

McCracken Family and the 42nd Regiment of Indiana Volunteers

Background on the 42nd Indiana

In September of 1861 the Forty-second Regiment of Indiana Volunteers was organized, and seven members of the McCracken family enlisted. Henry, John James, Thomas and William Nelson McCracken were all brothers. Charles McCracken and Richard McGehee were their first cousins. William H. H. Gilley would later marry Margaret McCracken (sister of Charles). All but two of the new soldiers were young, unmarried men. However, William Nelson McCracken was 32 years old, married and the father of five children; and Richard McGehee was 36 years old, married and the father of six children. These seven men were related to several other members of the unit through their mothers' families. They were also neighbors and members of Mount Olive Baptist Church. The impact on the community must have been tremendous.

The draft was put into operation in Indiana in October of 1862, but Daviess County was able to meet its quota until later in the war.

In the fall of 1864 it became necessary to put the draft into effect in Daviess County. There had always been a small number of southern sympathizers living in the area and since early in 1863 tension had increased. In August of that year a riot had broken out in Washington between Union soldiers and southern sympathizers. By the fall of 1864 the people of Daviess County were tired of the war and had very strong feelings against the draft. The great adventure had become a great tragedy.

Captain Eli McCarty was appointed notifying officer of the draft for 1864. He had been wounded at the Battle of Perryville on 8 October 1862 while serving with Company "G" 42nd Indiana Infantry and had resigned his commission. It was probably Captain McCarty who went to the homes of Abram T. Banta and Walter W. McGehee on 22 September 1864 to inform them that they had been drafted to serve one year. Abram T. Banta was 40 years old, married to a McCracken descendant and the father of six children. Walter W. McGehee was 26 years old, married and the father of one child. They must have been quite distressed about being drafted, but they complied and were mustered into the 44th Indiana Infantry on 18 October 1864.

The draft continued in Daviess County. In the southeastern part of the county some men had sworn to resist the draft and to kill anyone who would come after them. On 3 October 1864 Captain Eli McCarty was murdered while carrying out his responsibility to inform men that they had been drafted.

At the end of the war in May 1865, six members of the McCracken family were still in the army. Of the sixteen who served their country, two were killed, four wounded, and seven contracted diseases that permanently impaired their health.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE 42nd REGIMENT OF INDIANA VOLUNTEER INFANTRY

28 Sept 1861 - The following were enrolled. All enlisted for 3 years: Charles McCracken, Henry McCracken, John James McCracken, Thomas McCracken, William Nelson McCracken, Richard McGehee, William H. H. Gilley

10 Oct 1861 - All seven above mustered in at Evansville.

January 1862 - Henry McCracken had frozen feet at Calhoun, Kentucky.

February 1862 - William H. H. Gilley had Typhoid Fever on march to Fort Donelson; Thomas McCracken ill for 3 months.

11 Apr 1862 - Skirmish at Wartrace, Tennessee.

29 Apr 1862 - Action near Bridgeport, Alabama.

27 Aug - 26 Sept 1862 - March from Huntsville, Alabama to Louisville, Kentucky in pursuit of Bragg.

8 Oct 1862 - Battle of Perryville.

31 Dec 1862 - Battle of Stones River began; Charles McCracken wounded.

4 Jan 1863 - Battle of Stones River ended; Richard McGehee wounded.

7 Jan 1863 - Richard McGehee died of his wounds .

29 June 1863 - Skirmish at Elm River, Tennessee.

29 June - 16 Aug 1863 - Occupation of Middle Tennessee.

16 Aug - 22 Sept 1863 - Georgia Campaign

11 Sept 1863 - Skirmish at Davis' Cross Roads near Dug Gap, Georgia.

19 Sept - 21 Sept 1863 - Battle of Chickamauga; John James McCracken wounded.

21 Sept 1863 - Skirmishes at Rossville Gap, Georgia.

24 Sept - 23 Nov 1863 - Siege of Chattanooga, Tennessee.

23 Nov 1863 - Engagement, Orchard Knob, Tennessee.

24 Nov 1863 - Assault and capture of Lookout Mountain, Tennessee.

25 Nov 1863 - Assault and capture of Missionary Ridge; Thomas McCracken wounded.

26 Nov 1863 - Skirmishes at Graysville, Georgia and Pea Vine Valley, Tennessee.

27 Nov 1863 - Engagement, Ringgold Gap, Taylor's Ridge, Georgia.

27 Feb 1864 - Francis M. Hunter enlisted.

1 May - 8 Sept 1864 - Campaign against Atlanta, Georgia.

8 May – 9 May 1864 - Combat, Buzzard's Roost Gap, Georgia.

14 May - 15 May 1864 - Battle of Resaca, Georgia; Henry McCracken's hearing damaged.

25 May - 5 June 1864 - Battles near Dallas, New Hope Church and Allatoona Hills, Georgia.

27 May 1864 - Action, Picketts' Mills, Georgia.

28 May 1864 - John James McCracken discharged at Cliffburn Barracks, D.C.

10 June 1864 - Charles McCracken discharged at Evansville, Indiana.

11 June -14 June 1864 - Combat near Pine Hill, Georgia.

15 June -17 June 1864 - Combat near Lost Mountain, Georgia.

27 June 1864 - General assault on Kennesaw [sic] Mountain, Georgia.

4 July 1864 - Combat Smyrna Camp Ground, Georgia.

18 July 1864 - Skirmish, Buckhead, Nancy's Creek, Georgia.

19 July – 20 July 1864 - Battle of Peachtree Creek; Francis M. Hunter wounded.

22 July - 25 Aug 1864 - Siege of Atlanta.

5 Aug - 7 Aug 1864 - Combat at Utoy Creek, Georgia.

29 Aug 1864 - Skirmish near Red Oak, Georgia.

31 Aug - 1 Sept 1864 - Battle of Jonesboro, Georgia.

15 Oct 1864 - William Nelson McCracken discharged at Louisville, Kentucky.

17 Oct 1864 - William H. H. Gilley, Thomas McCracken and Henry McCracken discharged at Villanova, Georgia.

15 Nov -10 Dec 1864 - Campaign against Savannah (Sherman 's March to the Sea).

10 Dec - 21 Dec 1864 - Siege of Savannah.

1 Feb - 26 Apr 1865 - Campaign of the Carolinas.

16 Mar 1865 - Battle of Averysboro, North Carolina.

19 Mar - 21 Mar 1865 - Battle of Bentonville, North Carolina.

23 Mar 1865 - Occupation of Goldsboro, North Carolina.

13 Apr 1865 – Occupation of Raleigh, North Carolina.

26 Apr 1865 - Surrender of Johnston's army at Bennett's House near Durham Station, North Carolina.

29 Apr - 19 May 1865 - March to Washington, D.C. via Richmond, Virginia.

24 May 1865 - Grand Review of Sherman's Army in Washington, D.C.

21 July 1865 - Francis M. Hunter discharged at Louisville, Kentucky.

Charles McCracken

Charles McCracken was born 3 February 1842 in Daviess County, Indiana. His parents were William McCracken and Mary Ann Webber. On 28 September 1861 he enlisted as a private in Company "G" 42nd Regiment of Indiana Volunteer Infantry. At the same time his cousins, Richard McGehee, John J. Henry, Thomas and William N. McCracken and his future brother-in-law William H. H. Gilley also enlisted. Charles McCracken was 19 years old. At Evansville, Indiana, on 10 October 1861 Charles and the others were mustered in to serve three year enlistments.

At the Battle of Stones River, 31 December 1862, Charles McCracken was seriously wounded in both legs. A bullet entered the left leg about mid-way below the knee. It went completely through that leg and then entered the right leg where it lodged between the bones of the right leg. It remained there for nearly twenty-five years. He was treated in a field hospital near the battlefield, transferred to an army hospital in Cincinnati and then transferred again to an army hospital in Evansville, Indiana, where he remained until his discharge 10 June 1864 - almost a year and a half after he was wounded. His discharge states that he was unfit for the Veteran Reserve Corps and that he was unable to walk without crutches.

While Charles was in the hospital at Evansville he met Nancy Ann Bastin. Her home was north of Bloomington, Indiana, but she was living in Evansville and helping care for the soldiers in the hospital. On 9 July 1864 Charles McCracken and Nancy Ann Bastin were married in Evansville by a Methodist minister. The young couple went home to Barr Township, Daviess County, Indiana, where they purchased land and built a log house. They eventually became quite prosperous.

Mount Olive Baptist Church was very important in the lives of Charles and Nancy and their seven children. The land for the first church building had been given by Charles' parents, and many aunts, uncles and cousins were also members of Mount Olive.

The wound in Charles' right leg never healed properly and in 1869 and 1875 it became so infected that surgery was necessary to drain the infection. In 1880 Dr. W. L. Evans of Loogootee stated: "There is no probability of the wound ever healing permanently and he (Charles) would be, in my opinion, in a much safer condition if the limb was amputated just below the knee joint, and I frequently advise him to submit to an amputation". Charles never submitted and lived to be 87 years old. Nancy died 6 December 1917 and Charles died 15 July 1929. are buried in Bethany Christian Church Cemetery.

The obituary of Charles McCracken:

"Civil War Vet Taken by Death Late Monday

Charles McCracken, 87 Died at Home Near Montgomery

Charles McCracken, 87 retired farmer of Barr township, died Monday afternoon at 5 o'clock following a serious illness of about two weeks.

