



# TARRANT COUNTY TXGENWEB

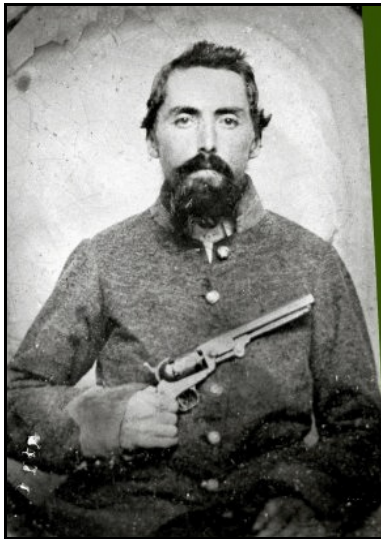
Barbara Knox and Rob Yoder, County Coordinators

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## Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

### John Sherman Saunders

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John Sherman Saunders was born October 22, 1836 in Claiborne County, Tennessee. The [Grapevine Area History](#) (1979) contains several articles concerning Mr. Saunders and his children. This writer was personally acquainted with several of his grandchildren. The article about Mr. and Mrs. Saunders was written by Iska Saunders Plumlee.

Saunders served as a second lieutenant in Co. H, 61<sup>st</sup> Tennessee Mounted Infantry, also known as Pitts' Regiment and the 81st Tennessee Infantry. He enlisted at Sycamore in Claiborne County, Tennessee on October 3, 1862, for a period of three years or the war. He was mustered in at Henderson's Depot, Tennessee on November 10, 1862. On a muster roll for January and February, 1863, he was shown as sick in Vicksburg, Mississippi. For the roll for March and April, 1863, he was at home on a leave of absence.

He was captured by Union forces in Claiborne County, Tennessee on November 6, 1863, and was sent to the military prison at Louisville, Kentucky, where he arrived on November 14. From there, he was sent to Camp Chase, Ohio on November 17, 1863. He remained at Camp Chase until March 25, 1864, when he was sent to Fort Delaware, Delaware. The trip to Delaware took two days. There he remained until the end of the war, and was released upon his oath of allegiance to the United States on June 12, 1865. At the time of his release, he was described as having a light complexion, dark hair, and blue eyes. He was 5'9" tall.

Saunders was married on November 22, 1865 to Margaret Neil Stone in Claiborne County, Tennessee. She was a daughter of Reuben Floyd Stone (1804-1879) and his wife, Fetna (Hurst) Stone (1812-1892). Not long after the birth of their first child in Claiborne County in 1867, the Saunderses moved to Christian County, Missouri, where John put in a "short crop." With several

other related families, they formed a wagon train and came to Texas, arriving on Grapevine Prairie in Dallas County on December 13, 1868. Two days later, at the home of W. W. Corbin, Mrs. Saunders gave birth to her second child.

Saunders moved his family into the town of Grapevine for a short time, where he ran a general store. Later, he moved to what is now known as the "Gano House" two and one half miles northeast of Grapevine. There he and his wife spent the rest of their lives. It is shown on the 1895 Sam Street Map of Tarrant County. In modern-day terms it sat in the Denton Creek bottomland east of Grapevine Dam and southwest of Grapevine Mills Mall.

When the 1900 census was taken, Margaret said she had given birth to five children, only four of whom were still living. Their children were: Mary Alice Saunders (1867-1929, the wife of Henry Edgar Saunders); Henry Ellison Saunders (1868-1948, who was unmarried); Charles Edgar Saunders (1870-1886); and twins Ellen Pearl Saunders (1873-1944, who married George Cal Corbin, Jr.) and James Sterling Saunders (1873-1945, who married Minnie May Mehaffie).

John S. Saunders died May 31, 1906. An obituary for Mr. Saunders appeared in the Grapevine Sun on June 2, 1906: *"SUDDEN DEATH. We know our people will regret to learn of the sudden death of Mr. John S. Sanders, which occurred last Thursday night about twelve o'clock of apoplexy. Just previous to his death a storm had come up and Mr. Sanders had made his way to his storm-house, and was found a few minutes later on the step unconscious. He was taken to the house, but never regained consciousness. 'Uncle Johnny,' as he was called by his friends, came to this community about 35 years ago from Tennessee. He was about 70 years old at the time of his death, and was one of the most highly respected citizens of this community. A wife and four children, besides other relatives and a host of friends to mourn his sudden death. The Sun extends its sympathy to these sorrowing relatives and friends."* Mr. Saunders has no Texas death certificate.

An obituary for Mrs. Saunders appeared in the Grapevine Sun on September 22, 1932: *"MRS. JOHN S. SAUNDERS DIED. Mrs. John S. Saunders, age 90, died at the home of her son, H. E. Saunders, near Grapevine, September 20 at 8:00 a.m. She had been ill for only a few days. She was born in Tazewell, Tenn., October 15, 1841, came to Texas in 1868 and settled near Grapevine, where she has made her home. She joined the Dove Baptist Church in 1869 and later moved her membership to the Grapevine Baptist Church, where she remained a member until the time of her death. Her husband, John S. Saunders, died in 1909 [sic] at the age of 70. 'Aunt Mug,' as she was called by her friends, was one of those good old pioneer women, whose influence for good in her community will live on and on. Funeral services were held at the home Wednesday afternoon at 3:00 o'clock, Rev. E. N. Strother, pastor of the Grapevine Baptist Church, officiated, assisted by Rev. R. B. Morgan of Everman, a former pastor. The body was laid to rest in the Grapevine Cemetery. Surviving her are one sister, Mrs. Kate Crutchfield, Tazewell, Tenn., two sons, H. E. and J. S. Saunders of Grapevine, one daughter, Mrs. Cal Corbin of Denton, and 10 grandchildren."*

John S. Saunders' granddaughter, Iska (Saunders) Plumlee, had a large collection of Mr. Saunders' papers, including many pieces of correspondence he had for many years after the war with old Confederate comrades who never moved to Texas. All those papers were lost one morning in the early 1970's in a huge fire at Coppell, which took place while the Plumlees' large old farmhouse was being moved to a new location. It became entangled in electric lines which started the fire.

