods to play in, such beautiful trees and wild flowers. The dogwood with its beautiful white flowers and the redbuds - Oh! How beautiful they all were. We would use the leaves of the trees to make our dresses and hats and pin them together with sage grass stems and trim them with wild flowers. What a Garden of Eden - Happy, happy childhood days. When we would decide we wanted to go horse back riding, we would bend a sapling down and jump on and away we would go - some of those poor saplings never raised up again, we had ridden our poor steed to death. There were many other trees in the woods besides the fruit and nut trees. The oak, elm, hackberry, ash, poplar and sycamore. The poplar was easy to saw and split, so we used it for cook stove wood....

Now, I will tell you about our Uncle Ed Hundley. He was Mother's youngest brother. He went to Texas when he was about twenty years old. In about two years, he came back to Kentucky on a visit with such glowing reports of Texas that our Mother decided that was the place for us. Our Father was in bad health, so she didn't know how they were going to manage to make a living for a big family raising tobacco. Of course, we kids were delighted to get out of working in the nasty old gummy tobacco. Our Father hated to leave his mother who was 92 years old and his two sisters who were getting up in years. Our Mother was a strong-willed woman, so her word was the law, but it was the only thing she could do. Our Father had pneumonia in the winter before we moved to Texas. He was never very well after that. Our Grandma said she was afraid we would go out to Texas and all be killed by the Indians. We told her the Indians were all gone and it was a cotton-raising country, and we would pick clean, white cotton instead of working in old dirty tobacco. Well, goodbye dear old Kentucky and all our loved ones we are leaving behind. Now we are Texas-bound. We drove off leaving our dog sitting on the front porch looking wishfully after us. We went by Grandma Hundley's place to tell her goodbye and Uncle Tom Hundley took us to the train.

What an undertaking for a woman to face, going to a new country with a sick husband and eight children - the oldest not quite fourteen and the youngest not quite three months old; but, we kids were thrilled, getting to ride on the train for the first time. It was a slow train, run by coal, and when we wanted fresh air we had to open a window and the black smoke and cinders would blow in our faces. It took three days and nights to make the trip and most of the children were trainsick before we got to our destination. It didn't bother me, I guess. I must have been tough.

We changed trains at Cairo, Illinois and crossed the Mississippi River on a ferryboat. They ran the train onto the boat and it was so heavily loaded that they argued a long time before they decided to go across and the water almost came into the boat. The Ohio River is clear and the Mississippi River is muddy. We saw where the Ohio emptied into the Mississippi. It ran away out before it mixed with the muddy water.

On the train was the first time we ever saw a banana. I told Mama to buy some - I wanted to see what they tasted like, but we didn't like them....

Right away, Uncle Ed put us to picking his cotton. The first thing, they had Buck and I to run a race to see which could pick their row the quickest. He beat me a little, but I don't know which one had the most burs and leaves in their sack. It didn't take long to learn how to pick cotton. We picked it, too. We didn't pull bolls like they do now. We helped pick Uncle Ed's crop and then we rented a place close to him so we could raise a cotton crop the next year. Our Father wasn't able to work in the field, so they had to hire a man to do the plowing and teach us how to raise cotton. We were lucky in getting a man who knew all about raising cotton. He could plow the straightest row of any one I have ever seen. He showed us how to chop cotton about eighteen inches apart. He would say if we left a sprig of grass, he would make us go back and cut it out. But, when we got through with the field, boy, it was beautiful. His name was Carl Blankenship. He was a good man. He was twenty-four years old and was like a big brother to we kids. He was studying to be a doctor. He made it, too. We never forgot the training he gave us. He went off to medical school, so the next year our parents had to hire another man. He was 18 years old and didn't know as much about raising cotton as we did, but he could plow and that was what we had to have, as the boys weren't old enough to plow yet. His name was John Orsburn. He was a tall, dark-eyed, good looking boy. He wanted to date me, but Mama wouldn't let me go with him - only when we all went together. He asked me to marry him when I was fifteen; but, I told him "No" I was too young, so he married another girl. We lived at that place three years and raised good cotton crops; but, we kids were growing up and our Mother decided we had to have a bigger house, so they rented a big two-story house about twenty-five miles north of where we were living. We still had to have a man to do the plowing, so they hired a young man named John Center. He was like a big brother to we kids. He wanted to marry Etta, but she wouldn't have him, so he married another girl, too.

While we were living at this place, we went to school at Steward's Creek. There I met Jim Ashlock. He told me later that he claimed me for his girl there, but I didn't know it. I sure didn't claim him for my boy friend. He was a big curly - headed boy who looked like his hair was never combed. We didn't become sweethearts for several years after that, when he was the dandy of the neighborhood. He was handsome with his pretty dark curly hair.

