



Lavaca County and The Spanish American War

By Brenda Lincke Fisseler

The next several issues of this newsletter will share the story of Lavaca County during the Spanish-American War and later the Philippine-American War. While both military actions were short term conflicts, Lavaca County men were involved in both and this newsletter will endeavor to share information about these men and their commitments to service. This newsletter series will also highlight some of the individuals whose stories are unique and those who lost their lives in service to their county.



Volunteers in the Spanish American War

The next issues of this newsletter will focus on the individuals who served from Lavaca County in the Spanish-American War. Many times, the stories will be brief, but there will be instances where the story can be quite unusual.



James Jalufka
1st Texas Cavalry Co. G
Enlisted: April 28, 1898
Discharged: November 14, 1898



James Jalufka was born on November 18, 1879 at Moravia, Texas the son of Ignac (J.E.) Jalufka and his wife Agnes Hollub Jalufka.

He lived in the Moravia area until he enlisted in the U.S. Army on April 28, 1898 during the Spanish American War. He was discharged on November 14, 1898.



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with any one who might be
interested!*

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After first military service, James returned to Texas and eventually moved to the Corpus Christi, Texas area. James was married to Helen F. Marlow on November 21, 1904 in Corpus Christi. Prior to 1910, James worked as a saloon owner and an agent for a brewery in Corpus Christi. The couple's only child, Dorothy, was born on May 6, 1906.

Jalufka-Govatos House

While living in Corpus Christi, Jalufka and his wife had a home built in 1905. Jalufka was known as a cotton grower and owned a local cotton gin. The house was located at 1408 North Mesquite and was part of the neighborhood known as "Old Irishtown". They lived in the home until 1919, after which time it was used as rental property. Pete and Minnie Lee Govatos, members of a family active in the city's Greek community, purchased the home in 1944 from the Jalufkas. They lived in the house until 1960. The house changed ownership many times and eventually fell into disrepair. The city of Corpus Christi purchased the home in 1987, moved it to Heritage Park and renovated it on site.

James served in the military a second time during WWI from 1918 to 1919. He first served in Co. M, 143rd Inf, 36th Division and later in the Headquarters Co. of the 9th Inf.

During the later part of their marriage, wife Helen worked as a manager of the G.E. Valentine Boat Works in Corpus Christi. In a newspaper article from October 1926, it was noted the Helen was the only woman in Texas to hold a skipper's license. Her ship, the Helena, was a pleasure boat equipped with two 100 HP engines, could reach a speed of 20 knots per hour and carried 50 passengers. Her nickname was "Captain" and her operation was located at the Old Pleasure Pier.

Before the 1940 census, James and Helen divorced and James later married Mrs. Hilda Echols in Corpus Christi. About two to three years before his death, James and Hilda moved to Kerrville so he could receive medical care at the Veterans Hospital.

James Jalufka died on November 24, 1969 at the age of 90 in Kerrville, Texas. He was buried in the Garden of Memories Cemetery in Kerrville.

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