Death of Mr. McCracken, who was a Civil War veteran, resulted from infirmities of age.

Born in Barr township on February 3, 1842, the deceased had spent his life in this vicinity. At the time of his death he lived south of Montgomery.

The son of William and Mary (Webber) McCracken, the deceased married Nancy A. Bastin on July 9, 1864, and to this union seven children were born, six of whom survive. The wife preceded him in death.

During the war Mr. McCracken was a private in Company G, 42nd Regiment of the Indiana Volunteers.

He was a member of the First Mt. Olive Baptist Church.

One of a family of nine boys and girls, Mr. McCracken was the last of the family.

Surviving children are William H. McCracken of Washington, Mary E. Steen of Montgomery, Henry M. McCracken of Argos, Ind., Charles A. McCracken of Washington, and George M. and Minnie A. McCracken of Montgomery. Fifteen grandchildren, and sixteen great-grand-children also survive.

Funeral services will be held Wednesday morning at 10:30 o'clock at Bethany church. Rev. C.J. Grimes in charge. Burial will be made in Bethany cemetery. James A. Gill will have charge of the funeral."

Henry McCracken

Henry McCracken was born 5 March 1843 in Daviess County, Indiana. His parents were John McCracken and Sarah Jane Webber. Henry enlisted as a private in Company "G" 42nd Regiment of Indiana Volunteers on 28 September 1861 at the age of 18. His brothers John James, Thomas and William Nelson McCracken enlisted at the same time. They were mustered in on 10 October 1861 at Evansville.

During December of 1861 the 42nd was ordered to move its camp from Henderson to Calhoun, Kentucky, where there was a concentration of Union troops. The weather was cold and rainy making the roads ankle-deep in mud. Each man was required to carry about seventy-five pounds of equipment in his knapsack in addition to his rifle and haversack. At night the regiment usually had to make camp in the mud and get their water from any available stream. It was not long until one-third of the regiment was sick with typhoid, measles, pneumonia and dysentery. The result for Henry McCracken was

frostbitten feet which caused him to have painful, swollen feet throughout his three years of service.

In the spring of 1863 Henry became ill with fever and was in a regimental hospital near Murfreesboro, Tennessee. His brother "Nelson" went to visit him every day until the 42nd moved on, leaving Henry in the hospital. When Henry rejoined his unit several months later his relatives were shocked to see him because he had lost his hair as a result of his illness.

At the Battle of Resaca, 15 May 1864, the 42nd was being supported by a battery of six pound Napoleon guns. These were muzzle-loading cannons with a maximum effective range of 800 to 1,000 yards. They fired two to three rounds a minute. The cannons were on a hill above a branch of water. Company "G", 42nd, was below the artillery and some of the men were ordered to lay down in the water to protect themselves. The water was cold and Henry went into the water reluctantly and only after he was ordered to do so by his officers. He laid in the water for several hours with cannons being fired over his head. When he came out of the water after dark he had a fever. As a result of fever, exposure and the concussion of the cannons, his hearing was damaged.

Henry McCracken was discharged as a Corporal 17 October 1864 at Villanova, Georgia. He returned to his father's farm and worked there for one season before he moved to Patoka, Gibson County, Indiana. There he worked at Coleman's Sawmill as an engineer and fireman running the stationary engine, but he occasionally worked in the planing mill and sometimes stacked lumber as well.

On 12 September 1867 Henry McCracken married Mary Jane Hanks in Gibson County, Indiana.

After working at the sawmill for a number of years, Henry decided that he was not able to do that kind of work any longer and that he must get on a farm. The McCrackens moved to Kansas, but only stayed for a short time and then returned to Patoka. Henry went back to the sawmill and worked there another year. He and Mary Jane then moved to Daviess County and Henry went back to farming in Barr Township, having been away for about 10 years.

Mary Jane died 13 October 1904, leaving Henry a widower for over twenty years. Henry died 30 December 1924 and was buried in Bethany Christian Church Cemetery with his wife.

Obituary

His rather touching obituary follows

"Illness of few hours fatal to Henry McCracken

Henry McCracken, one of Barr township's oldest, most prominent and widely men, died at 10 o'clock last night at his home south of Montgomery at the age of almost eighty-two years after a shockingly brief illness.

Mr. McCracken who had been enjoying robust health for a man of his advanced years and had been in Montgomery during the afternoon and was stricken about 4 o'clock, shortly after returning to his farm home. He was chopping wood when the fatal seizure came on and gradually sank, although physicians were called immediately after he became ill. Heart disease is believed to have caused his death.

Perhaps none of the older residents of Barr township had a wider circle of friends or was better liked than the deceased man and his sudden illness and death have cast a note of genuine sadness everywhere among his acquaintances. Mr. McCracken was born on a farm within three quarters of a mile of the place where he died and his entire life excepting two short intervals when he was in Kansas were passed in the same community. He had always been a farmer.

Mr. McCracken's wife died some years ago but he is survived by the following children: Minnie, of Evansville; Lillie, at home; Oliver of Washington; John, at home; Will and Arthur of Oklahoma; and Byron of Harrison township. Two sisters also are left, they being Eliza Rudolph and Mary Jane McCracken, both of Montgomery.

In every sense of the word, Henry McCracken was one of the patriarchs of southern Barr township, a man who was strictly honest in all his personal and business dealings and who loved his family and home with an intense devotion that was noticeable to everyone."

John James McCracken

John James McCracken was born 2 December 1832 in Daviess County, Indiana. His parents were John McCracken and Sarah Jane Webber. He enlisted in Company "G" 42nd Regiment of Volunteers on 28 September 1861 at Washington, Indiana, and on 10 October 1861 he was mustered in at Evansville, Indiana, with his brothers William Nelson, Thomas and Henry McCracken. John James McCracken was 28 years old and entered the service as a Sergeant.

The 42nd Indiana lost eight killed, fifty-three wounded and thirty-one captured at the Battle of Chickamauga. They fought under General Thomas who became known as "The Rock of Chickamauga" because it was his corps that held the line against the Confederates after the rest of the Union army retreated in confusion. John James McCracken was one of the 9,756 Union soldiers who were wounded in the battle. His wound required the amputation of the right index finger. After the hand had healed, he was transferred to the Veterans Reserve Corps because he could no longer shoot a rifle. At Cliffburn Barracks, D.C., on 28 May 1864, John was discharged being unfit for duty and having just five months of his enlistment to serve.

John J. McCracken returned to Daviess County, Indiana, and on 21 December 1867 he married Adaline Ingram. They had five children before Adaline died in 1880 after only 13 years of marriage. John lived until 2 July 1910, aged 77. He and his wife are both buried in Bethany Christian Church Cemetery.

Obituary

His very interesting obituary follows:

"John J. McCracken, Old Soldier, is gone

Was one of the wealthiest citizens of county - estate valued at more than \$50,000.

John J. McCracken, who was one of the wealthiest men of the county, died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Jacob Clark, near Glendale, Saturday afternoon, of Brights disease. Funeral services were held from Bethany church Tuesday and burial in the adjoining cemetery. Mr. McCracken had been declining for two or three years but his condition did not become critical until about two months ago.

One relative estimates the estate of Mr. McCracken to be worth \$50,000 or \$60,000. The bulk of the estate is in farming lands. A partial distribution of the cash was made several weeks ago by Mr. McCracken he realizing that chances were against his recovery. He amassed his fortune by economical living and assiduous work and it may be truthfully said that he was the architect of his own fortune.

Surviving him are five children, two sisters and one brother. The children are Mrs. Jacob Clark, Harrison township; Orien H. McCracken and Austin McCracken, Maysville; and Cyrus B. McCracken of Washington, and J. E. McCracken of Elmore township. Mr. McCracken was born in Barr township more than seventy-seven years ago and had lived all his life in Daviess county. He was an old soldier and one of the best known and respected men of the county."

Thomas McCracken

When the Civil War began, John McCracken and his wife Sarah Jane (Webber) McCracken were the parents of seven sons and two daughters. Four of their sons enlisted in Company "G" 42nd Indiana Regiment of Volunteer Infantry on 28 September 1861. They were: Thomas, William Nelson, John James and Henry. Thomas McCracken was twenty-five years old at the time of his enlistment, having been born 5 October 1835 in Barr Township, Daviess County, Indiana.

Shortly after enlistment the "boys" of the 42nd Indiana were vaccinated for smallpox at their camp near Calhoun, Kentucky. This was unusual, as very little was known about what caused disease - let alone how to prevent it. During the first winter of their service, the 42nd Regiment experienced a great deal of sickness. There was an outbreak of measles in the camp causing several deaths, and many soldiers had such severe complications that they were never fit for duty again. Thomas McCracken was one of the soldiers who was so sick that he was sent to a hospital in Nashville, Tennessee in late February 1862. After about a month, he was transferred to a hospital in Louisville, and at that time he wrote to his family telling them about his illness. His older brother Samuel Clark McCracken was sent to Louisville by their father to bring Thomas home. He was able to obtain a furlough and went home to Barr Township for two months, hoping to regain his health. In a short time, his brother "Clark" became ill with what was

at first believed to be chickenpox. But, they soon discovered that "Clark" had smallpox and had exposed the rest of the family. It is believed that "Clark" contracted the disease while visiting the hospital at Louisville. By the time that all of the family was out of danger, Thomas was well enough to report back to the hospital at Louisville. He was sent to the front and reached the regiment at Huntsville, Alabama.

