

## Captain Elijah P. Petty – Company F, 17<sup>th</sup> Texas Infantry

Elijah was born in 1828 in Tennessee. The 1860 census shows him as a 32 year old lawyer in Bastrop, Texas. His wife Mary is 26, his two sons Frank and Don are ages 6 & 2 and a new baby boy, whom they will nickname Van, is born shortly thereafter. They own \$2800 of real property and \$2000 of personal property which is probably 2 or 3 slaves.

Elijah enlisted on May 13, 1862, in Bastrop, Texas. He is 34 years of age and “enlists for 3 years or the war.” He is shown present on all the 1862 muster rolls. On May 20, 1862, he is appointed Captain of Company F.

On January 8, 1863, from Pine Bluff, AK., he writes, *“We are away out here in the woods . . . water is bad . . . swampy . . . What they want with us here is beyond my imagination. I send \$2 to buy Van (youngest son) a pig.”*

The Feb. 28 muster roll shows him absent on detached duty. On March 4<sup>th</sup> he writes, *“I am still here at work in the Court Martial. . . Have disposed of 8 cases and sentenced 4 men to be shot . . . They are to be shot for desertion.”*

Elijah is wounded in the shoulder, at the battle of Millikens Bend, LA., on June 7, 1863. He will be furloughed home to recover. On August 11<sup>th</sup> he will depart Bastrop to rejoin the 17<sup>th</sup> Texas.

On September 24, 1863 he placed the following requisition for Company F: 40 pair shoes, 13 hats, 8 pair pants, 30 pair drawers, 32 shirts and 1 jacket.

On October 4 from Bayou Rouge, Louisiana, he advises his wife that, *“The boys have just found & cut a bee tree and I stopped to eat some honey. Oh we soldiers have a fine time.”*

In January, 1864, the unit is in Bayou de Glaze, Louisiana and Elijah writes, *“It is a miserable wet time and mud mud mud is all the go. We are having a rough time . . . I weighed to day 146 pounds of substantive flesh.”*

Captain Petty was killed at the battle of Pleasant Hill on April 9, 1864. Sgt. Mays of Company F sent a note dated April 9<sup>th</sup> to the Captain’s son. On June 2 the following note arrived from Major Charles Morgan of Parson’s Texas Cavalry, *“Mrs Petty . . . I do sympathis with you in . . . the loss of your husband. . . He was buried near the house (Childer’s) in a corner of the yard. . . I got his Sash, Handkerchief, knife, comb . . . and will send them to you as soon as possible. Your friend and fellow mourner.”*