

George S. Nichols, Sergeant, Co. D, 19 TN Cavalry, CSA

- 1843 August 23: George Searight Nichols was born to John and Elizabeth McGowan Nichol in Williamson County, TN.
- 1850 August 27: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in District 9, Williamson County, TN showed seven-year-old George living with his parents and cousins. His father, John Nichol, was a magistrate. The Nichols family owned seven slaves.
- 1860 June 2: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in the Eastern Subdivision, Williamson County, TN showed sixteen-year-old George, living with his parents and siblings. His father was listed as being Justice of the Peace for Williamson County. The Nichols family owned six slaves.
- 1861 May 9: George and his brother James both enlisted in the CS Army, they mustered into Capt. James P. Hanner's Co., 1st TN Infantry (later to become Co. D, 1st Tn Infantry)
- 1862 May & June: Company Muster Roll. Present. Remarks "Reenlisted in Corinth, Miss April 30, 1862 for 2 years or the war."

¹ Williamson County Historical Society, Flickr

July & August: Company Muster Roll. Absent. Remarks "Sick at Chattanooga, Tenn." While at the hospital Nichols was ordered to be detached at the hospital and being paid as a nurse.

August to December: Company Muster Roll. Present.

1863 January to April: Company Muster Rolls. Present.

at some point during this time George transferred to Co. D 19th Cavalry.

1864 June 18: Nichols own words in his pension application stated he was wounded "In a skirmish between Felix Hind's House-Made Yankees and Bushwackers, between Corinth, Miss and Purdy, Tennessee." His wounds were extensive, shot in eye, shoulder and jaw, yet he returned to service after a 60 day furlough.

November 30: George Nichols was with 19th TN Cavalry at the Battle of Franklin.

1865 May 22: After being captured in Mississippi, Nichols was paroled as a prisoner of war in Memphis, Tenn.

1868 George Searight Nichols was sworn in as an original member of the Williamson County chapter of the KKK.

"I write this at the request of my wife, Mrs. Geo. S Nichols.

The Chartered members of the Ku Klux Klan of Williamson county, was sworn in by Col Doss of Memphis Tenn in Col John L House dry goods store at night in Franklin Tenn in the year 1868.

The names of the members

Col. John L House

Lieut George Smithson

Capt William Cunningham

J.M. Nichols

Daniel McAlpin

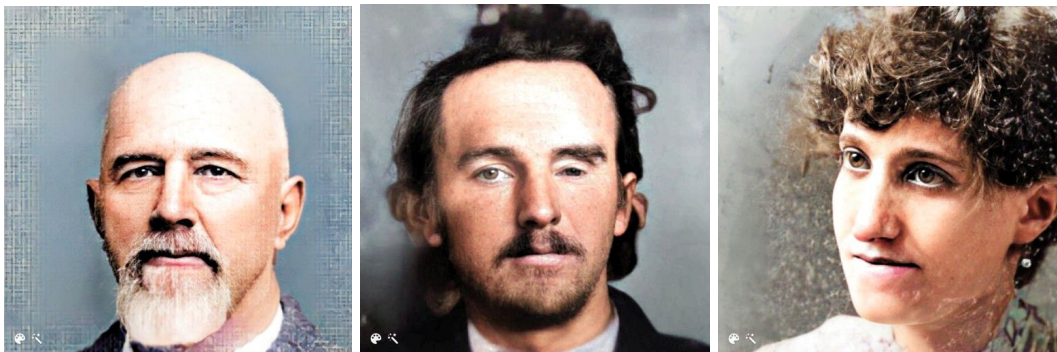
Geo. S. Nichols

All Reble soldiers, but McAlpin, all dead at the present time but Geo S Nichols.

This March 11th 1915

DATE SOLD		THE BRITT DRUG COMPANY NASHVILLE, TENN.		ORDER NO.
TERMS		Sold to <i>I write this by the request</i>		DATE SHIPPED
APPROVED BY		Shipping Point <i>of my wife Mrs L. S. N.</i>		DATE BILLED
		Ship Via <i>Nichols</i>		
QUANTITY	Description	Register No.	PRICE	
<p><i>The chartered members of the Planting Plant of Williamson county, was sworn in by Col Lewis of Memphis Tenn, in Col John L. House dry goods store at night in Franklin Park, in the year 1868. The names of the members</i></p> <p><i>Col John L. House Lieut George Smithson Capt William Birmingham J. M. Nichols Daniel M. Alpin G. S. Nichols</i></p> <p><i>all Noble Soldiers, but M. Alpin, all dead at the present time but G. S. Nichols This March 11th 1915</i></p>				

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Siblings: James M. Nichol, George S. Nichol and Cornelia S. Nichol [Cliffe]

James and George were both original members of the KKK and their sister Cornelia was documented as sewing the first robes for Williamson County KKK members.

Over the next few years the KKK proceeded to torment the local Black community in Williamson County. This included all levels of fear mongering including threats, intimidation and lynching. An Illinois born minister, Henry Eddy, who came South with his family to educate at freedmen's schools noted in

² Mary Nichol Britt Collection, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, TN

his monthly school reports that the KKK was filling the colored people with fear and causing the teachers and the students much anxiety.

IMPORTANT FROM FRANKLIN.

Passengers by last night's train report a fearful riot in progress at Franklin, Tenn., between the negroes and the Ku-Klux Klan. The fight was progressing when the train left. No particulars.

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because the injured parties were afraid.

In the latter part of 1868, a negro was hung by men in mask, at Franklin, on a charge of rape, I believe. Soon after, a merchant of the town was surrounded by men in mask, and shot in his own house, because it was said he disapproved of the hanging of the negro. In killing the merchant, whose name I remember as Bearfield, a negro was shot, it was said, "by accident." Bearfield was killed in open day, if I remember correctly, by masked men.

