

## **SOME VENERABLE TENNESSEANS**

By Ernest H. Boyd

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A recent conversation with the editor of the Herald concerning the celebration by Capt. C. E. Myers of Livingston, a Mexican war veteran, of his ninety-second birthday aroused my curiosity as to whether there were other surviving soldiers of that war, and whether or not there yet lived any widows of soldiers of the war of 1812, and I sought information from government and other sources, with the result that I obtained very surprising information, and for the benefit of such of the Herald's readers as are interested in history, I have concluded to furnish them this data.

It seems almost incredible that the widows of forty-nine soldiers of the war of 1812 are still living, although more than one hundred and seven years have intervened since the cessation of that war, but it is nevertheless a fact borne out by the records of the Bureau of Pensions at Washington.

All of these venerable ladies are in the neighborhood of the century mark and there is a wonderful group of elderly women. The last surviving veteran of the war of 1812 has long since passed to his eternal reward, but man's well known proclivity for marrying a wife just as much younger than himself as possible explains why there yet survive so many widows of General Andrew Jackson's Heroes of New Orleans.

The oldest of these widows of soldiers of the war of 1812 was born 104 years ago. She became the wife of a man who served in that war and died in command of a Union ship half a century later, and, although she has been his widow for sixty years, a grateful government continues to make provision for her.

Of the widows whose husbands served in the war of 1812 three of the number \_\_\_passed one hundred years of age, eight others are past 90 and twenty-two are octogenarians. At the head of the roll is Mrs. Elizabeth Tyler of Baltimore, now in her 105th year. Next in seniority is Mrs. Mahala Huff of Louisa, KY, who will soon celebrate her 104th birthday. Mrs. Matilda S\_\_\_\_\_ of New Market, MD is 101. She states that she goes up and down the stairway at her home without assistance, reads her Bible duly and writes letters occasionally to relatives, and friends.

### **TENNESSE IN FOREFRONT:**

But you ask: Are there any Tennesseans among the forty-nine surviving widows of soldiers of the war of 1812? Well, there are. When was Tennessee or when were Tennesseans ever outdone?

One of these widows is Mrs. Elira J. Gray of Newport, Cocke county, Tennessee. She is now in her ninetieth year. Her soldier husband was Willis Gray. He served in the Virginia militia as a private. Another is Mrs. Susannah Adams of Mountain City,

Johnson county, this state. She is now in her 88th year. Her soldier husband was Private William Adams. He served in the Seventh United States Infantry. The fact that Mrs. Adams lives in the town which has the greatest altitude of any town in Tennessee affords proof that points of high elevation do not necessarily defeat longevity.

Another Tennessee widow of the war of 1812 is Mrs. Louise Wade of Jasper, Marion county. She is in her eighty-eighth year. Her soldier husband was Sergeant Farleigh Wade of the Virginia militia.

Another is Mrs. Laura Hill of Jackson, Tennessee. She is one of the youngest, being only seventy-seven. Her soldier husband was Sergeant Jacob Hill of the Tennessee militia. However, she is not the youngest of these Tennessee widows of the war of 1812, as Mrs. Fannie Thompson, of Bloomdale, Tennessee, is only seventy-five. She is the widow of Private George Thompson, who served in the Virginia, militia.

#### WHAT MAY BE EXPECTED:

As 107 years have intervened since the close of war of 1812, and as the number of Tennesseans who served as soldiers in that conflict was exceedingly small in comparison with the number of young men of this state who served their country in the recent world war, it is entirely reasonable to predict that 103 years hence, which will be in the year of our Lord 2025, there will be living in the Old Volunteer State many widows of Tennessee soldiers of world war, and that they will then be the recipients of the nation's bounty as are the five surviving Tennessee widows of soldiers of this state who fought under "Old Hickory" in the memorable battle of New Orleans.

The fourteenth day of next month will be the seventy-fifth anniversary of the triumphant entry into the City of Mexico of the army of General Winfield Scott, which historic event brought the Mexicans to terms and ended hostilities in the war between the United States and Mexico - and yet, after the passage of these seventy-five years, there are now living seventy-three of the soldiers who under General Scott fought their war from Vera Cruz to the capital of Mexico, and in other battles of that war, a conflict which resulted in the cession by Mexico to the United States of a domain larger than any continental country of Europe, embracing as it does all of the present states of California, Nevada and Utah and most of Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado and Wyoming.