At the battle of Missionary Ridge, Thomas McCracken was wounded on the right side of the face. A musket ball entered through the cheek and lodged in the jaw damaging the jaw and the facial muscles. It was removed by a doctor at a field hospital set up in a Methodist Church at Chattanooga. He was transferred to a hospital in Nashville, and after a short convalescence returned to his regiment.

Thomas McCracken saw combat in approximately twenty-four battles and skirmishes, including Perryville, Stones River, Chickamauga, the Battles for Chattanooga and the Battles for Atlanta before he was discharged 17 October 1864 at Villanova, Georgia. His gunshot wound healed, but he suffered from the effects of his illnesses for the rest of his life and was pensioned from the U.S. Government as a result.

In 1871 he married Amanda Jane Bastin in Monroe County, Indiana. He was 35 and she was 16. Amanda was the younger sister of Nancy (Bastin) McCracken who was married to Thomas' first' cousin, Charles McCracken. Thomas died 8 April 1901 at the age of 65 and is buried at Mount Olive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Obituary

His obituary from the "Washington Democrat" follows:

"Thomas McCracken, who died Monday afternoon at his home two and a half miles southeast of Montgomery had been sick for over three months from cancer of the liver. His condition, however, did not become serious until two weeks ago. The funeral took place Wednesday. He leaves a wife, two daughters, Mrs. Will Price and Mrs. Cal Morgan, and a son, Henson McCracken."

William Nelson McCracken

William Nelson McCracken was the son of John McCracken and Sarah Jane Webber. He was born 11 November 1828 in Daviess County, Indiana. On 27 March 1853 he married Sarah (Berry) McGehee who was the widow of his first cousin Charles McGehee. Sarah had one son, William Henry McGehee, who was born 2 December 1848. Her first marriage lasted less than two years and she was a widow when she was not quite nineteen years old.

William Nelson McCracken enlisted at the age of 32 as a private in Company "G" 42nd Regiment of Indiana Volunteers on 28 September 1861 at the same time his three younger brothers and two first cousins enlisted. They were all mustered in at Evansville on 10 October 1861. He left a wife, four children and a step-son behind when he joined the 42nd.

The 42nd was in camp near Huntsville, Alabama from April until August 1862. Their duties included brigade drill, picket duty and building stockades. The men considered it "featherbed soldiering".

Confederate General Bragg and his men were then occupying Chattanooga, which was the key to transportation and communication in that part of the south. On August 19th General Bragg began his invasion of Kentucky, hoping to obtain supplies and recruit soldiers for his army. It was not long before the Federal forces at Huntsville, including the 42nd, began their march northward in pursuit of the Confederates. They marched from Huntsville to Louisville, Kentucky, in a month. During the grueling march they were cut off from supplies most of the time. Through parts of Kentucky the line of march often followed in the wake of the Confederate drive north. As a result, the countryside had been depleted of most of its food supply, and the water supply (which is normally poor during late summer) amounted to stagnant ponds which were often contaminated by dead mules left by the rebs [sic].

"Nelson" was driving a regimental train wagon, and he became overheated due to the extremely hot weather. His left arm and shoulder "played out" and he had to be relieved from duty. He was treated in regimental hospitals several times during the next two years because of the chronic illness that he contracted on the march. In March of 1864 he was transferred to the Veterans Reserve Corps and was discharged 14 October 1864 at Lexington, Kentucky.

William Nelson McCracken returned home to Daviess County. He and Sarah lived on farms in Barr and Reeve Townships and had five more children. They moved to Washington, Indiana, about 1893 and retired. Sarah died 25 September 1906 and William N. died 15 May 1910 at the age of 81. Both are buried in Mount Olive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Obituary

The obituary of William N. McCracken:

"Nelson McCracken Passes

Another of the fast thinning ranks of the boys in blue passed to his eternal reward when William Nelson McCracken died at 1:10 o'clock Monday morning at his home 513 Cosby street. Mr. McCracken served three years in the war of the rebellion in the Forty-second Indiana regiment of Infantry and he was one of the best known veterans of the county.

Born November 11, eighty-one years ago, Mr. McCracken lived in Barr and Reeve townships until 1893 when he moved to Washington. He was a farmer and a man of high ideals, known for his honesty and integrity. He married Sarah Berry McGehee in 1853 and they had nine children. Mrs. McCracken died in this city in 1906. Mr. McCracken united with the Baptist church while a young man and his membership was with the Mt. Olive church in Barr township at the time of his death.

The surviving children are John B. McCracken of Hamilton, Washington; H.R. McCracken of Denver; Mrs. Nimrod Victor, Maynard, Minn [sic]; Mrs. Walter Levey and Mrs. Rolland Roselle of Pine Bluff, Ark; Mrs. Henry Villwock of Edwardsport; Mrs. Levi Hunter and Matthew McCracken of Washington. Besides these he leaves four brothers and sisters. They are John James McCracken of Maysville and Henry McCracken of Barr township, and Mrs. Henry Rudolph and Mary J. McCracken of Montgomery.

The death of Mr. McCracken was not expected. He had been declining for about a year and while bedfast for some time his condition did not become critical until last week. He suffered from ailments of old age."

Richard McGehee

Richard McGehee was born 16 July 1825 in Mayslick, Mason County, Kentucky. His parents were Jesse McGehee and Sarah McCracken. The McGehee family moved to Daviess County before 1840 and lived near the McCrackens in Barr Township. Three McGehee brothers served in the Civil War - none of them in the same unit.

Richard McGehee married Evaline Berry 13 January 1846 in Daviess County, Indiana and they had eight children. Two daughters died as children. In 1850 their household consisted of Richard, Evaline, their two small children and Sarah McGehee and her small son. Sarah (Berry) McGehee was the widow of Richard's brother Charles, and she was also the sister of Evaline (Berry) McGehee. This Sarah later married William Nelson McCracken. On the next farm lived the John McCracken family whose four sons (William N., John J., Thomas and Henry) enlisted in Company "G" 42nd Regiment of Indiana Volunteers on 28 September 1861 at the same time that Richard McGehee enlisted. Two farms away Charles McCracken lived with his parents. He also joined the 42nd, making six very close relatives in the same unit.

Richard McGehee was 36 years old when he was mustered in as a private 10 October 1861 at Evansville, Indiana. He left his wife and six children in Daviess County. When the five day Battle of Stones River began Richard was a sharpshooter with the rank of Corporal. He was assigned to picket duty with the 42nd on the night of 3 January. After midnight, the 42nd was attacked by the Confederates and in thirty to forty minutes they lost nearly half the total of 150 men killed and wounded in the entire battle. Richard was wounded in both thighs during the early morning hours of 4 January, and died as a result on 7 January[sic] 1863. He is buried in Murfreesboro National Cemetery.

The death of Richard McGehee left Evaline to raise six children alone. Tragedy continued to plague the family, however, and Evaline died 8 January 1865 - just two years after her husband's death. Now the six children were orphans. The oldest daughter died a few months after her mother, leaving five orphans. They were appointed a guardian, but tradition has it that they were raised in different families of relatives. At this time most of the relatives lived in the same neighborhood and attended Mount Olive Baptist Church. It was common for them to take in children who needed a home and raise them along with their own.

William Henry Harrison Gilley

William Henry Harrison Gilley was born 6 March 1838. Both of his parents died by the time he was seven years old. William Ratton (who married Lucinda Gilley in 1843) was appointed guardian of William and four of his sisters who were under 14. When his sister Winney married Jesse Colbert, William H. H. Gilley was indentured to Jesse to learn the trade of farming. He lived near Hudsonville, Harrison Township, with Jesse and Winney Colbert until he enlisted in the U.S. Army.

On 28 September 1861 William H. H. Gilley enlisted as a private in Company "G" 42nd Regiment of Indiana Volunteers. He was mustered in at Evansville on 10 October 1861 at the age of 23.

Early in February 1862 the 42nd received orders to move to the area of Fort Donelson, Tennessee on the Cumberland River in preparation for a battle. The 42nd was to leave its camp at Calhoun and proceed to Owensboro, Kentucky, where it would be transported by steamer down the Ohio River and then up the Cumberland River to Fort Donelson. They responded to the order immediately and began striking tents and loading wagons. By 9:00 p.m. they were ready to march. During the night they marched twenty-six miles through rain, mud and slush. In the morning they boarded steamers which headed down the Ohio, stopping at Evansville just long enough for the men to greet a large crowd of friends and relatives.

It was during this time that William came down with typhoid fever which is an infectious and sometimes fatal bacterial disease spread by contaminated water or poor sanitary conditions. He was sent to a hospital in Evansville where he remained for three months.

Upon being released from the hospital, William H. H. Gilley reported to Pittsburg Landing. Benjamin Hopkins of Company "G" 42nd was also released from the hospital at the same time. They traveled together to Pittsburg, Tennessee (near Shiloh) expecting to rejoin their regiment. The regiment, however, had been sent in another direction. They were placed with the 49th Ohio and did duty there until the fall of Corinth, Mississippi.

