

## Alexander S Freeland Battle Notes

[photo of Alexander Strain Freeland as an older man]

Name: Alexander Strain Freeland  
Born: 20 MAR 1842 Macon (New Mountrie) Co, ILL  
Died: 26 SEP 1920 Decatur, ILL  
Marr: 09 JAN 1868 Eliza Margret Hood  
Service: Co E 21st ILL INF  
[signature] Alexander Freeland  
21 IL INF

At The Battle of Stone River

Hurriedly [sic] dropped [sic] on a rude pallet by the Side of Comrade Will Harlan as bad wounded as my Self. He with an arm broken below the Shoulder, by a musket ball, which lodged in his back under his Shouldier [sic] blade and myself with a Thigh badly torn by a grape Shot, In the field Hospital I lay, More than a Score badly wounded already occupied the best room in the Tennessee [sic] Farm House and the few attendants were now kept So buisy [sic] that they could not give even the dying their proper attention The wounded were comeing [sic] in very fast each and evry [sic] one needing immediate attention, Of the battle its Self I cannot tell much for I did not See only the beginning, and was knocked out at the very commencement this I know that the tide of battle had turned against us, Stubbornly our men held to their ground but Regiment after Regiment and Brigade after Brigade were Swept from their positions, wounded men brought in by their comrades and hurriedly left without care wept like children as they tried to tell of company and regimentel [sic] losses, all took comfort from the thought that the enemy in front never could have driven them, till they were flanked and fired uppon [sic] from the rear, while the 21st Ill Inft [sic] under Col JW Alexander was hotly engaged he Saw the troops to our left giving away and he orderd [sic] a part of his regiment to front in that directtions [sic] till they were nearly Surrounded then gave they command to retreat in order, the enemy in masses closely followed up Sudenly [sic] a cry was raised our "Colors "Our Colors" Sevral [sic] rods to the rear, lay our Color Sergeant and guards, all Shot down, a Score of resolute men Sprang back for the rescue they met the enemy face to face. the clash was dredful [sic] but only lasted a few seconds Shots clubbed muskets and bayonets were used, men on both Sides were down but Sergt[sic] Wm Hunter of Co F brought them Safe to the regiment, Nearer and nearer to our Hospital came the battle and maney [sic] shots fired at our retreating men passed through our room death was no respecer of persons, and many brave hearts and fond hopes were blotted out [crossed out] that in wars cruel Strife that day, now amidst the roar of battle could be heard the hoarse Shouts of Officers to their men as they Strove to form their lines and check the onrush of the now almost victorious Confederates our officers were an especial mark for their bullets and maney [sic] killed and wounded gen Sill a dearly beloved commander was killed, fell

