

Tucker, William Feimster ^[1]

Tucker, William Feimster

by N. C. Hughes, Jr., 1996

9 May 1827–15 Sept. 1881

William Feimster Tucker, Confederate brigade commander, teacher, lawyer, and legislator, was born in Iredell County ^[2]. After study at Emory and Henry College he began teaching in Houston, Miss. In 1851, soon after his arrival, he met and married Martha Josephine Shackelford, the daughter of Henry Shackelford, a wealthy landowner of Okolona, Miss.

Shortly after his marriage Tucker abandoned teaching and opened a law practice in Houston. Politically active, he campaigned hard for John C. Breckinridge in 1860. When Breckinridge lost, Tucker, believing that war was inevitable, began organizing and training a militia unit in Houston known as the Chickasaw Guards. This unit, commanded by Tucker, answered Governor John J. Pettus's call in January 1861 and moved against the Federal garrison in Pensacola.

In March 1861 ^[3] Captain Tucker and the Chickasaw Guards were mustered into the Confederate army as Company K, Eleventh Mississippi Regiment. Immediately they were ordered to Virginia and fought under General Barnard E. Bee at First Manassas. After this battle, Tucker returned to Mississippi and, using his Company K as a nucleus, recruited the Forty-first Mississippi Regiment. On 8 May 1862 he was commissioned its colonel. The regiment distinguished itself in its first battle at Perryville in October 1862, although suffering severe casualties. Tucker was among those wounded. The Forty-first Mississippi continued to see action as a part of James R. Chalmers's brigade in the Army of Tennessee, fighting at Murfreesboro, Chickamauga, and Missionary Ridge. At Chickamauga Tucker and his regiment were again cited for distinguished service.

On 1 Mar. 1864 Tucker was promoted to brigadier general, commanding Chalmers's old brigade (Seventh, Ninth, Tenth, Forty-first, Forty-fourth Mississippi Infantry Regiments and the Ninth Mississippi Sharpshooter Battalion). In the ensuing Atlanta campaign, he led the brigade until his arm was shattered during the Battle of Resaca on 14 May 1864. This wound forced his retirement from field service, but the end of the war found him commanding the District of Southern Mississippi and East Louisiana.

Tucker resumed his law practice after the war and moved to Okolona. There he prospered as a lawyer and soon returned to politics. A participant in the violent upheavals and controversies that marked Mississippi politics in the 1870s, he served in the state legislature in 1876 and again in 1878. He was one of the members of the committee that initiated impeachment proceedings against Governor Adelbert Ames.

On 14 Sept. 1881 Tucker was assassinated at his residence. Two men were arrested for his murder but were not convicted. He was buried in Okolona Cemetery.

References:

Clement A. Evans, ed., *Confederate Military History*, vol. 7 (1899). ^[4]

R. Henderson, "W. F. Tucker" (Mississippi Division of Archives and History, Jackson).

Dunbar Rowland, *History of Mississippi* (1925).

William F. Tucker Papers (Manuscript Department, Duke University Library, Durham, and Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill).

Additional Resources:

Wright, John D. 2013. *The Routledge encyclopedia of Civil War era biographies* New York: Routledge. 594.

Subjects:

Biographies ^[5]

Lawyers ^[6]

Military personnel ^[7]

Public officials ^[8]

Authors:

Hughes, Nathaniel C., Jr. ^[9]

Origin - location:

Iredell County ^[10]

From:

Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.^[11]

1 January 1996 | Hughes, Nathaniel C., Jr.

Source URL:<https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/tucker-william-feimster>

Links

[1] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/tucker-william-feimster> [2] <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/iredell> [3] <https://www.ncpedia.org/history/cw-1900/civil-war> [4] <https://archive.org/details/confederatemilit72evan> [5] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/biography-term> [6] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/lawyers> [7] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/soldiers> [8] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/public-officials> [9] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/authors/hughes-nathaniel-c> [10] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmont/i> [11] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/dictionary-no>