William never recovered from the effects of the Typhoid Fever. He returned to the 42nd and remained in the army, but was assigned to detached duty much of the time due to his health. On 9 October 1864 he was discharged at Villanova, Georgia, as a corporal.

He returned to Daviess County and lived with Jesse and Winney Colbert for a while. When his health permitted he farmed - some of the time for himself and some of the time as a hired hand. On 28 December 1864 William H. H. Gilley and Margaret Alice McCracken were married by Reverend Slater of Mount Olive Baptist Church. The Gilleys lived in Daviess County and continued their membership at Mount Olive until 1871 when they moved to Clay County, Illinois. They lived near Flora, Illinois, and William worked at farming and, for a short time, on the railroad.

William first applied for a pension in 1879. It was rejected, apparently for lack of hospital records from Evansville, Indiana. Several more attempts were made to secure a pension and it was finally granted in 1885. It took an Act of Congress to accomplish it.

In 1886 William and Margaret moved back to Washington, Indiana. They lived at 1306 W. Walnut. William H.H. Gilley died 26 October 1906 in Washington at the age of

68. Margaret received a widow's pension after his death. She lived at 1216 E. VanTrees and owned real estate valued at \$1200.00 and household goods valued at \$25.00. She lost her rights to a pension when she married John M. Jackman on 13 August 1911.

Obituary

"Washington Gazette"

Saturday, November 3, 1906

DEATH REMOVES W.H.H. GILLEY WAS A NATIVE OF DAVIESS COUNTY AND AN OLD SOLDIERMEMBER CO. G, 42nd IND.

His Illness Lasted But Three Days When the Last Reveille Was Heard Calling Him

Responding to the last reveille that mustered him out of service forever, W. H. H. Gilley answered the roll call at 2 o'clock Friday night. An illness of three days duration resulting from an attack of paralysis of the kidneys caused the death of another Union soldier of the rebellion.

The news of the death of Mr. Gilley came as a surprise[sic] and a shock to nearly everyone as few knew of his illness. He was down town on Wednesday evening of this week. Shortly after going home that evening he received the paralytic stroke and grew steadily worse until death.

He was born in this county near Hudsonville. All his life except three years during the war and a short residence in Illinois was spent in this county. He enlisted in company "G" of the 42nd Indiana regiment volunteers September 27, 1861, and served in this company to the end of his enlistment. Captain Palmer speaks highly of the services rendered the country by this veteran. When he was mustered out of service he returned to Daviess county and for years made his home south of the city near Veale's creek church. Six years ago he moved to this city and since then has lived on east VanTrees street. Mrs. Gilley whose maiden name was McCracken survives him as do two sons Austin and Charles Gilley.

He was a member of the G. A. R. post of this city, the Red Men's lodge of this city and the First Baptist Church. He always took an active part in the organizations to which he belonged."

Francis Marion Hunter

Francis Marion Hunter was born 19 September 1845 in Barr Township, Daviess County, Indiana. His birth was recorded in the Bible that had belonged to his grandfather John

Hunter, a Revolutionary War soldier. The Bible record reads "Franklin Marion Hunter" but his Civil War records give his name as Francis. The name he actually used was Frank. He was the fourth child of William Hunter and Martha Davis.

In September of 1861 Frank's older brothers Henry and Reuben enlisted in Company "G" 42nd Indiana Regiment of Volunteer Infantry. At the Battle of Perryville, 8 October 1862 the 42nd was attacked in a ravine where they were filling their canteens and eating their rations. The 42nd was ordered to break into companies and to reform at the top of the hill. In the confusion there were many casualties. Henry Hunter was killed and Reuben Hunter was wounded. Reuben received a medical discharge on 3 January 1863. A little more than a year later, Reuben enlisted again in the 42nd as a Corporal, and Francis Marion Hunter enlisted at the age of 18 and went off to war with his older brother.

The 42nd joined General Sherman's army at Chattanooga, Tennessee and fought in the Atlanta Campaign from 1 May through 8 September 1864. They fought at Buzzard's Roost Gap, Resaca, Dallas, New Hope Church, Allatoona Hills, Picketts' Mills, Pine Hill, Lost Mountain, Kenesaw Mountain, Smyrna Camp Ground, Nancy's Creek, and then Peachtree Creek. It was at Peachtree Creek, Georgia that Reuben Hunter was mortally wounded. He died at a Federal Field Hospital in Kingston, Georgia, 5 August 1864. Frank Hunter was also wounded at Peachtree Creek on the 20th of July. A rebel bullet hit him in the left shin. Frank was treated by a regimental surgeon and was soon returned to duty. The wound caused him a good deal of pain while on the marches that followed the Battle of Peachtree Creek, but it eventually healed completely.

Sherman's army soon occupied Atlanta. The next campaign was Sherman's March to the Sea. It began in Atlanta 15 November 1864 and ended in Savannah 21 December 1864. Then came the Carolinas Campaign early in 1865. The Grand Army of the West marched 425 miles from Savannah, Georgia to Goldsboro, North Carolina in fifty days.

The 42nd was present at the surrender of Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston on 26 April 1865 near Durham Station, North Carolina. The war was nearly over. The 42nd began its long march to Washington, D.C. on the 29th of April and arrived in the capital city on the 19th of May where a Grand Review of the victorious armies was held on 23 and 24 May 1865.

Francis M. Hunter was discharged at Louisville, Kentucky, 21 July 1865 and returned home to Daviess County. Paul Hunter never remembered hearing his grandfather Frank talk about the Civil War. The subject must have brought many painful memories to the old man.

Tradition has it that the Hunter family moved to Texas and "burnt up" in the dustbowl. Most of the family moved up into Kansas except Frank who came back to Barr Township where he and Susan Dell Banta were married. Susan's parents were Abram T. Banta and Eliza Stephens, and her grandparents were William Stephens and Elizabeth McCracken. Franklin M. Hunter and Susan Dell Banta were married 27 December 1871.

Frank and Susan Dell lived in a log house built by Susan Dell 's grandfather, Henry Banta. They purchased 72 acres of land in Barr Township that had been in the Banta family since 1818. Four of the five Hunter children were born in the log house. In 1888, a frame house which still stands, was built, and in 1889 Annie Gertrude, the youngest Hunter child was born there.

Frank and Susan Dell celebrated their golden wedding anniversary 27 December 1921 with a family gathering. All five of their children and nine of their ten grandchildren celebrated with them. The highlight of the party was an elaborate wedding cake trimmed with sweet peas and gold letters. Baked inside the cake was a gold ring for Susan Dell and a gold pen for Frank.

Frank Hunter died 7 March 1924 from a heart attack brought on by the exertion of using an old fiddle-style seeder to sow grass seed. He was buried in Bethany Cemetery. One of the obituaries written about him said, "The deceased man whose word was as good as his bond was an outstanding representative of the fast-passing type of citizen that has done much to make Daviess County a leading Indiana community[sic]. It can be said with all candidness that in his death the county has suffered an irreparable [sic] loss.

Obituary from the "Washington Democrat" 7 March 1924

"Francis M. Hunter, age 78 years, died this morning at 8:40 at his home south of Montgomery. He had been in poor health for a long time, and had been confined to his bed for ten days. Mr. Hunter was a farmer, and was well known throughout the county. He leaves a widow and five children, Mrs. Daniel Liddle, of Vincennes, Austin Hunter, Mrs. Lewis Harris, and Mrs. Robert Wildridge, all of Barr township, and Mrs. Curtis Ellis of Steele township. He is also survived by a brother, William Albert Hunter, of Chanute, Kan., and a sister, Mrs. Laura McGehee, of Howard, Kan. He leaves ten grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Mr. Hunter was a member of the Bethany Christian church, where the funeral services will be conducted Sunday morning at 10:30. Burial in the churchyard."

The Battle of Perryville

8 October 1862

FEDERAL: General Buell

37,000 effectives

4,211 casualties

CONFEDERATE: General Bragg

16,000 effectives

3,405 casualties

Company "G"

42nd Indiana - Charles McCracken, John James McCracken, Thomas McCracken, William Nelson McCracken, Henry McCracken, Richard McGehee, William H. H. Gilley

The Battle of Perryville was the most significant battle fought on Kentucky soil. It was a strange engagement where parts of Buell's Federal army battled portions of Bragg's with both sides obtaining the advantage at times. Due to an atmospheric phenomenon by which battle noise was not heard back of the lines, Buell did not realize until late in the day that a major fight was in progress and failed to get his full force into battle. Likewise, parts of Bragg's army were still in the Frankfort area where General Bragg was witnessing the inauguration of a Confederate governor. By day's end Buell had won at least a partial victory and Bragg retreated to the southeast, ending the Confederate invasion of Kentucky.

On the morning of the 8th of October, the 42nd Indiana moved on the "double quick" for more than a mile. Before the battle began, the regiment was drawn up in formation as if it were on dress parade, and an order was read to the men to the effect that under no conditions would a soldier be allowed to assist a wounded comrade off the battlefield. The soldiers were about to engage in the death conflict for the first time. Imagine how they must have felt at that moment.

The day was very hot and few of the men had water in their canteens. The regiment moved into a ravine where there was water, and while they were cooking, eating and filling their canteens, they were attacked - first with cannons, and then the Confederate infantry moved out of the brush and began firing into the 42nd's right flank. They were trapped in the ravine and before they could decide what to do, a staff officer from the brigade commander dashed down the hill and gave orders for the regiment to break by companies and re-form at the top of the hill. There was great confusion as each company made its way out of the ravine, the best way that it could, while being fired upon constantly.