Two years ago about 180 of these veterans of the Mexican war still survive. Of the seventy-three who are still spared the government records at Washington show that only two are under ninety years old, and that both of them will celebrate their ninetieth birthdays in a few weeks. And here is where Tennessee comes in again -the oldest surviving veteran of the Mexican war is William Roddeto of Cross Plains, Tennessee, who recently attained the ripe old age of 102. He belonged to the 3rd regiment of Tennessee volunteers.

Another Tennessee veteran of the Mexican was is James W. Shirk of Vonore, Tenn. He is 97. He belonged to the 5th Tennessee volunteers.

#### FOUGHT IN TWO WARS:

Capt. Calvin E. Myers of Livingston, who is personally known to a number of the readers of this great paper and who has a daughter, Miss Dora Myers, who is an esteemed resident of Cookeville, is a veteran of the both the Mexican and Civil wars. He served through the Mexican war in the 4th Tennessee Infantry. Fourteen years after the close of the Mexican war, he raised the first company of Confederate soldiers that left Overton county in the spring of 1861 and was its captain. Capt. Myers recently celebrated his ninety-second birthday.

John M. Broadway, a former Tennessean, now living at S\_\_\_\_, MO, served throughout the Mexican war in the First Tennessee mounted volunteers. He is 93.

Jacob M. Fleming, a former Tennessean now living at Mr. Pleasant, Texas, served throughout the Mexican war as a soldier of the Third Tennessee Infantry. He is 93.

Jess Stonecipher, a former Tennessean, now a resident of Xenia, Ill., belonged to the 5th Tennessee volunteers. He is now 92.

Matthew C. Trouesdale, a former Tennessean now living at Kempner, Texas, served throughout the Mexican war in the First regiment of Tennessee volunteers. He is now 98 years old.

Josephus C. Wise, another Tennessee soldier of the Mexican war, who now resides in the state of Texas, is 95 years old. He lives at Ladonia in that state. He belonged to the Third regiment of Tennessee volunteers.

#### WERE KNOWN LOCALLY:

George Stultz, a highly respected citizen who lived near Cookeville and with whom many readers of the Herald were personally acquainted, died about three years ago. As I recall it he was about 95 when he died. He served throughout the Mexican war. Another distinction of which he was very proud was that he served for sixty-five years as a ruling elder in the Cumberland Presbyterian church.

Many readers of the Herald have known Mexican war veterans who lived in Putnam county and who have passed away in comparatively recent years.

After all our nation is yet young as compared with older nations. More intimately than we may think is the present connected with the earlier events of greatest importance in our national history.

Within my memory, my paternal great-grandmother, Elizabeth Boyd, a widow of a soldier of the war of 1812, who fought under Jackson in the battle of New Orleans, died at the age of 97 at the home of my grandfather in Rock Spring Valley, this county.

I have often heard Dr. John G. Goodpasture, a maternal great-uncle of mine and a veteran of the Mexican war who died at Algood eighteen years ago recount his experiences as soldier of that war. Among other Putnam county veterans of the Mexican war with whom I was personally acquainted and who have passed away in recent years were Joseph Riddle, Benjamin Brinley and John Clarke.

Esquire John H. Dowell of Cookeville, who died about two years ago and who was known to practically all of the Herald's Putnam county readers was a grandson of a soldier of the Revolutionary war. He had often heard his grandfather talk about his experiences as a Revolutionary soldier. He also vividly recalled other soldiers of the Revolution who were living when he was a boy.

Miss Susan Quarles and Mrs. Lou Robinson of Cookeville and Capt. J. L. Quarles of Sparta are grandchildren of a soldier of the Revolution. Their grandfather, William Quarles, served throughout the Revolutionary war as a lieutenant in the First Virginia regiment.

There are no doubt other grandchildren of Revolutionary sires now living in Putnam county. But I am making this article too long. I merely referred to the Revolutionary war as a reminder that notwithstanding the splendid achievements and commanding prestige of our nation, it is yet a very young nation as the ages of the older nations of the world go and that we Americans are not yet very far removed from the struggle which gave our republic its birth.

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