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1869

Returned to His First Love.

FRANK ALDERSON, the man the Ku-klux ran off from his negro wife on Leiper's Creek last winter, has returned. It is said that he has been living in Mississippi, and has come back for his dark innamorata, and will carry her to the land where the sweet magnolia blooms, and a clime more congenial to her sunny nature.

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³ Memphis Daily Appeal, Memhis, TN, Tuesday, 21 Jul 1868, pg. 4 (accessed newspapers.com)

⁴ Nashville Union and American, Nashville, TN, Wednesday, 13 Apr 1870, pg. 1 (accessed newspapers.com)

⁵ The Herald and Mail, Columbia, TN, Friday, 23 Jul 1869, pg. 3, (accessed newspapers.com)

- 1870 June 4: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Williamson County, TN showed George, a grocery clerk, living with his mother and some siblings.
- 1872 January 18: George Searight Nichols married Alice Adelaide McPhail in Franklin, Williamson County, TN.
- 1880 June 5: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Williamson County, TN showed George, a farmer, and Alice living with their children: Mary, age 7 and John, 5. Also living with the family was Alice's brother Angus McPhail and George's mother.
- 1888 Nichols daughter Mary and her friend Lela Vaughn claimed to have been the victims of an "attempted" attack from a copper colored man, although they couldn't remember what he looked like. Unjust violence was so prevalent and accepted within society that this future lynching was warned about in the paper.

WILL BE LYNCHED.

A Negro Brute Assaults Two Franklin Ladies.

Special Dispatch to the Avalanche.
 NASHVILLE, TENN., Nov. 20.—Near Franklin, Tenn., as Miss Mary Nichol, a daughter of Geo. S. Nichol, and Miss Lela Vaughan, daughter of Neil Vaughan, each aged about fourteen years, were driving in a buggy about dark. A colored man met them and attempted to stop their horse. They laid whip to the animal and at the same time commenced screaming. The negro released his hold upon the horse and attempted to drag one of the girls from the buggy. The continual whipping of the horse made the wheel of the buggy throw the negro down and the girls escaped. They were so frightened that they will not know the man and are not able to identify him. They describe him as young and copper-colored. He wore a jacket and a white hat. One man has been arrested, but the girls could not swear that he was the person. The negro will be lynched if caught and identified.

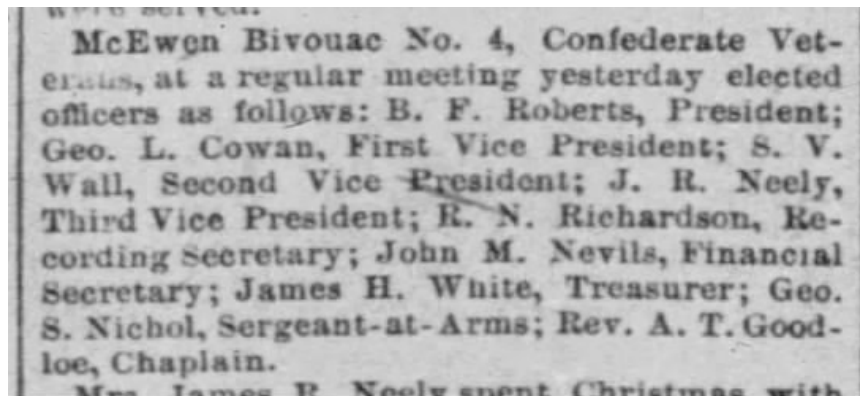


Mary Nichols at a Confederate Reunion

⁶ Memphis Avalanche, Memphis, TN, Wednesday, 21 Nov 1888, pg. 1 (accessed newspapers.com)

⁷ Photo retrieved from Williamson County Historical Society/Flickrjmyhntgre

- 1890 Nichols was an active member of the United Confederate Veterans, McEwen Bivouac. His wife and daughter were members in the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Both were active in raising money and erecting the Confederate monument in the square in Franklin in 1899.



- 1891 George S. Nichols applied for a Tennessee State Pension as a soldier for the Confederate Army. He stated he was with the army until the end of the war and he was unable to do any manual labor because of his many wounds from the war. Friends gave testimonials on his character and service during the war. John DeGraffenreid appeared for the court clerk and submitted the following statement: *“The said witness further makes the oath....that they have known the character of the applicant Geo. S. Nichols, both as soldier & as a citizen and testify that his service as a soldier was of the loyalist character, and that he is now an honorable citizen of Williamson Co., and that he will not waste or misuse the states bounty but will apply the sum to the support of living and family.”*

August 9: George Nichols was listed in the newspaper as being allowed a quarterly \$25.00 pension.⁹

- 1900 June 2: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in District 9, Williamson County, TN showed George, grocery salesman, and Alice sharing a home with their adult daughter Mary and her husband James Britt. James was also listed as a grocery merchant. Living with the family was a fourteen-year-old Black male servant named James Kinnard.
- 1909 April 29: A terrible tornado blasted through Franklin. The Nichols House was damaged. This photo shows some of the damage.

⁸ Nashville Banner, Nashville, TN, Monday, 29 Dec 1890, pg. 5 (accessed newspapers.com)

⁹ The Daily American, Nashville, Sunday, 9 Aug 1891, pg. 5 (accessed newspapers.com)



1910 April 23: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Franklin, Williamson County, TN showed George and Alice living on Columbia Pke.

1913 (abt) Photo of Nichols and his grandson at a United Confederate Veterans event wearing Confederate uniforms.



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1918 September 15: George Searight Nichols died and was buried in Franklin, TN.

¹⁰ Williamson County Heritage Society, flickr