The 42nd had scarcely re-formed and aligned for battle when the order came to change position again so that the 42nd could come to the aid of the 80th Indiana Infantry and the 19th Indiana Artillery. General Rousseau, the division commander, rode in front of the 80th Indiana with his hat on the tip of his sword, held high above his head. The men cheered him loud and long. The 80th had been in existence for only a month and its men had no military experience at all.

The 42nd and the 80th formed their battle lines on an angle with each other, with the 19th Indiana Battery of Artillery on a small hill between them. The enemy (a brigade known as the "Louisiana Tigers") advanced towards their position and were met with heavy fire, but they moved on steadily as if on drill in camp. Richard McGehee was one of the sharpshooters of Company "G" 42nd who were ordered to keep the rebel flag down. Three times the Confederate flag and its bearer were shot down only to be taken

up again by another man. The fourth time it fell within seventy-five yards of the 42nd's line.

During the battle, Captain Charles G. Olmstead of Company "A" was killed by a bullet that struck him near the center of the forehead. He was urging, encouraging and cheering his men on and had just said to them, "This is as good a place to die as any other". The words had hardly left his lips when he fell. Four other officers were wounded, one of them being Captain Eli McCarty of Company "G" who was severely wounded in the shoulder.

At the end of the day, the 42nd was holding its position firmly, and steadily forcing the enemy back, when it was discovered that another rebel force was approaching them on the right. But before the rebels got close enough to do much damage, the orders came for the 42nd to retreat over the hill, and the fight ended. The battle lasted six hours, but the fighting time of the 42nd was about two hours.

The next morning, the Confederate army had retreated and was on its way out of the State of Kentucky, taking with it large quantities of army supplies that it had obtained there.

On the morning of October 8th, the 42nd regiment numbered less than 500 effective men. The entire loss during the battle was 166, or one-third of the effective command. The available fighting force of Company "G" was 52 and the loss in killed and wounded was 22, leaving only 30 men who escaped injury.

Letter about the Battle

The following letter was written by a private of the 42nd Regiment to his wife at home in Indiana:

"Camp on the March Oct the 19th

My Dear love, I have the pleasure of writing to you once more. I am best of my health considering sircumstances [sic] and I hope that these few lines may find you all enjoying good health. I received from you a letter dated Sept 28 and one from your mother on the 2d. I was glad to here [sic] from you once more. it was the first time that I had heard from you for one month. I have not wrote mutch [sic] as I would have liked to. we have been marching for the last two month. we have had a fight since we left Louisville. it is called the battle of Perryville. Alexander and I went threw [sic] the battle safe and unhurt. the Loss of our Company in killed one, Oliver Busenham, Wounded 8 tho [sic] slitley [sic]. we are 4 miles on the other side of Craborchert tho [sic] expect to leave here to day. some thinks that we will go in camp. we are a hundred and five miles from Louisville. our company is reduced to about twenty-five men. we have not slept under tents since we left Huntsville. while we was in the fight I lost my blanket and haversack. I captured a secesh haversack. it don [sic] me till I draud [sic] one. I have don [sic] without one ever since last out of the field. I was in the hottest [sic] of the battle all the time. Oliver was killed by my side as we retreated up a hill. he was struck with a ball in

the back. he fell and ask me to help him but there was no place to stop and help wounded men. the secesh was in all over that ground in few minutes. the rebels treted [sic] him with respect, our dead they stript [sic] of there [sic] shoes and blankets and other close [sic]. I had your Portrait in my shot Pouch. a bullet struck it severing it from one end to the other. I never seen your likeness agan [sic] tho [sic] I feel lost without it. I hope that it will not be long till I can see your lovly [sic] face once more never to part until Death. I send my best respects to all. Send your letters to Louisville Ky 42 reg. Excuse me for the present. Write Soon.

William R. Stuckey

In October of 1862, after the Battle of Perryville, there was a reorganization of the Federal forces located in Tennessee. What was previously known as Buell's Army of the Ohio became the Army of the Cumberland. Major General William S. Rosecrans took command 30 October 1862. At Nashville during the months of November and December the commands were re-equipped with rifles of a standard caliber. Up until this time a variety of rifles were being used which made it very difficult to supply ammunition.

The Battle of Stones River

31 December 1862 - 4 January 1863

FEDERAL: General Rosecrans

43,400 effectives

13,249 casualties

CONFEDERATE: General Bragg

37,712 effectives

10,266 casualties

Company "G"

42nd Indiana - Charles McCracken, John James McCracken, Thomas McCracken, William Nelson McCracken, Henry McCracken, Richard McGehee, William H. H. Gilley

Casualties: Charles McCracken, wounded 31 December 1862; Richard McGehee, wounded 4 January 1863 and died 7 January 1863.

On 26 December 1862, General Rosecrans and his Army of the Cumberland moved out of Nashville, intending to sweep Bragg's Confederate army aside and drive on to Chattanooga. Four days later, as Federal forces neared Murfreesboro, Bragg chose to make his stand just north of the city in relatively open country dotted with patches of red cedar and divided by the shallow, winding Stones River.

The Confederates had expected an assault from Rosecrans' advancing army on the 30th of December, but it had not come. That night the two armies camped within sight of each other, ready for battle. The mood was tense but there was no firing. The soldiers tried to rest. Somewhere an army band began to play a patriotic air and soon the band from the

other side replied with one of its own. Before long the hills resounded with "Hail Columbia" battling "Bonnie Blue Flag", and "Dixie" trying to drown out "Yankee Doodle". Some band struck up "Home Sweet Home" and the tough westerners of both armies began to sing the bittersweet song that brought back memories of home and family. The singing ended when "Tattoo" called for lights out in the cold, wet camps.

On the last day of the year, both generals planned to attack. Bragg planned to swing with his left to crush the Federal right flank, and Rosecrans planned to do just about the same thing to the Confederate right. But the Confederates took the initiative and immediately after dawn the rebels charged the Union right flank. From the beginning the Federals were on the defensive, and after several assaults on their right flank they were forced back to the Murfreesboro-Nashville Pike with their backs against Stones River. Rosecrans' offensive was called off and by noon he had formed a strong defensive line instead. Confederate assaults continued until late afternoon, but the Federal defenses held. Although Confederate casualties were heavy, they had clearly won the day. After the day-long fight, the armies remained on the field within range of each other.

There was little fighting at Stones River on 1 January 1863. Some positions were shifted and there were a few exchanges of gunfire, but the day was spent mostly in preparation for the continuance of the battle. The exhausted soldiers rested; but the stretcher-bearers, ambulance drivers and doctors at the field hospitals worked long and hard.

Fighting resumed at Murfreesboro on 2 January 1863. The Confederates succeeded in taking a small hill on the east side of Stones River that was occupied by Federal troops. The Federals, however, drove them off with artillery and a countercharge. At the end of the day the armies of Bragg and Rosecrans paused on the battlefield again, each hoping that the other would withdraw.

Saturday, 3 January, the Federals pushed two brigades (which was only a small amount of the available force) forward in an attack on rebel lines. The rest of the army remained in position. During the night, Bragg's Confederate Army of Tennessee, despite apparent victory in the first stages of battle, withdrew from Murfreesboro toward Tullahoma, Tennessee. The Battle of Stones River was over.

The Union army occupied and fortified the city of Murfreesboro. A huge supply base was built there and named Fortress Rosecrans. From there the Union army was able to launch a successful attack on the Confederate rail center at Chattanooga and thus control the transportation routes in southeastern Tennessee. The loss of the food-producing section of middle Tennessee was a severe blow to the Confederate army.

THE 42nd AT STONES RIVER

The 2nd brigade, under Colonel John Beatty, to which the 42nd Indiana belonged, left Nashville 26 December 1862 and marched toward Murfreesboro by way of Lavergne. The late heavy rains had flooded the area, making the road nothing but mud. Four days later the 42nd Indiana reached the main army which was then in position confronting the Confederates along Stones River. They took their position in the center, covering the turnpike and the railroad.

The Army of the Cumberland was divided into three corps commanded by Generals McCook on the right, Thomas in the center and Crittenden on the left. One of the three division commanders under General Thomas was General L. H. Rousseau, and under General Rousseau's command were four brigades. Colonel John Beatty led the 2nd brigade which consisted of the 42nd Indiana, 88th Indiana, 15th Kentucky and 3rd Ohio.

The Confederates first attacked McCook on the right at daybreak. His first two divisions gave way almost immediately, but the third division held fast until they ran out of ammunition. The Federal line was quickly being doubled back on itself like a jackknife.

About 9:00 a.m. Generals Thomas and Rousseau gave Colonel Beatty orders to occupy a cedar woods to the right of the turnpike. The brigade was to assist in holding the rebels in check while new lines to the rear were being fixed. The brigade was quickly in position and was instructed to throw up temporary breastworks made from fallen trees, and then to lie down for the advance of the Confederates who were then coming directly toward them. Within ten minutes the 42nd Indiana and Colonel Beatty's brigade were under fire. A short time later a Colonel of the 15th Kentucky was killed and his men retreated in confusion, without informing Colonel Beatty. The position of the 15th had been just to the right of the 42nd with about seventy-five yards between the two regiments, but because of the smoke and noise in the cedar woods it was impossible for anyone in the 42nd to know what was happening in the next regiment. It was quickly discovered by Colonel Beatty that the rebels were advancing through the woods and would soon be able to surround and capture the entire brigade if it did not retreat. The commands were given and the regiments marched in formation to the lines in the rear under heavy fire.