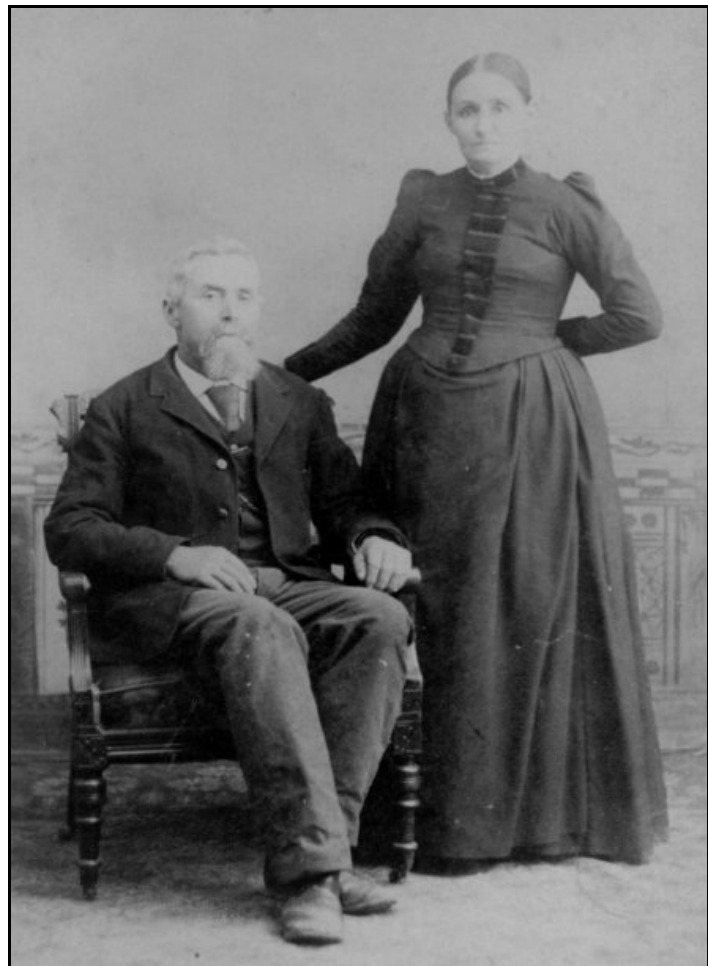
This writer was there that morning helping to look for any family mementoes which might have survived. He remembers finding a partially-melted silver dollar in the ashes. The metal box which contained Mr. Saunders' old letters was found to contain only ashes. The so-called Gano Cabin, now standing in Old City Park in Dallas, was for decades the home of John S. Saunders and his children. This writer visited it while it still stood downstream from the dam at Lake Grapevine.



John Sherman Saunders as older man



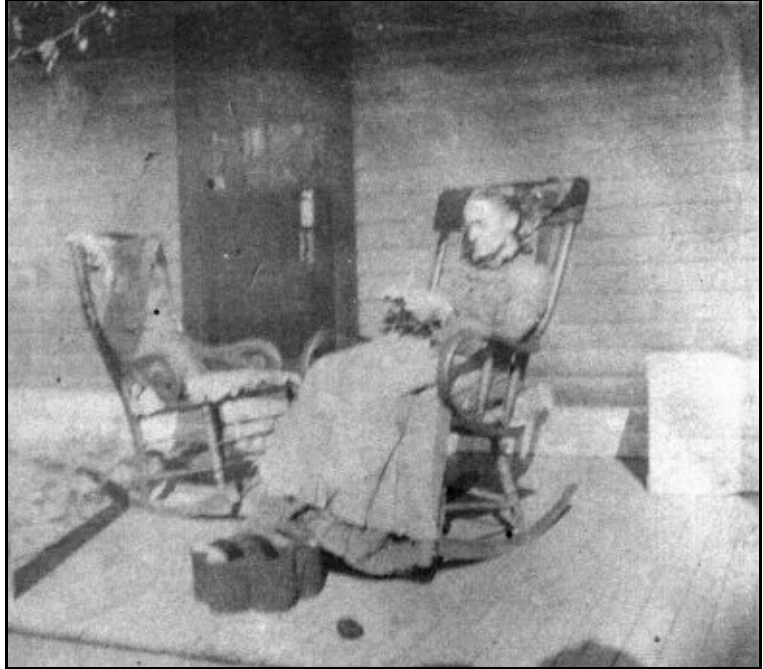
Courtesy of Dorothy Stanfield



Mr. and Mrs. John S. Saunders



Mug Saunders on porch



Mug Saunders

Photos were taken at the Saunders old house along Denton Creek.  
This is the house that was moved to Old City Park and is known over there as the Gano Cabin.



John and Mug Saunders



John S. Saunders and his dog



SAUNDERS	
JOHN S. SAUNDERS BORN OCT. 22, 1836 DIED MAY 31, 1906	MARGARET NEAL SAUNDERS BORN OCT. 13, 1841 DIED SEPT. 20, 1932



Margaret Saunders and two of her grandchildren