

# Civil War Doctor

By Gene McCain

## Preface

A young doctor, having just finished his medical training, as was the case with Dr. Vernon T. Chew when he finished his surgical training at the St Louis College of Medicine in 1860, expects to begin this practice in a nice clean hospital or medical clinic. But, that was not the case for the graduating class of 1860.

The nation was soon after involved in a civil war, so many of the graduates were compelled to join in the war effort, ending up in very difficult battlefield conditions, often short of cleanliness and supplies.

The new Dr. Chew joined the Missouri National Guard as a surgeon with the rank of Captain in the 1<sup>st</sup> Missouri Regiment Infantry, 8<sup>th</sup> Division, but his unit soon became activated into the Confederate States Army. Dr. Chew saw combat in many areas, including the battle of Vicksburg, Mississippi, where his horse was killed by enemy fire, and Grand Gulf, Mississippi. Traveling with his infantry group as far east as Atlanta, Georgia, Dr. Chew met and married his wife, Annie Temperance Williams, in Alabama during the war. He was granted a 40 day leave of absence from his war responsibilities to complete his marriage and honeymoon.

After the end of the war he began his private medical practice in Alabama, but then moved to McKinney, Texas for 10 years before settling in Rosenberg, Texas where he began the first resident medical practice in Rosenberg.

I have tried to put together his story in this narrative.

Thanks for reading,  
Gene McCain, great-grandson