Then the fighting began again. The lines of the Federals and Confederates were never more than 75 to 100 yards apart. For two hours the 42nd Indiana, 88th Indiana and 3rd Ohio held their position. They received reinforcements, and for two more hours they fought a most desperate fight, maintaining their ground, but with heavy loss. It was about 4:00 p.m. before they were ordered out, making the actual fighting time that day about seven and a half hours. The command then retired to the rear of the main line, across the railroad and turnpike.

The new position of the Federal line was in the shape of a horseshoe. In the center of the curve were thirty pieces of artillery which included the six famous cannons known as the "Chicago Board of Trade". Reinforcements occupied the center of the horseshoe and could be moved in a very short time to wherever they might be needed on the front line. After all of the Federal troops in front of this new line had been withdrawn, the Confederates made a bold and rapid advance. When the enemy was about 200 yards away from the new line, the order came for the artillery to begin firing. The enemy soldiers were in full view and were hit with a hail of fire from the Federal artillery and infantry. It was a scene of carnage and death, but the rebels were not easily stopped. As soon as one line of soldiers melted away under the fire of cannon and small arms, another was ready to take its place. The rebels came on, wave after wave, for about an hour. Some rebel soldiers threw down their arms and crawled through the underbrush and smoke of the battlefield to the Federal lines and gave themselves up rather than face certain death.

Rapidly approaching darkness put an end to the day's fighting - to the great relief of both exhausted and decimated armies .

The 42nd Indiana did not fight again until the night of January 3rd. On the 1st and 2nd it took its place with Colonel Beatty's brigade in the center of the horseshoe-shaped line, but the Confederates did not attack on the 1st, and on the 2nd they fought only with General Crittenden 's corps on the left.

On the night of the fourth day, which was 3 January 1863, the 42nd under Lt. Colonel Shanklin was on picket guard duty directly in front of the center of the battle line. About midnight Colonel Shanklin sent a message to brigade headquarters to report that the

rebels were planting a battery of artillery so near that the commands of their officers could be distinctly heard, and asking for reinforcements. This message went to General Thomas whose response was, "Tell Lt. Colonel Shanklin to hold that position at all hazards". An hour later Colonel Shanklin again asked for reinforcements, and sent the information that he believed a rebel cavalry unit was also in his front with the infantry and artillery. General Thomas repeated his earlier command. Colonel Shanklin and the 42nd obeyed orders. The fight came in darkness and many on both sides were killed. The rebels had a section of artillery, but the 42nd had only small arms. The fight lasted thirty to forty minutes, but the casualties of the 42nd regiment were nearly equal to those of the seven and a half hour fight of the first day. The command was overpowered, and (acting under the impression that the rebel force was much greater than it actually was) retreated to the main line about 1,000 yards away. The enemy proved to be only the rear guard of the rebel force which used this last encounter with the 42nd to cover its retreat from Murfreesboro.

In the morning the Confederates were gone. Union General Rosecrans made the following report: "Sunday morning, January 4, It was not deemed advisable to commence offensive movements, and news soon reached us that the enemy had fled from Murfreesboro. Burial parties were sent out to bury the dead, and the cavalry was sent to reconnoiter." [sic]

After the battle, a number of days were spent collecting small arms from the battlefield and burying the dead. The dead of Colonel Beatty's brigade were buried near the railroad and pike with those of the 42nd Indiana being buried together in one long, wide grave.

A National Cemetery was established in 1865 at Stones River National Battlefield. Of the 6,124 Civil War graves, 2,307 are unknown. Corporal Richard McGehee is buried in grave number 0-5810.

Letter about the Battle of Stones River

In a letter to his wife, a member of the 42nd Indiana described the battle this way:

Camp near Murfreesboro [sic], Tenn [sic] Jan the 20th 63

My darling wife

I am in Tolerable good health and hope these may find you and viola [sic] and all our friends at home enjoying the best of health. we have had a very hard time since I wrote you the last letter. we went on a scout on the 13th and arived [sic] back on the 16th. the hardships we seen is indescribable. we went to a Little Town nine miles from here and then was within three miles of the rebel camp. it was suposed [sic] that it was only a Brigade of Cavalry. our Regt only consisten [sic] of one hundred and sixty seven then, we lay on our arms all night and the next morning we fell back to Salem five miles from this place where we lay for two days in the rain and mud and since that time I have been very poorly having a very bad coal [sic]. I received your letter of the 27th and was glad to here [sic] from you and would have wrote to you sooner but my head hurt so that I was almost blind so you must excuse me for not writing sooner. I supose [sic] you have heard more about the Battle than I can inform you of. if the Dead is Buried it is of late. there was secesh on the field last Saturdsday [sic] for I seen them. I went to see Franklin Ross and Jasper M. Martin and to carry there [sic] Knapsacks to them. I was glad to see them as well as they was. they are tolerable bad wounded tho [sic] not dangerously. I was sorry to see Frank leave the Field as he is my old faverite [sic] friend and feel as

nigh to each other as brothers. he is wounded in the shoulder and Martin in the bowles [sic] and arm. bouth [sic] no doubt will recover but never will be fit for duty. there is fore [sic] missen [sic] but three we have never heard from. S.T. Tyner Wm A Kith and Amos Barker all fought well and it is supposed they are taken prisoners. Willis Brown is absence. he was seen run off the field and was seen the next day at Nashville. he is but little thought of in Company K. I till [sic] you he is the damnest [sic] coward I ever seen. darn the secesh. they fight like hell. we Didnt [sic] make any thing of them in the long run for they whiped [sic] us like hell the first day wednsday [sic] tho [sic] we made them smell thunder after that. we didnt [sic] gain as big a victory as you will here [sic]. our loss is great and no one is able to give a correct account. the sufferings of the boys is to [sic] bad to discribe [sic]. we lay for three days laying on our bellys in the mud and rain without any thing to eat. our suffer was great. you would hardly believe me if I would tell you that I eat the flesh of a horse tho [sic] I wasnt [sic] the only one. thousand besides me eat of it. I thought it was as good meat as ever I eat but I often shuder [sic] when I think about it. there was three horses killed in a few rods of our Regt. they was hardly Don [sic] Kidken [sic] when the boys comenced [sic] Skinining [sic] and eating. we was sent out on picket on saturday [sic] after the battle of Wednesday [sic]. we run the Rebles [sic] out of a strip of woods. we was atacted [sic] early in the morning with a heavy force of Rebles [sic]. they opened the atact [sic] with there [sic] batterys [sic] one in front and two was playing on us at acrossfire [sic]. the Cannons was so close to us we could here [sic] the Rebles [sic] Commanders Cursing the gunners and telling them to aim low for the d-d [sic] Yankys [sic] is laying down. frequently they would say give them Hell. we was laying behind cliffs of rocks. I almost wished I was a mole and if I was I would have crauled [sic] in the ground. we was ordered to retreat. when we raised up the dam [sic] Devils was within a few rods of us. we run like Hell for a while the cannon balles [sic] flying around us like hail and there was three Regts [sic] of Rebles [sic] firing [sic] as fast as they could. and who will you say was the cause of me getting out safe? I think I can safely say it was by good runing [sic] that I got out of that mornings [sic] fight. we lossed [sic] several good men that morning besides a good many wounded. I donot [sic] beleave [sic] that there has ever been such a battle fought in America as the battle of Merfeesboro [sic]. we will be paid off in a few days. I will send you the money in the place of Father. if your father wishes to com [sic] to see us they can come with all ease and if them come send me a hat and pair of boots. I wrote to father to send me a pair of boots and he has not."

William R. Stuckey

42nd Indiana

Battle of Chickamauga

19 and 20 September 1863

FEDERAL: General Rosecrans

58,000 effectives

16,170 casualties (28%)

CONFEDERATE: General Bragg

66,000 effectives

18,454 casualties (28%)

Company "G"

42nd Indiana under General Thomas - John James McCracken, Thomas McCracken, William Nelson McCracken, William H. H. Gilley

Casualties: - John James McCracken, wounded.

On the battlefields of Chickamauga and Chattanooga the Union and Confederate armies clashed during the fall of 1863 in some of the hardest fighting of the Civil War. The objective of both armies was the control of Chattanooga which was a key rail center and the gateway to the heart of the Confederacy. The campaign actually began six months earlier, after the same armies fought at Stones River.

The Confederate army moved all but three divisions from the Ringgold, Georgia area across West Chickamauga Creek on 18 September 1863. Heavy skirmishing with Federal cavalry broke out at Pea Vine Ridge, Alexander's Bridge, Spring Creek and other spots in the area. Union General Rosecrans moved Thomas' corps of the Army of the Cumberland in a hard march to the northeast so that the Confederates would not outflank the Federals toward Chattanooga. A major battle was in sight. On the 19th neither the Federal army under Rosecrans nor the Confederate army under Bragg was quite sure of the exact position of the opposing army as they moved into roughly parallel lines west of Chickamauga Creek, southeast of Chattanooga.

