



TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Peter Kuykendall Matthews

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Peter Kuykendall Matthews was a Texas cavalryman who was shot to death in northeast Tarrant County only four years after the War ended. He lies buried in the abandoned Spring Garden Cemetery along the south side of Cheek-Sparger Road in Bedford.

Peter K. Matthews was born in Howard County, Missouri. His headstone records his date of birth as March 8, 1824.

Matthews served the Confederacy as a soldier in Co. A, 29th Texas (DeMorse's) Cavalry. He enlisted for a term of three years on April 24, 1862 in Denton, Texas in Captain E. B. Kearby's Company of DeMorse's Regiment of Cavalry. This company subsequently became Co. A of the 29th Texas Cavalry. He was mustered into the Confederate service on May 3, 1862 at Camp Cooper. He presented himself for service riding a horse worth one hundred dollars and with equipment worth forty dollars. Matthews' name appears on a muster roll for May and June, 1863. His military records file in the National Archives contains two copies of his medical discharge, complete with all the proper endorsements up the chain of command. The discharge confirms his birthplace as Howard County, Missouri. It says he was five feet, seven inches tall, and had a fair complexion, blue eyes, and light hair. It was dated June 3, 1864 at Bonham, Texas. A surgeon made the following statement about Mr. Matthews' condition at the time: *"...chronic hepatitis and splinitis to such a degree as to render him entirely unfit for the most ordinary duties of life. His recovery is extremely doubtful and far distant and therefore I earnestly recommend his discharge from the service..."*

The 29th Texas was made a part of Cooper's Brigade, Roane's Division, 1st Corps, Army of the West, Trans-Mississippi Department, during the months of December 1862 and January 1863. From January through October, 1863, it was attached to Cooper's Brigade, Steele's Cavalry Division, District of Arkansas, Trans-Mississippi Department. The 29th Texas took part in the Battle of Fort Gibson, the Battle near Honey Springs (July 17, 1863).

From October 1863 through February 1864 the regiment was included in Cooper's Brigade, Indian Territory, Trans-Mississippi Department. It became part of DeMorse's Brigade, Indian Territory, Trans-Mississippi Department in February of 1864, and took part in the Camden Expedition in March through May, 1864.

In April, 1864 the 29th Texas became part of Gano's Brigade, Maxey's Cavalry Division, District of Arkansas, Trans-Mississippi Department. It took part in the Battle at Poison Spring on April 18, 1864, at Camden on April 23, 1864. The regiment went through several other organizational changes and took part in other engagements after Mr. Matthews left it.

P. K. Matthews appears in the 1865 Tarrant County tax list as the owner of 320 acres of land. One half of it was the entire 160 acres of the W. O. Yantis survey, the other half was 160 acres of 320-acre A. J. Woodson survey. He also owned four horses worth \$140. Both the Yantis and Woodson surveys lie entirely within the present-day City of Bedford. The Yantis survey, in modern terms, is bounded on the north by State Highways 121/183, and lays west and south from the intersection of Central Drive and the highway. Much of the Yantis survey is today occupied by the buildings of the Hurst-Eules-Bedford I.S.D. The A. J. Woodson survey is closer to the Spring Garden Cemetery site. The entire survey's north line coincides with today's Harwood Road, with the survey's northwest corner being at Harwood's intersection with Murphy Drive. The survey was in a rectangle, stretching one-half mile east of that point, to about where Martin Drive and Harwood Road intersect. From that point it runs one mile south to Highway 183, following today's Murphy Drive for the north half of that distance. The survey is bisected into equal parts by Bedford Road, which runs across it east-west. State Highway 183 now lies along the entire southern boundary of the Woodson Survey.

The fact that Mr. Matthews was buried at Spring Garden, rather than in Bedford Cemetery, is another circumstantial argument to suggest that Bedford Cemetery was not established until about 1872, as some researchers have already suggested.

On August 10, 1867, P. K. Matthews registered to vote in Tarrant County. He indicated he had come to Texas about 1853, to Tarrant County about 1857, and to his present precinct (2) in the county about 1865. He said he was born in Missouri.

Matthews' headstone says he died on February 12, 1869. Matthews' descendants said he was shot by bushwhackers while working in a field. They took the team of animals with which he was working. His name does not appear in the 1870 Tarrant County Mortality Schedules compiled by the U. S. census bureau.

In the early 1980's when the Spring Garden area was being developed, this researcher carefully monitored the digging in the cemetery area. He found Mr. Matthews' headstone in the back of one of the workmens' pickups; the workman intended to sell it. The stone was taken away from the workman and was erected in Bedford Cemetery along with the other stones which were found at Spring Garden.



This stone was originally in Spring Garden Cemetery. It is now in Bedford Cemetery. Peter's body was not removed from Spring Garden.

On January 15, 2013 we received the following note from Charles Hoagland, a direct descendant of Peter K. Matthews' brother. We are posting it here for any descendants who might be interested.

"You had listed for Rufus Sigler that he had submitted for a divorce from a M. M. Sigler in 1886 and also stated that he was in jail on the 1880 census. Well, this may seem circumstantial, but it may be that M. M. Sigler was the widow of Peter K. Matthews.

The wife of Peter was Martha Missouri Lile-Matthews. After Peter passed away, she moved and is listed on the 1870 census in Ft. Worth. The 1880 census she is living in Cooke County and is listed as M. M. Sigler. Three of her children are living with her. 1900 and 1910 census she was living in Oklahoma and using Matthews as her last name again.

Like I said, circumstantial. Thought I would send this to you in case you wanted to look into it. Coincidence? Who knows? Your choice completely."