from his horse dead, and brought by loving arms and laid on the back porch of our Hospital, an old officer Col Williams of the 25 Ill gray with years, wounded and dying was brought in by Some of his Soldiers who after looking for a better place laid him on the hard floor by my side and then hurried away to join their comrades, Lying helpless, Oh how useless, none but an old Soldier can tell how acutely we Suffered lying on our backs when our fighting comrades So Sorely needed our help, deprived of action paralised [sic] maney [sic] though only Slightly wounded unable to survive so queerly do wounds affect the nerves Abandoned by all of our attendants who fled to escape capture, The battle roled [sic] by us and far beyond into the great Cedar brake [sic] that Streched [sic] for miles to the north and west of us, from where no news of battle reached us but the dreadful Sounds of musketry that came from gloomy depths of the great thicket where brave men fought the enemy in Smal [sic] groups or Singly from tree to tree or Stone to Stone Many Soldiers got Separated from comrades were killed or mortally wounded lay down to die where they remained undiscovered [sic] for years till woodchoppers found their bones and remains of their equipments [sic], John Kuch of my co was Shot through the body and left by his chum also wounded, much search was made for him afterwards, but he was found Sevral [sic] years later and identified by his name on his belt plate, and he has been buried in the Murphresboro [sic] National Cemetry [sic], the fighting of these men helped in a large measure to Save the Army of the Cumberland, for by the delay caused to the enemy gen Rosecrans was able to form a new line, closing up and reinforcing all of the gaps and weak places and when gen Bragg renewed the attact [sic] he only hastened the defeat of his men. by their furious assaults on our Solid ranks, our Hospital with about Three Hundred men was now fully in the enemys [sic] hands and they immediately removed all of our hospital Stores Some of our Surgeons remained with us but their assistants were gone and their instruments were taken away to be used by the confederates, all of the Slightly wounded fled with our army only badly wounded remained, men were dying all around us mangled Shot and Shell, Some were bleeding to death and as they realised [sic] their [crossed out] their condition cried pittifully [sic] for the help they needed, others bravely waited in Silence till death closed their eyes, Twenty Eight years have gone and I have not forgotten the faces of them men and what they Suffered for their country, As night came on we began fully to realize our helpless condition weakened by the loss of blood we were Suffering even more with cold of a freesing [sic] night than from wounds, Early in the day I had given my place to the dying Officer and later took my place in the hall beside a Norwegian a 15th wisconsin [sic] man, Shot through the loins. His cries even in norse [sic] was most distressing [sic] Towards morning Some Johneys [sic] came along and built up a fire of rails in the yard neard [sic] the end of the house I determined to Share Some of its warmth, with much pain and difficulty I draged [sic] myself out through the door then along the porch to the roaring fire, at its further end, I Still remember is comfort to me how I lay in the dirt taking in its generous heat Thinking of my poor Norse friend before returning to my bed I drew Some bricks from under the porch and heated them in the fire and wrapping them up made my way back with more ease than I came out I placed two of the hot bricks against the feet of the Norwegian, though I could not understand a Single word of his I am Sure by his intonatoon [sic] thanks and blessings without number were bestowed on me. The next two days passed without much change in our prospects, many of men had Succeeded in dressing their

own wounds [illegible] and a few could help others who were worse off, The Confederate Soldiers who came around were kind to us building fires and removing [sic] the dead from among the living, (The dead made a long tear [sic] that reached nearly across the yard) but the Confederate officers who visited us tried to quarrel [sic] with our helpless men and went of [sic] mad when told the truth, we were told that Gen Bragg's cavalry had surrounded Rosecrans' army and that [illegible] are just shooting youn [sic] all to death, after the heavy [sic] fighting of the third day we noticed a great change, all wounded men who could walk were got into line and ordered [sic] to go to Murfreesboro [sic] where they were put on a train, and sent to Atlanta Ga I saw two of these men that had been shot in the head and were pitiable beyond description [sic] one (my cousin) I know to have died, Officers were sent to parole those unable to go Fire arms and camp equipment were gathered [sic] up and hauled away, one small piece [sic] of wheat bread was given to each of us the first food we had after our own ran out, by dark the Johnnies [sic] began to disappear from the hospital and by morning only two or three were seen hurrying by, many were our [illegible] Some thought our army had surrendered [sic] many others that Gen Rosecrans [sic] had retreated, thus were we in doubt till near noon when some one saw a soldier in blue running out of the woods to the north of us, every [sic] one who could do so got on his feet to look at him, before he reached us another and then a half dozen were in sight and a glad sight it was to us. The poor fellows were hurrying to us on the hunt of friends they found some alive others beyond help, soon two came carrying [sic] in Andy Lyn of my company, a new recruit of only a few weeks leaving a young wife and baby at home shot across the back [crossed out] he [crossed out] fell he fell between the cotton rows where he had lain all those four long cold nights and days, The Sun's warmth had sufficiently revived him to call our men to his help which the enemy had refused but he died the shock was to [sic] great for his recovery. One man with five wounds dressed them himself while a man by his side died with only the end of his finger shot off, he must have died with lock jaw, such was our condition many being compelled to lie in the dirt and ashes around the fires without shelter that it was determined to remove all except the dangerously [sic] wounded to Nashville thirty miles away so ambulances were brought around and we were loaded up and on the road the fourth [sic] of Jan 63 soon afternoon, But the distress [crossed out] of [crossed out] that of that painful cold! Cold ride never can be told, ice must have formed nearly an inch thick and the heavy swinging of the ambulances from side to side as they dropped [sic] into the ruts was more than flesh and blood could bear

[margin notes from beginning: wagoner Co. A.]