

## **Captain James A. Anderson – Co. C, 2<sup>nd</sup> Alabama Cavalry and his daughter Miss. Mary Anderson**

James Anderson enlisted on March 22, 1862 in Eutaw, Alabama, for 3 years or the war. He was elected 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant of the Company.

He was promoted to Captain on May 27, 1863.

Shown 'absent sick' on the August and October, 1863, muster rolls.

July 4, 1864, reports show him as an 'inmate' at the Gilmer Hospital in Camp Marietta near Atlanta. He had been seriously wounded in the neck at Nekajack, Georgia. (near Atlanta). Post-war he will die of the effect of this wound in the late 1860s in Falkland, Alabama.

His daughter, Mary Anderson, will be born on February 19, 1867, near Forkland, Greene County, Alabama. When James died, not long after Mary's birth, her mother, sister and Mary moved to Birmingham.

Mary became a rancher, viticulturist (a grower of grapes), real estate developer and inventor as she matured. Mary built and owned the Fairmont Apartments on Highland Avenue in Birmingham.

In 1902, while visiting New York City, she noticed that the trolley operators drove with the front window open in rain, snow, sleet and other types of bad weather. They had no way to clear the front window. This led to her design, patent, and manufacture of a prototype windshield wiper, in 1903, for the trolley industry. One company even stated, "*We do not consider it to be of such commercial value as would warrant undertaking its sale.*" Her patent expired in 1920 and shortly thereafter a flourishing automobile industry decided that windshield wipers would be standard equipment on virtually all vehicles.

Mary never profited from her invention. However, she was financially secure with an inheritance from her aunt and the steady earnings from her real estate property.

Mary joined the Pelham 67 Chapter of the UDC in Birmingham in 1923. She passed away while at her summer home in Monteagle, Tennessee, on June 27, 1953. The inventor of the windshield wiper is interred at Elmwood Cemetery in Birmingham.

**(Compiled Service Records Confederate, Brewer Library, UDC, Richmond, Virginia, Microcopy 34, Roll 4; Article for the UDC Magazine written by the Pelham 67 Chapter and on file in the Brewer Library.)**