General Thomas, on the Federal left or north flank, sent part of his troops forward to investigate the enemy. This body ran into the dismounted Confederate cavalry of Nathan B. Forrest and actually opened the battle. Fighting in this section grew more severe as other units joined in, and by afternoon the greater portions of both armies were engaged along a ragged three-mile line. The Confederates were unable to penetrate between Chattanooga and the Federal forces who held the roads to the city. Losses in the sporadic but heavy fighting were high on both sides (some units lost more than fifty per cent of their men), but the results were negligible as the same ground was fought for, over and over again. At night, the Federals tightened their line and built breastworks, and the Confederates received reinforcements.

The fight began again the next morning, September 20th, about 9:30 a.m. when the Confederates moved forward. The Union left under General Thomas fell back, but held at the breastworks. Neither side gained nor lost much from the heavy Confederate attacks until shortly before noon when the Confederates found that by a blunder of orders an entire Union division had been pulled out, leaving a gap in the Federal line. The rebels hit hard at that point, driving two divisions away and cutting the Federal line, which caused a major portion of it to flee in considerable disorder. Rosecrans, McCook and Crittenden were caught up in the retreat toward Chattanooga. Only Thomas' corps, aided by a few other units, remained. General Thomas managed to form a new line on a rounded knoll known as Snodgrass Hill. Here the Federals held through the afternoon, repelling assault after assault. Thomas' men and fragments of other units fought a great defensive battle which earned for Thomas his famous name "Rock of Chickamauga". The battle lasted until night when, obeying orders, Thomas withdrew towards Rossville and the mountain gaps that led to Chattanooga.

The Confederates pursued, occupying Missionary Ridge, Lookout Mountain and Chattanooga Valley. By placing artillery on the heights overlooking the river and blocking the roads and rail lines, the rebels prevented Union supplies from entering the city.

The Battles for Chattanooga
23-25 November 1863

FEDERAL: General Grant

56,000 effectives

5,824 casualties

CONFEDERATE: General Bragg

46,000 effectives

6,667 casualties

Company "G"

42nd Indiana - Thomas McCracken, William Nelson McCracken, William H. H. Gilley.
Casualties: - Thomas McCracken wounded, 25 November 1863.

After the Battle of Chickamauga, the Confederates had a stranglehold on Chattanooga, occupying Missionary Ridge, Lookout Mountain and Chattanooga Valley. The city was under siege when President Lincoln and his military advisors made two decisions that affected the future of the siege and the whole war. The first was to send General Hooker to Chattanooga with a corps from the Army of the Potomac. The second was to place General Ulysses S. Grant as overall commander in the West. Grant quickly promoted General Thomas to head the Army of the Cumberland, replacing Rosecrans.

General Grant arrived at Chattanooga on 23 October 1863 and the situation there began to change almost immediately. On the 28th, Federal troops were able to open a short supply route from Bridgeport, Alabama. General Hooker came from Virginia with 20,000 men and General Sherman brought 16,000 men from Mississippi to reinforce the Union army at Chattanooga. About the same time, the Confederate force was depleted when Longstreet's 15,000 rebel soldiers were sent to Knoxville to oppose Burnside.

On the morning of 23 November 1863 the Confederate troops who were then occupying Missionary Ridge were entertained by the appearance below of 20,000 Union troops, dressed in their best uniforms and marching in perfect ranks to the vigorous music of military bands. The rebels watched calmly, assuming that a grand parade was underway. Suddenly, the parade wheeled and charged furiously up the slopes. In short order, Federal troops overran Orchard Knob, a hill between Chattanooga and Missionary Ridge. Grant ordered reinforcements and entrenchments on the knob which became his command post the next day.

In the early morning hours of the 24th, General Sherman's troops quietly crossed the Tennessee River in makeshift boats, carrying their rifles and spades. By dawn they had dug rifle pits a mile long, and by afternoon all of Sherman's men had crossed the river and were ready to attack Missionary Ridge.

Also during the morning of the 24th, General Hooker ordered the advance on Lookout Mountain. A dense fog hung around the slopes and Hooker's advance was not discovered until his troops were a few yards away from the rebel positions. The Federal soldiers pushed the defenders steadily up the rough slopes of Lookout Mountain. By

noon a Confederate stand at Craven's Farm had been driven back and Hooker's troops were entrenched just below the summit. The remaining Confederates withdrew during the night. Before sunrise on the 25th, Hooker sent a detachment to the top of Lookout Mountain and at dawn the Union army below could see the Stars and Stripes flying at the summit. Amid their preparations for battle, the Union soldiers cheered and celebrated.

From his command post on Orchard Knob, General U.S. Grant ordered the advance against Missionary Ridge on the morning of 25 November 1863. Sherman attacked on the north end of the ridge and Hooker attacked on the south end. Grant planned to hold the attack on the center until the flanks had gained some ground and diverted the enemy force. Both of these attacks soon slowed down, but Grant held off on the attack in the center until mid-afternoon. The signal was given and General Thomas' men began to assault the heavily entrenched enemy in the center at the top of Missionary Ridge. Certain that there would be fierce resistance, Grant ordered his troops to stop half-way up the slope and reorganize. In a very short time, Thomas' men were driving the Confederates out of their entrenchments so rapidly and following them so closely that Confederate and Union troops were running and climbing side by side as the Federals advanced and the Confederates retreated. This caused the rebel artillery to aim high in order to avoid killing their own men. The Union soldiers did not stop and reorganize as ordered, but instead continued their charge up the heavily occupied slope into the Confederate center yelling, "Chickamauga, Chickamauga" as they charged. The Yankees overran line after line of defenses until the rebels on the crest were desperately hurling rocks at the onrushing enemy.

The Confederates were soon in panic-stricken retreat towards Chickamauga. Confederate General Bragg narrowly escaped being captured, although that is what happened to over 4,000 of his men. Union troops gathered at the top of Missionary Ridge cheering wildly.

The siege and the Battles for Chattanooga were over, and Union armies now controlled the city and nearly all of Tennessee. The next spring, Sherman used Chattanooga for his base as he started his march to Atlanta and then to the sea.

THE 42nd INDIANA AT CHATTANOOGA

After the Battle of Chickamauga, the 42nd retreated to Chattanooga with the rest of the defeated Army of the Cumberland. It went into camp in several locations within the besieged area, living in fortifications and entrenchments in direct range of the rebel heavy artillery on Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. For many days and nights they were harassed by the Confederate artillery.

The soldiers suffered a great deal from the lack of food and medical supplies during the siege. The meat allowance for an entire regiment was one beef on foot once a week. The hungry soldiers ate everything except the bones, horns and hoofs.

Their discomfort was increased by the lack of proper clothing (especially shoes) and the fall weather in the mountains. The siege lasted for two months. The first month no supplies could get through at all. The second month was not much better, but they were able to get limited supplies of food.

The arrival of Generals Grant and Sherman with their 36,000 reinforcements gave the men renewed hope and courage. To them it meant that offensive operations would soon

begin and the siege would come to an end. The month after the arrival of Grant and Sherman was spent busily preparing for the offensive operation.

On the 23rd of November, the 42nd fought at Orchard Knob. The next day General Hooker and his men had the responsibility of dislodging the Confederates from Lookout Mountain which rises about 1,400 feet above the Tennessee River, with a plateau at about 1,100 feet. The 42nd Indiana was part of General Carlin's brigade whose responsibility it was to carry ammunition to Hooker's men who had attacked the mountain early in the day. About 5:00 p.m. Carlin's brigade crossed Chattanooga Creek and climbed the mountain to Hooker's right, carrying supplies of ammunition on their backs to his soldiers. The Confederates finally withdrew after midnight and about daylight the next morning, a party from the 8th Kentucky climbed to the summit of Lookout Mountain and planted the Union flag at a point where it was dramatically visible to the rest of the Union forces in the valley below. The officers and soldiers who had been under siege for two months cheered enthusiastically. That morning the men of the 42nd Indiana climbed down the mountain, crossed to Missionary Ridge and waited for orders to attack.

It was between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. on the 25th that six cannon shots from Orchard Knob gave the signal for the general advance on the center of Missionary Ridge. After the first entrenchments of the enemy had been captured, the troops (officers and men) were so eager to reach the top of the ridge that they held their fire and scrambled up the face of the ridge. The crest was reached at least six different places at the same time. As the Confederates retreated, loud hurrahs and cheering could be heard all along the victorious Union line. The men were wild with excitement because of the victory and because they could see the Confederate wagon trains, artillery and soldiers all struggling to their rear.

After the Battle of Missionary Ridge, the 42nd Indiana was one of the regiments ordered to pursue the retreating Confederates. When the pursuers arrived at the Chickamauga River, General Palmer, who was commanding an entire corps, asked for a good skirmish regiment to go forward. The 42nd, which was at the rear of the column, was ordered to the front for that purpose and was ordered to encounter or scatter the enemy. The regiment remained in front until Graysville, Georgia was reached and the pursuit was abandoned.

The 42nd lost 42 officers and men killed or wounded during the Battles for Chattanooga.

