

Vachel Benson Poem

84th IL INF Co. F

Formed at New Salem, IL

WRITTEN IN HONOR OF VACHEL BENSON WHO
DIED ON STONE [sic] RIVER BATTLEFIELD DEC. 31 1862 JAN. 1-2 1863
BY JOHN FLETCHER SLOAN WHO FOUGHT BY HIS SIDE.

Among the pines that overlook stone [sic] river's rocky bed,
Illinois knows full well many a son that's [sic] numbered with the dead
That night when all along our lines rained showers of shot and shell,
There many a brave young soldier died, there many a hero fell.

When night closed o'er [sic] those bloody scenes returning o'er [sic] the ground,
I heard poor Vachels [sic] pitious [sic] moan laid low by mortal, wound
I built a fire of cedar rails, The air was cold and damp,
I filled his canteen from the spring below the river's bank.

And then I sat me down to ask,
If he would wish to send a last request or parting word,
To Mother, Sister or Friend?
I have some words poor Vachel said, my friends would like to hear.

My mother's soul tw'ould [sic] fill with sorrow
My sister's eyes tw'ould [sic] fill with tears
Tell them I died this stormy night, No friends or kindred near,
To wipe death damp from my brow or shed affectionate tear.

[memo-This is a copy of a poem or song John Fletcher Sloan sent home to his folks.
Early in 1863 after his buddie [sic] was killed at Stone [sic] River battlefield, near
Murfreesboro, Tennessee [sic]]