



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Joel Lewis Foster

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Joel Lewis Foster, a Confederate veteran, was a first cousin of the three Fosters who left the Lonesome Dove Community to fight for the Confederacy... Jarrett Foster, Benjamin J. Foster, and James Littleton Foster. Joel's father, Thomas Jefferson Foster, was a Mexican War veteran and a brother of Tarrant County pioneer Ambrose Foster (c1794-1847). Late in his life, Thomas J. Foster also came to Grapevine, where he died in 1901 and was buried in Grapevine Cemetery. A true Confederate, Joel Lewis Foster named one of his sons Robert E. Lee Foster.

Joel Lewis Foster was born in Monroe County, Mississippi on October 11, 1832. He came to the Republic of Texas with his parents and siblings, settling in old Red River County in the area now known as Cass County. Here Joel lived until after the Civil War, when he moved to Grapevine. Eventually his parents and most of his siblings moved here as well.

According to Pearl Foster O'Donnell's Trek to Texas, Joel L. Foster married Catherine McCloskey on October 13, 1852. Her headstone says she was born in November 29, 1830; she was born in Illinois. Their children included Mary Isabella Foster (1854-1883, Mrs. Jefferson S. Tucker); John Jefferson Foster (1856-1943); Sallie Catherine Foster (1859-1925, Mrs. James Whitfield Harrison); Joel Lewis "Sut" Foster (born about 1861); Robert E. Lee Foster (1866-1922); and Drucilla Lucinda Foster (1867-1947, Mrs. Nathan Hudgins). When Mrs. Foster was questioned by the 1900 census taker, she said she had given birth to eight children, five of whom were still living. The 1880 census shows the family living in Tarrant County with an additional son William J. L. Foster (born about 1861), along with Robert and Lucinda.

Foster served in the Confederate Army as a private in Captain J. R. Watson's Company of Ochiltree's Regiment of Texas Volunteers. This subsequently became Co. B, 18th Texas Infantry. He enlisted April 12, 1862 at Linden in Davis County (now Cass County), Texas for a term of three years. He traveled nineteen miles to the regimental rendezvous. He was present on the rolls for September and October, 1862. A record in December, 1862 shows him temporarily serving

teamster duty. On January 15, 1863 he began serving as a permanent teamster, and still had the job when the rolls for January and February, 1864 were compiled. The 18th Texas Infantry spent its entire existence in the Trans-Mississippi Department, with all its fighting taking place in Louisiana and Arkansas. Later in his life he was a member of the Robert E. Lee Camp of United Confederate Veterans in Fort Worth.

Joel L. Foster and his family lived in Precinct 3 of Dallas County when the 1870 census was taken. By 1880 they had come to the Grapevine area, where he and his wife remained for the rest of their lives.

Joel Lewis Foster died in Grapevine on April 26, 1905. A short notice of Mr. Foster's death appeared in the Grapevine Sun on April 29, 1905: *"Another Good Man Passed Away. On last Wednesday evening at about 7 o'clock, Mr. J. L. Foster breathed his last and his spirit took its flight to that realm from whence no traveler ever returns. Next week we will give a sketch of his life. In the meantime we wish to tender our sincere sympathy to his children, grand children, other relatives and friends. But our deepest and most earnest sympathy goes out to his heartbroken wife in this hour of sad affliction. She who was walked down life's pathway through the varied vicissitudes of life, sharing in his joys and sorrows, she, we say, will miss him most of all."*

As promised, the next week a very interesting and expanded account of Joel Foster's life appeared in the issue of May 6, 1905: *"DEATH OF A PIONEER CITIZEN. The great crisis is past, death is conqueror; but a spirit has returned to its Eternal Home where death is a stranger and happiness and joy reign supreme. On the evening of the 26th of April the Great Omnipotence sent His angel to earth to ease the pain and suffering of one who had lived his three score and ten years and had fulfilled his mission on earth. This one was J. L. Foster. He had lived a long, useful life and had the confidence and esteem of every one who knew him. The last years of his life were of suffering, having been almost an invalid for eight years. Though he suffered he never complained and was always ready to do favors for his friends. He was noted for his fidelity to his friends, who were numerous, as was shown by the long funeral train of vehicles that wended its way from the church to the cemetery. The funeral services were held at the Methodist Church, Rev. E. Newton officiating, assisted by Rev. C. B. Smith, the pastor, and Rev. N. B. Baker.*

"Capt. A. M. Quayle, a lifelong friend, also talked and told of his friendship of the deceased.

"The deceased leaves behind his beloved wife, 5 children, several grand children and great grand-children to mourn his death. Although he has crossed the great divide that ...[about four lines on the fold of the newspaper are unreadable]...who knew him best.

"He was buried under the auspices of the Masonic fraternity.

"The following is a short sketch of his life, written by himself, dated Grapevine, Texas, 1905:

"This is a partial history of my past life: I was born in Monroe county, Miss., Oct. 11, 1832; came to Texas with my father, mother, two brothers, and two sisters in 1841; settled in what is now known

as Cass county. I lost my mother August 1, 1842; my father volunteered to serve in the war between Texas and Mexico, and left us in the wilds of a frontier life. After the war was over he married again and took us all home. In 1850 I took a rambling notion and left home for west and southwest Texas, among Indians and Mexicans. After satisfying myself I went back to Cass county in December, 1852. Married October 13, 1853, to Miss Catherine McCloskey, the daughter of Dr. J. J. McCloskey. I then settled down on a farm. The civil war came up, and I volunteered April 2, 1862 in Watson's Co. B, Eighteenth Texas Infantry. Came home July 30, 1865. In 1869 I professed faith in Christ and joined the Methodist church. My religious life has not been as good as I wish it had been. I still have a hope. I moved to Grapevine, Tarrant county, in 1870. I am still farming. I have raised 12 children, 6 of my own, 3 boys and 3 girls, and all are married; and raised 6 orphaned children to be grown. I have passed through many dangers, both seen and unseen to me, for which I am thankful to God, and give Him the praise. I have been a voter for 50 years, and I have always voted a straight Democratic ticket. JOEL L. FOSTER."

Mrs. Foster died in Grapevine on September 26, 1911. An obituary for her appeared in the Grapevine Sun on September 30, 1911: *"DIED. Mrs. Katherine foster died last Tuesday night at the home of her son-in-law, N. D. Hudgins. She was 81 years old at the time of her death. Her husband, J. L. Foster, died several years ago. She leaves five children--three sons and two daughters. Mrs. Foster has lived in this community many years; has a large connection and a host of friends. She was a member of the Methodist church. She had reached what is considered a ripe old age; had seen many changes; and has now passed to her reward. To her surviving sons and daughters, who have lost their best earthly friend, whose place will ever remain vacant, for there is none can fill the place of mother, we tender our deepest sympathy."*



Lower left, Thomas Jefferson Foster, a veteran of the Mexican War who lies buried in Grapevine Cemetery. His three sons are: Berry A. Foster (lower right), Joel Lewis Foster (upper left) and Rev. Lucratus Hodges Foster (upper right).



Joel Lewis Foster



Catherine McCloskey Foster