While we were living at this place, we got word from Kentucky that our father's mother had died. She was 97 years old. He was terrible grieved what would become of his sisters. Aunt Mary was 70 years old and Aunt Sally about 50. After Grandma died, they went to live with one of their nieces. They hadn't lived there long when they wrote us that Aunt Mary and Aunt Sally had burned to death. What a shock, our dear Aunt Mary and Aunt Sally - burned to death! Our poor Father, it was almost more than he could bear. Our Mother got on the train and went back to Kentucky to see if she could find out what caused the fire. They said the fire started in Aunt

Mary's and Aunt Sally's room and they thought the fire had popped out of the fireplace on the rug and the room was in a blaze before they knew it....

I forgot to tell you about the first blue norther we experienced. We were picking cotton for Uncle Ed when he started yelling at us to get our sacks off and go to the house. He wouldn't let us take time to take our sacks to the wagon. Before we got to the house the wind was icy cold and was sleeting. One time Uncle Ed and some neighbor men were coming from Dallas in an open wagon and one of those blue northers blew up and they almost froze to death. When we saw a dark blue cloud coming up in the North, we knew what to expect.

We were still living in the big house, called the Jim Portman place. We had lived there one year and made a good crop. By this time, our Father was unable to do any kind of work and our Mother had to tend to all the business, so she rented the place for another year; but, Mr. Portman decided he didn't want to rent to a woman and rented the place to a man after he had rented it to her. He let this man put some of his farming implements and hill up several bushels of sweet potatoes on the place. She told them she would see them in court and he would lose his potatoes and his implements, if she was mean enough to take them, which she wasn't. Sure enough, she beat the case and we made another crop there. By this time, we were finding out that raising cotton wasn't any picnic either - pulling heavy sacks and picking our fingers to pieces. We wouldn't empty our sacks until we had 50, 75 or sometimes one hundred pounds in them and then load them on our shoulders and take them to the wagon and weigh and empty them. Ella, John and I would pick about three hundred pounds each in a day. The smaller boys didn't do quite that well. We didn't get to go to school until the cotton was all out in the Fall, unless there would come a rainy spell and we would go two or three weeks. That is the way we got what education we have....

I forgot to tell you about our brother Bob's snake experience while we were living on the Portman place. There was a big pond on the place for stock water, so one day Bob and a neighbor boy were playing around the pond and they saw a snake in the water and started throwing rocks at it and it got so mad it reared up on its tail and came out of the water real close to the boy. Bob was across the pond from him and threw a rock and killed the snake. I think the Lord must have directed that rock. The snake was a water moccasin, a very poisonous snake....

The family had had reverses and I knew it would be hard on them to send me to school, so I quit. Ella and I and the boys walked two miles and went to school at Coppell, but we didn't get to finish high school.

Our Father passed away November 30, 1903. He always said he wished some of us would get married, so he could see some of his grandchildren before he died....

Our Mother had a stroke and was paralyzed in one leg and one arm, but she could get around pretty good with her crutch. She never regained the use of her arm...

I will bring this disconnected story to a close. I wrote it as it came into my mind, so please excuse mistakes and remember I love everyone of you very, very much, because you are you and not for what you do. Lovingly, Attaway (Burton) Ashlock

William and Louisa lived in Hickman County until September, 1892. She had a younger brother who had gone to Texas and came back with glowing reports of the country. William nearly died from pneumonia the previous year and was in poor health and could no longer do tobacco farming, so she decided it would be a good move to pack up and relocate to Texas.

The Burton family appears in the 1900 Dallas County, Texas census in Precinct 8, which is very near the northeast Tarrant County line. William Franklin Burton died in Dallas County on November 30, 1903, and was buried in Grapevine Cemetery. No obituary appeared for him in the Grapevine Sun or in the Dallas Morning News.

When the 1910 census was taken in Armstrong County, Texas, Mrs. Burton said she had given birth to eight children, and that all of them were still alive. Three of her children, Cassie, John, and James C. were living with her at that time.

Burton's widow, Mrs. L. E. Burton of Claude, Armstrong Co., Texas, filed an application for a Confederate pension in 1911. She said she had lived in Texas eighteen years and at Claude, Texas for about five years. Her application was rejected because of her short time of residence in Texas.

By 1920, Mrs. Burton had moved to Enid, Oklahoma; the census that year shows she lived in Ward 2 with her daughter Ella (a saleslady) and her son, Robert M. (a machinist). Louisa Elizabeth (Hundley) Burton died July 27, 1927 in Enid, Garfield County, Oklahoma. Her body was brought back to Grapevine, Texas for burial beside her husband in Grapevine Cemetery. No obituary has been found in any surviving issue of the Grapevine Sun for Mrs. Burton. Her death date has not been engraved on her headstone.