Sherman's Advance to Atlanta

4 May - 17 July 1864

FEDERAL: General Sherman

100,000 effectives

CONFEDERATE: General Johnston

65,000 effectives

Company "G"

42nd Indiana – Henry McCracken, Thomas McCracken, William H.H. Gilley, Francis M. Hunter

By the spring of 1864 the Confederacy was weakening and the mighty war power of the Union was at last being used effectively. General Ulysses S. Grant, who had recently been promoted to military commander-in-chief, ordered a concerted offensive by all Union armies. His orders to General William T. Sherman at Chattanooga were to attack the Confederate army in Georgia, "break it up, and go into the interior of the enemy's country as far as you can, inflicting all the damage you can upon their war resources".

Sherman's 100,000 men and 254 pieces of artillery left their encampments near Chattanooga in early May. In the mountains of northwest Georgia, protecting the railroad that ran from Dalton to Atlanta, were General Joseph E. Johnston and 65,000 Confederate soldiers with 187 cannon. The Army of the Cumberland, which included the 42nd Indiana, met the enemy at Ringgold, Georgia and for 106 days they were constantly under fire as they fought their way to Atlanta. They shot up 86,611 rounds of artillery and 11,815,229 rounds of infantry ammunition during the campaign.

Many battles were fought as the Federals pushed the Confederates closer and closer to Atlanta. Johnston was a clever defensive fighter and retreated slowly. Sherman generally avoided direct attacks and moved around the Confederate flanks, compelling them to withdraw in order to avoid encirclement. That is what happened at Resaca (13 - 15 May) near the Oostanaula River, when, after two days of fighting, Sherman sent out cavalry and an infantry division planning to make a flanking movement south of the river, because the Confederate position at Resaca was too strong for a direct attack. Realizing the danger of being flanked with the river at his back, the Confederate general withdrew during the night. The southerners had been protecting a railroad bridge at Resaca, and as they headed south they burned the bridge behind them.

The two armies fought stubbornly at New Hope Church on 25 May, Picketts' Mill on the 27th and Dallas on the 28th. On 27 June Sherman changed his tactics and ordered a frontal assault on the Confederate position at Kennesaw Mountain. The Confederates easily repelled the Union attacks, losing only 500 men compared to 2,000 Union casualties.

After the bloody battle at Kennesaw Mountain, Sherman resumed his flanking strategy forcing the Confederates to retreat to the Chattahoochee River only eight miles from Atlanta.

Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston received a telegram on 17 July 1864 from President Jefferson Davis relieving him of command and ordering him to turn his army over to General John Bell Hood.

The Battles for Atlanta

18 July - 1 September 1864

FEDERAL: General Sherman

100,000 effectives

CONFEDERATE: General Hood

50,000 effectives

Company 'G'

42nd Indiana - Henry McCracken, Thomas McCracken, William H. H. Gilley, Francis M. Hunter.

Casualties: Francis M. Hunter wounded, 20 July 1864 at Peachtree Creek.

When John Bell Hood assumed command of the Confederate Army of Tennessee on 17 July, Atlanta was being threatened by Sherman's three converging armies. Hood had about 60,000 men, but about 10,000 of them were home-guards which were not at all useful as assault troops. General Hood had been given the command because his predecessor, Joseph E. Johnston, had failed to halt Sherman's advance. Hood was expected to save Atlanta by attacking and driving the enemy from the city's gates. He attacked immediately and repeatedly for the next week. His attacks, however, achieved little besides the elimination of nearly 20,000 of his own men, and in the end he had to abandon Atlanta anyway.

The Confederates struck first at General Thomas' Army of the Cumberland which had just crossed Peachtree Creek north of Atlanta on 20 July. Hood hoped to catch the Federals in the process of crossing the creek and the low swampy land bordering it, but Thomas' men were already across the creek and in a good defensive position when the rebels attacked. The attackers lost 5,000 men in the ensuing battle, and they failed to budge the Federals from Peachtree Creek.

The next day, the Confederate soldiers marched fifteen miles south and east around the city of Atlanta where they attacked General McPherson's Army of the Tennessee on 22 July. During the hard-fought Battle of Atlanta, the rebels managed to attack from two directions and the yankees [sic] were hard put to defend their positions. The Union soldiers were sometimes fighting back to back to repel assaults from both directions, jumping from one side of their rifle pits to the other and then back again to fire in the opposite direction. The outcome was in doubt for a long time. In the end, General McPherson was killed and there were 3,721 other Union casualties. Losses on the Confederate side were somewhere between 7,000 and 10,000 men. The battle was the beginning of the Siege of Atlanta, and General Sherman began to turn his attentions to cutting the supply lines into the city.

The next move was Sherman's. He ordered the Army of the Tennessee, whose new leader was General Oliver O. Howard, to march completely around the city towards the important railroad outlet to the south. Before they reached the railroad, however, the Confederates attacked for the third time in nine days at Ezra Church west of Atlanta. It was early afternoon on 28 July, and the battle lasted until dark when the rebels withdrew into the fortifications of Atlanta. The Federals lost fewer than 600 men, but the Confederate losses have been estimated as high as 5,000.

The last battle for Atlanta began 31 August at Jonesboro, fifteen miles to the south, where Hood's Confederate army attacked the Federal right flank, hoping to prevent encirclement of the city. The Confederate losses were high again, with 1,725 casualties compared to 170 for the Federals. After losing the two-day battle of Jonesboro, General Hood ordered all public property in Atlanta destroyed and the city evacuated.

Sherman entered Atlanta on 2 September 1864 and triumphantly telegraphed to Washington, "Atlanta is ours, and fairly won". The fall of Atlanta was a crippling blow to the Confederacy's capacity and will to make war. Coupled with Union victories elsewhere, the war's end was now in sight. In the North there was rejoicing and on 8 November 1864 Abraham Lincoln was re-elected President, endorsing a fight to the

finish. A week later Sherman left Atlanta in ruins to begin his devastating March to the Sea.

Sherman's March to the Sea

15 November - 20 December 1864

FEDERAL: General Sherman

62,000 effectives

2,200 casualties

CONFEDERATE: General Hardee

13,000 effectives

Unknown casualties

Company "G"

42nd Indiana - Francis M. Hunter

On 15 November 1864 Sherman's well-equipped force of 55,000 infantry, 5,000 cavalry and 2,000 artillerymen with 64 guns left Atlanta organized into two wings. Sherman's two wings marched from Atlanta in such a way as to deceive the Confederates as to the true destination of the main body. As they made their virtually unopposed advance to Savannah they destroyed railroads, and within a band fifty to sixty miles wide, they methodically destroyed all resources and property that might be of any military value to the Confederates.

Because railroads carried men and supplies for the armies, they had frequently been the target of raids throughout the war. By 1864 a standard method of railroad destruction had emerged: the rails were pried up and the ties collected into piles and set on fire; then the rails would be heated over the fire until the iron glowed red. At that point the rail would be wrapped around a nearby tree or telegraph pole and allowed to cool. Factories and forges were also military targets because they produced munitions of war. And, because armies could not fight unless they were fed, even food became a military target. In the midst of all this destruction, the line between acceptable and unacceptable became blurred. The man most closely associated with this type of warfare was William Tecumseh Sherman, who is still deeply resented in much of the South. Sherman clearly recognized that for the Union to win the war, the will of the South had to be broken. Sherman's March to the Sea was tragic, but no more tragic than the war as a whole, and in many ways it was the inevitable outcome of the violence begun in 1861.

Campaign in the Carolinas

1 February - 26 April 1865

Company "G"

42nd Indiana (with Sherman) - Francis M. Hunter

On the first of February, 1865, General Sherman and his army started north from Savannah, and the conclusion of the war began. Sherman had about 60,000 veterans and when he reached North Carolina he would be reinforced by 21,000 more men, who

were at that time on the coast of North Carolina under the command of General Schofield. To oppose the huge Union army, the Confederates had about 30,000 men, including home guards, and there was no possibility that they could increase their numbers. General Joseph E. Johnston was brought back from retirement and put in charge in the hope that he might somehow find a way to halt Sherman. But Johnston himself admitted, "I can do no more than annoy him".

Geography and weather were greater obstacles to Sherman's men than the Confederate army. The line of march went through swampy, lowland regions and crossed many rivers. The roads were almost impassable and the streams were swollen from the rainy winter weather. But Sherman's men were tough veterans who could improvise their way through almost any obstacle. They went through South Carolina as rapidly as they had gone across Georgia, building bridges, corduroying roads, and fording icy rivers as the line of march went steadily northward.

As the army marched through South Carolina, many of the soldiers seemed determined to make the state - which they saw as the heart and soul of secession and rebellion - suffer for its treason. Aside from the official work of destruction, the Federals also burned and destroyed a great deal of private property.

As Sherman's men moved into North Carolina, the Confederates tried to stop their progress at Averysboro on 16 March and at Bentonville for three days beginning 19 March. But the advance could not be checked. Sherman's army reached Goldsboro on 23 March 1865 where it met Schofield's Union force which had come from the coast. Sherman's men had marched 425 miles from Savannah to Goldsboro in fifty days.

The combined Union army, with more than 80,000 men, continued on toward Greensboro which was the temporary capital of the Confederacy. They captured Raleigh on 13 April and the next day Sherman received a message from Confederate General Joseph Johnston requesting a temporary cessation of hostilities until a peace could be worked out. After some negotiation, the surrender terms were agreed upon. The surrender took place 26 April 1865 at the Bennett house near Durham Station, North Carolina.