



Photo added by Eric J. Brock

Capt James Martin Foster

BIRTH 23 Apr 1831
Monroe County, Alabama, USA

DEATH 12 Dec 1900 (aged 69)
Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, USA

BURIAL Oakland Cemetery
Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, USA

MEMORIAL ID 48101097 · View Source

CSA Capt. James Martin Foster

Bio Source:

Comprising Sketches of Parishes, Towns, Events, Institutions, and Persons, Arranged in Cyclopedic

Form (volume 3), pp. 170-171

Edited by Alcée Fortier, Lit.D

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Foster, James Martin, born in Monroe county, Ala., April 25, 1831, was a son of Flaval and Mary (Hollingsworth) Foster, and when about 10 years of age was brought to Caddo parish, La., where his parents settled and the father engaged in planting. The son, James, completed his scholastic education



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at the Western Military institute, Drennon Springs, Ky., and after taking his diploma in civil engineering young Foster set about putting his theoretical knowledge into practice by entering the employ of a railroad, in the construction department. Not long after, yielding to the solicitude of his parents, he returned to his home, where he engaged in agricultural pursuits. Upon the death of his father in 1859, he assumed charge of the planting interests. When in 1861 the call to arms in defense of the South rang out through the land, his first impulse was to go to the front. His patriotism, his military training, his fitness for leadership, all pointed to a military career, but his brothers having joined the army, duty, ever the polar star of his conduct, bade him stay to look after the helpless and needy, the women and children, whose support had been taken from home. How faithfully he performed this duty is attested by the beneficiaries of his work. His plantation on the border line of Louisiana and Texas, was called the "New Egypt." Its bins and cribs were overflowing with corn, and the smokehouse bursting with bacon cured under his supervision. It was the Mecca of the poor and needy for a circuit of many miles, and to them was given without money and without price. When Gen. Bank's army came up the Red river Mr. Foster was one of the foremost to shoulder a musket and go forward to meet the invaders. After the battle of Mansfield his home was a refuge for the sick and wounded soldiers, who were tenderly cared for until

well enough to return to their homes. When the war ended, nothing daunted, he set about retrieving his fortunes. He became one of the largest and most successful cotton planters in the state of Louisiana. Associated with him in his plantation interests was his younger brother, the late Capt. C. J. Foster of Shreveport. They owned and operated a vast tract of land in the rich Red River valley near Shreveport, which embraced several fine plantations, and upon which they frequently made more than 3,000 bales of cotton in a single year. In private life he was a shrewd business man whose integrity, industry and thrift not only made him successful in every sense of the word, but also a man of great influence for good in his community. The name of Capt. James M. Foster, as he was familiarly known to all of his friends, will go down in the annals of Louisiana as one of the most powerful political factors who ever dwelt in the state, despite the fact that throughout his entire career he remained, out of choice, in practical retirement, accepting no public office of any kind, with the exception of a few minor trusts imposed on him by his fellow men, relating to the affairs of his parish and state, from the burden of which he had no desire to escape, believing it to be his duty as a citizen to assume and perform his full share of such responsibilities. He was one of the best known men in Louisiana, who wielded an influence in the affairs of both the state and nation. He was a leader, who led men by wise counsel and with foresight and wisdom. He gave of his time and

energies toward putting down the evils of the reconstruction days following the Civil war; bore a prominent part in the long and bitter fight which resulted in the downfall of the Louisiana Lottery company in 1892, in which he stood opposed to the lottery company. The story of his life, so strenuous in its endeavor, so high in its ideals of right, so persistent in its loyalty to rectitude and country and to God, is a rich heritage to his family, his children and grandchildren. His life was diligent, many-sided in its activities, and never stopped growing and expanding until brought to an end by death, Dec. 11, 1900. In his domestic life Capt. Foster was equally fortunate and blessed. In 1859 he was married to Miss Eleanor [sic] Long.

The Shreveport Caucasian.

December 12, 1900

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James M. Foster Dead.

The announcement of the death of James M. Foster, which occurred at his home, in Fairfield, near this city, at 10 o'clock last night, while not unexpected by his friends, who had kept in close touch with his condition, carried regret which was expressed sincerely. The cause of death is attributed to the result of an accidental fall from his horse about a year since he was riding at a rapid pace to seek shelter from a threatening storm

of wind or rain. Since that day he was less buoyant than had been his custom, but he remained active and apparently untiring until a few weeks since when he was confined to his bed and gradually grew worse, passing away like a flickering light which had shed its full effulgence within its utmost reach. At his death Mr. Foster was in the seventieth year of his age. He was born in Marion county, Alabama, and was the son of Flavel and Mary Hollingsworth Foster, who settled on an improved farm near Keachie, Desoto parish, in 1848, where they spent their last days, in the fullest sphere of happiness, dying in 1860 and in 1864, respectively. Mr. Foster's father was a leading and successful planter and had improved several farms. He was a most worthy gentleman and citizen and a staunch member of the Methodist church.

Mr. J. M. Foster, his son, graduated as a civil engineer at the college at Drennon Springs, Ky., at which he had for classmates, Judge Charles E. Fenner, Col. J. M. Hollingsworth and Hon. H. P. Wells and among the others in attendance and who became distinguished in the history of their country, was one of his teachers, James G. Blaine, who was the leader of his party and the Republican candidate for the presidency defeated by Grover Cleveland. At the time of his father's death Mr. Foster had adopted civil engineering as a profession, but he was called to manage the estate of his father, which he accomplished with the

success which characterized his course in life.

He was married to Miss Nettie Long, a lady of culture and literary ability, who is beloved by all who know her, and to this union were born a number of children, of whom, Lucille, wife of Hon. Benton McMillan, governor of Tennessee, Mrs. T. M. Comegys, Miss T. Olive Foster, Hon. J. M. Foster, Jr., member of the State Legislature, and John Gray Foster, survive, and who were present when he died.

He moved to Caddo Parish about the year 1870.

Mr. Foster was a man of untiring energy. He and his brother, C. J. Foster, deceased, were for years general partners and through their practical endeavors accumulated considerable wealth in planting. Mr. Foster was also engaged in commercial pursuits. In politics he was an uncompromising Democrat. He was the recognized leader of his faction since the death of Colonel J. M. Hollingsworth. He was for years a member of the Police Jury of which he was its president at his death, and he was also a member of the State Arbitration Board until the law was repealed. Mr. Foster was never a soldier, but pursued the quiet paths of an industrious life.

He was a good citizen and a staunch member of the Presbyterian Church. He was devoted to his home,

and his family to whom earnest sympathy is tendered in their great affliction.

Family Members

Parents



Flavel Foster
1801-1860



Mary Amelia
Hollingsworth
Foster
1802-1864

Spouse



Mary Ellen *Long*
Foster
1842-1910

Siblings



Emily Caroline
Foster Gibbs
1829-1857



Claiborne
Jasper Foster
1834-1898

Children



Ernest Flavel
Foster
1860-1862



Mary Elinor
Foster Comegys
1868-1946



James Martin
Foster
1871-1928



John Gray
Foster
1878-1901



Theresa Olive
Foster
1879-1920



Lucille *Foster*
McMillin
1879-1949



Newton
Blanchard
Foster
1880-1881



Erastus Fullilove
Foster
1884-1888

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