



# TARRANT COUNTY

## TXGENWEB

Barbara Knox and Rob Yoder, County Coordinators

Copyright © 2010. All rights reserved.

## Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

### Alexander R. Knowles

Compiled by Michael Patterson  
Copyright © 2010. All rights reserved.

Alexander R. Knowles was a veteran of a Louisiana infantry regiment who lived in the Smithfield area in 1900. He was a member of the R. E. Lee Camp of Confederate veterans in Fort Worth. He later left Texas, and was living in Washington state as late as 1920. Family sources say he died in California in 1927.

Mr. Knowles told his comrades in the R. E. Lee Camp that he was born in Dooley County, Georgia in February, 1845. Family sources say he was a son of Joseph E. Knowles and Mary Ann Swearingen.

Alexander appears in the 1850 census of District One, Baker County, Georgia, with his parents and siblings. His father, Joseph E. Knowles, was working as a blacksmith. The occupations of the Knowles' neighbors suggest they may have been living in a town. Alexander was a five-year-old boy. In addition to the family members, their household also included a nineteen-year-old student named James Swearingen (probably a relative of Alexander's mother) and Thomas Leonard, a thirty-year-old well digger born in Ireland.

When the 1860 census of Claiborne Parish, Louisiana was prepared, Alexander appeared as a sixteen-year-old boy in the family of his father, J. E. Knowles. Joseph Knowles' fortunes had dramatically increased since 1850; in 1860 he was the owner of five thousand three hundred dollars worth of real estate and thirteen slaves. Thus Alexander must have lived comfortably, at least in his teenage years.

Alexander R. Knowles served the Confederacy as a private in Co. B, 12<sup>th</sup> Louisiana Infantry. He said he enlisted in 1863 at Vienna, Louisiana, and surrendered in April 1865 in North Carolina. There is no record of Mr. Knowles having applied for a Confederate pension in Texas.

Mr. Knowles' records in the National Archives show that he enlisted in the (Second) Co. B, 12<sup>th</sup> Louisiana Infantry, at Vienna, Louisiana on March 8, 1863 for a term of three years. He was detailed as a teamster on August 27, 1863 by order of Colonel Scott. He was sick at Laurel Springs, Mississippi beginning on October 1, 1863. In November and December 1863 roll, he shows in Breckinridge's Division Hospital No. 2 at Lauderdale Springs, Mississippi. Mr. Knowles appears on a roll of Jackson's Cavalry Division Hospital at Old Marion, Mississippi. He was furloughed from Montgomery Hospital for sixty days from about April 15, 1864, was still out on a surgeon's certificate on a roll for July and August 1864. On July 29, 1864 he was admitted to the Ocmulgee Hospital at Macon, Georgia for treatment of "ulcus." From there he was furloughed on August 16, 1864 to his home in Claiborne Parish, Louisiana. On August 15, 1864 his name appears on a roll of Floyd House and Ocmulgee Hospitals, Macon, Georgia, for treatment of "C. ulcer of right leg and Feb. Remitt and Gen. Debility."

His name appears in a case book, shown as a twenty-year-old soldier, at Hood Hospital at Cuthbert, Georgia. The notation says: "***Case. Ulcer following gun shot wound and fracture of Tibia. History—Wounded 28 July 1864 at Jonesboro, Ga. Sent to Okamulgee Hospital Macon, Ga. And remained 3 months. Furloughed 60 days. Extended 30 days and sent to hospital by enrolling officer. Admitted Jany. 16, 1865—bone united--small ulcer in front tibia. Treatment—simple protective dressings and quietude—Bandages. Remarks—Long continued chronic inflammation about the site of the wound from neglect of treatment—has been followed by much morbid deposits and is the cause of unhealthy condition of ulcer. Feb. 1 Treatment continued. Feb. 19. Sent to Genl. Hospital at Eufala, Ala.***" Mr. Knowles and a number of his comrades were surrendered to Brig. General E. M. McCook by Maj. Gen. Sam Jones of the Confederate Army at Tallahassee, Florida on May 10, 1865. Knowles was paroled there on May 18.

Mr. and Mrs. Knowles and their children appear in the census in 1880 in Webster Parish, Louisiana. His wife, Virginia T. Knowles, said she was born about 1858 in Georgia. Both her parents were native Georgians as well. Alex R. Knowles was working as a carpenter. They had two children living with them: Carl G. (who was born about 1876) and Gustine C. (a daughter who was three months old as of June 25, 1880. The family was living at Minden, Louisiana.

By the time the 1900 census was taken, Alexander and his family were living at Smithfield in Tarrant County, Texas. He said he was born in February 1845 in Georgia to a North Carolinian father and a Georgian mother. Virginia Knowles said she was born in August, 1857. They were married about 1874. She said she had given birth to six children, three of whom were still alive. There were two children in the family in that year: Franlin (born in July 1887 in Texas) and Mary (born in July 1892 in Texas). Mrs. Knowles' mother, Elizabeth Wallace, was also living at Smithfield with the family. Mrs. Wallace was born in February of 1832 in Georgia to two Georgians; she was a widow who had given birth to seven children, only four of whom were still alive. Mr. Knowles was working as a truck farmer on land which he owned.

In 1900 Mr. Knowles owned had twelve acres of the John McCommas survey worth two hundred fifty dollars. He also had two horses or mules worth twenty-five dollars, one cow worth fifteen dollars, and one carriage or wagon worth ten dollars. Sometime before 1910 the Knowles family

moved away from Smithfield. There are no readable Knowles headstones in any northeast Tarrant County cemetery. Neither is there a headstone for Mrs. Elizabeth Wallace to be found there.

In 1910 Mr. and Mrs. Knowles lived in the 1400 block of Edwin Street in Fort Worth. He was working as a traveling salesman. He told the census taker he was a veteran of the Confederate army. His wife said she had given birth to six children, three of whom were still living. Both Mr. and Mrs. Knowles had been married only once.

Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Knowles were living in Adna Precinct in Lewis County, Washington when the 1920 census was taken. They lived alone. Their next-door neighbors were Scott Yancey and his wife, Franlin, born about 1888 in Texas to two Georgians. It seems likely this was Franlin Knowles, their daughter who was living with them in Smithfield in 1900. The Yanceys were still in Texas as late as about 1911.

Family sources say Alexander R. Knowles died in San Francisco, California on February 11, 1927. Scott Yancey and his family appear in the 1930 census of San Francisco, California. In that year, Mrs. Yancey's name was shown as Callie F. Yancey, but her birthdate and birthplace are consistent with that of Franlin Yancey in 1920 in Washington.