

Oliver Jones Smith Military Records

8th Arkansas Infantry

Overview of Civil War Records

Summaries of copies of civil war records obtained from the Arkansas Historical Commission:

Oliver Smith Jones

July 18, 1861. Enlisted in (Old) Company D, 8 Rgt. [sic] Arkansas Infantry.

September 10, 1861. Somehow switched to Captain Morgan's Company, 8 Rgt. [sic] Arkansas Infantry.

May 7, 1862. Reenlisted as 2nd Sgt. in (New) Company B, 8 Rgt. [sic] Arkansas Infantry.

June 30, 1862. Appointed 1st Sgt. [sic] in (New) Company B, Rgt. [sic] Arkansas Infantry.

August 24, 1863. Elected 2nd Lt. in (New) Company B, 8 Rgt. [sic] Arkansas Infantry. Pay now \$80/month.

September 20, 1863. Reported missing in action at Chickamauga, GA. [Chickamauga was a major Confederate victory, and the Union army was driven back to Chattanooga, but it is plausible that they took some prisoners with them.]

October 4, 1863. Reported in a military prison hospital in Louisville.

October 5, 1863. Sent to a military prison for officers on Johnson's Island in Lake Erie. [A miserable existence but probably better than an enlisted mens' [sic] prison.]

June 12, 1865. Released from prison after signing an oath of allegiance to the U.S. Described as 5'11". hair black, eyes black. Later dated his release from prison as July 1.

Summer, 1915. Applied for a Confederate pension. A physician certified that he had partial disability because of "old age" and "very weak condition of left hip due to a grape shot." Certified that his and his wife's property was worth no more than \$500 (not including value of homestead and household goods) and his income was no more than \$250. Pension was apparently \$100/year.

July 3, 1922. Maggie E. Jones, widow of O.S. Jones, applied for a pension. Gave her birthdate as May 12, 1860. Stated that her property (including home and household

goods) was valued at \$1000 and that her income was no more than \$250/year. Granted pension of \$100/year.

Oliver Jones Smith's Sketch of His Life

A LITTLE SKETCH OF MY LIFE AND WHAT KNOWLEDGE I HAVE OF MY ANCESTORS

Written October 7th, 1917, by Oliver S. Jones

I was born in Guinett [sic] County, Georgia, August 18th, 1841. My grandfather, Benjamin Jones, was a son of Thomas Jones, who came to America from Scotland in 1755.

Benjamin Jones was sixteen years of age when the war for independence closed and was at the surrender of Cornwallis. He married Mary K. Fowler, a Scotch-Irish girl, in 1791. To this union was born four sons and one daughter, Nathan, Thomas, James, Smith and Matildy. [sic]

My maternal grandfather, Henry Butler, married Mary Cricket; they came from Wales in 1755. To them was born Henry and Thomas.

Father and Mother were married on October, 1822. They settled in Guinett [sic] County and remained on this home until the fall of 1848 when they moved to Sugar Valley in the Cherokee Purchase. In the fall of 1859, we moved in an [illegible] wagon to Izard County, Arkansas, on White River, where Father and Mother sleep until the coming of The Lord.

Our family of nine children, seven boys and two girls, viz., Benjamin Curry, Thomas Marion, Rufus Philo, Nathan Henry, Willis Cornelius, Elizabeth Matilda, Mary Elifalet, Oliver Smith and James Hamilton, all of whom, except this writer and Sister Mary, have fallen asleep.

The opening of 1861 witnessed the beginning of the downfall of the Republic, our fathers fought seven years to establish, and sectional jealousy and party blindness have contributed much to the Revolution that replaced the Republic with the military despotism that, in this year of our Lord, 1917, we enjoy. Every one who has any conception of the Spirit of Christ should feel ashamed of the devastation, murder and sorrow that engulfed our fair land. In May, 1861, I left home and volunteered in the Confederate Army. Our first camp was Jacksonport on White River. From there we went to Pocahantas, from there to Columbus, Kentucky, from there to Bowling Green where we remained until mid-winter. The fall of Forts Henry and Donaldson, we retreated to Corinth, Mississippi. On April 5th, 1862, we marched out to Shilo [sic] Church and on the next morning, the 6th, at sunrise we opened the famous two days battle. We swept everything before us and by four o'clock we had the Yanks run in on

the River and we thought the day was won. But our great General A.S. Johnson was killed about three o'clock and that put Beauregard in command. He halted the victorious army and during the night Buel [sic] crossed the river with thirty thousand fresh troops and the battle opened and ground was fought over until about three o'clock when we marched off and left the field to the Yanks.

On May 16th we had battle at Farmington. My position in the line was in a graveyard and cannon balls were knocking the tombs to bits in good style. A fragment of a shell tore my shirt sleeve off but did not get any of my revolutionary blood.

In July we started on our Kentucky campaign. At Mumfordsville we captured four thousand Yanks without getting killed or killing anyone.

The next incident was at Richmond, Kentucky, where we had to kill a great many and get a good many killed before they would let us go on.

From Richmond to Perryville, where we spent a day at the past time of killing and being killed, many were killed on both sides and their bodies were left there to enrich the soil for the peaceful husbandmen.

Our next big fight was Murfreesboro on December 31st, 1862, and January 1st, 1863. This was a drawn battle, although we drove the Yanks three miles and held the field until Midnight, when Bragg ordered a retreat to Wartrace and after being without sleep or rest for two days and nights and marching in the coldest rain I ever felt, was, to say the least of it, not very pleasant.

At Liberty Gap on July 5th, 1863, our Arkansas brigade held an army corps in check all evening and killed more men than I ever saw on one little field.

September 20th we opened the great battle of Chickamauga where we lost sixty percent of our Regiment and at this time and place I dropped out of the firing and am given a free ride to Johnson's Island where I spent twenty-one months and was hungry all the time. On my way to prison I was kept in a hospital at Louisville, Kentucky, ten days till I recovered from the wound. I met some charming Kentucky girls at this place who did all they could to make us comfortable. I was kept in prison until all the Confederate Armies surrendered.

When I got out of prison, I went to Brother Rufus' home near Gilboa in Hancock County Ohio. Brother died December 1st and on the 20th, I started home. I reached home on January 3rd, 1866, being absent four years and eight months.

This I think covers about all that you could be interested in, and dear Halsey I close the book by subscribing

(signed) Oliver S. Jones.