Descendants have supplied an unreferenced newspaper clipping which appeared upon the death of Mrs. Burton. It says: ***“Louisa Elizabeth Hundley was born October 12, 1849, in Kentucky, and died July 26, 1927, at Enid, Okla., at the age of 77 years, 9 months, 14 days. She was married to W. F. Burton in Kentucky, June 14, 1876. To this union were born eight children, all of whom are living: Mrs. Etta Cowan, Enid, Okla.; Mrs. Atway Ashlock, Hereford, Texas; Miss Ella Burton, Enid, Okla., R. M. Burton, Enid, Okla.; Edd Burton, East Port, Idaho; W. O. Burton, Enid, Okla.; J. C. Burton, Hereford, Texas. She leaves not only these children but seventeen grand children, one great-grand child, three brothers, one sister, and a host of other relatives and friends. Her husband preceded her in death October 30, 1903. Mrs. Burton professed faith in Christ at an early age and joined the Presbyterian church. She lived a consistent Christian life until the day of her death. She bore many heavy burdens bravely and now she rests from her labors and has gone to her Heavenly reward. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. C. M. Curb at the Schaeffer Funeral Home Sunday, July 31, at 2:30 P.M. A quartet composed of Miss Rosalie and Sophia Duerksen, Mr. Hugh A. Jolley, and Mr. Clifford Carter, sang “Shall We Gather at the River,” “I Will Sing You a Song,” and “The Sweet By and By.” The body was taken to Texas for burial. The sympathy of the entire church is extended to the bereaved family.”***

The following eight children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Burton. All eight survived to adulthood. Mary Etta Burton was born October 23, 1878. She married a Mr. Cowin and lived at Enid, Garfield County, Oklahoma in 1927.

Eliza Attaway Burton was born February 20, 1880. She married Jim Ashlock on February 4, 1906 in Coppell, Dallas County, Texas. She and her husband lived at Hereford, Deaf Smith County, Texas in 1927. She died in Deaf Smith County on May 15, 1985.

Cassie Ella Burton was born November 27, 1881. She was unmarried and living at Enid, Oklahoma in 1927.

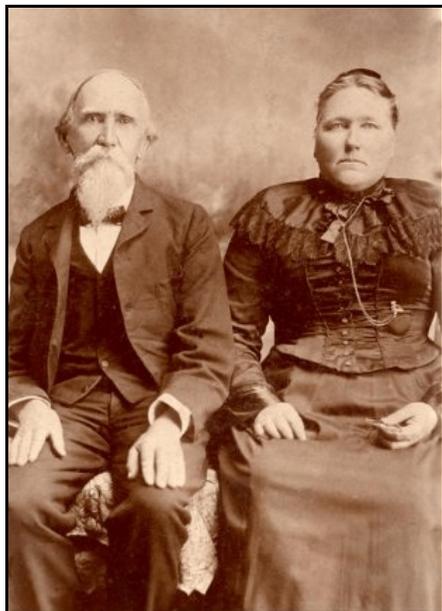
John Wiley Burton was born October 24, 1883. He lived at Enid, Oklahoma in 1927.

Robert Marshall Burton was born March 05, 1885 and died in 1961. He lived at Enid, Oklahoma in 1927.

Harry Edward Burton was born October 22, 1887. He lived at East Port, Idaho in 1927.

William "Buck" Oliver Burton was born August 18, 1889. He lived at Enid, Oklahoma in 1927.

James Cleveland Burton was born June 29, 1892. He lived at Hereford, Texas in 1927. He died about 1942 in Concord, California.



William F. and Louisa E. Burton

—o—

OBITUARY

Louisa Elizabeth Hundley was born October 12, 1849, in Kentucky, and died July 26, 1927, in Enid, Okla., at the age of 77 years, 9 months, 14 days.

She was married to W. F. Burton in Kentucky, June 14, 1876. To this union were born eight children, all of whom are living: Mrs. Etta Cowan, Enid, Okla.; Mrs. Attway Ashlock, Hereford, Texas; Miss Ella Burton, Enid, Okla.; J. W. Burton, Enid, Okla.; R. M. Burton, Enid, Okla.; Edd Burton, East Port, Idaho; W. O. Burton, Enid, Okla.; J. C. Burton, Hereford, Texas.

She leaves not only these children but seventeen grand children, one great grand child, three brothers, one sister, and a host of other relatives and friends. Her husband preceded her in death October 30, 1903. Mrs. Burton professed faith in Christ at an early age and joined the Presbyterian church. She lived a consistent Christian life until the day of her death. She bore many heavy burdens bravely and now she rests from her labors and has gone to her heavenly reward.

The funeral service was conducted by Rev. C. M. Curb at the Schaefer Funeral Home Sunday, July 31, at 2:30 P. M., A quartet, composed of Miss Rosalie and Sophia Duerksen, Mr. Hugh A. Jolley and Mr. Clifford Carter, sang "Shall We Gather at the River?", "I Will Sing You a Song," and "The Sweet By and By." The body was taken to Texas for burial.

The sympathy of the entire church is extended to the bereaved family.

—o—



Mrs. William F. Burton and her eight children

Back row, left to right: John, Robert, Ed, William (Buck) and Jim Burton.
Front row, left to right: Etta, Louisa, Attaway, and Ella.

Photographs courtesy of Maria Schisel.

