18th Tenn
Cpl. Wm McKay
Co. K Breckenridges Div - excellent on battle

TN

PRISONER'S PAROLE.

I, William L. McKay Corporal, of Company K.
18th Tenn. Infty. Regiment, of the so-called Confederate States Army;
captured at the battle of Stones River, Tennessee, solemnly swear before Almighty God, the
Sovereign Judge, that I will not bear arms against the United States Government, nor help,
aid or assist either directly or indirectly, any person or persons in making war against the same,
until regularly exchanged as a prisoner of war.

[illegible] and sworn to before me, [illegible]

Tenn. January 4 1863

Nill. L. McKay
Chas Cooper
Capt & Asst
PROVOST MARSHAL. Genl.
14th Army Corps.

MANUSCRIPT SECTION AC NO 858

Cpl W.L. McKay Co I 18th Tn

..... on the night of Oct 17. Moved to Camp near Maneys Spring on 18 where we lived like Millionares on the best that the Country afforded Butter - Eggs - Chickens - Turkeys - ham - potatoes - biscuit - light bread - cakes of all kinds and infact everything that a woman could think of to tempt the appetite, we were visited by the wives - daughters and sweet hearts of the soldier boys and each of them brought something to eat or wear.

We remained quilty in Camp until the 30 when we received marching orders, cooked rations and marched in the direction of Nashville, reached Stewarts Creek about dark and camped in the fence corners on Nov 1st continued March to Lavergne and camped, while here being in reach of my Grand Fathers I asked for a furlough which was refused.

On 4 ~~red~~ rec'd marching orders and marched at 8 PM. marched slowly all night and reached a point one mile south of Nashville just at daylight driving in the pickets who fired on us. We planted a battery on the toll gate hill ~~of~~ on Murfreesboro Pike with 18" Tenn supporting it, about sunrise (Nov 5) our battery Opened fire on the city, we (the private soldiers) of course expected the Yankees to return the fire and send the infantry out to engage us but they made no response. (I think now that the demonstration was made to allow our Cavalry to approach the City on the East and tear up RR). after waiting some time we

were ordered back six miles to Washington Institute to rest then back to Lavergne which we reached about 5PM. remained in camp at Lavergne until the 9th when we were orded back to Murfreesboro

p.53) Cheatham Division reached Murfreesboro on Nov. 24. the 18th Regt moved camp on 25th to a point between town and the river. recd marching orders on Dec 5 and marched through snow-mud and water to Pracer Mill on Lebanon pike about 8 miles from Murfreesboro where we were very comfortably quartered in the houses in the neighborhood, Co I was quartered in the temperance hall, on the morning of the 8th was ordered to Lebanon, after marching a short distance were ordered back to Pearces Milk, John H Morgan soon came in with 2000 prisoners Captured at Hartsville, they with the arms and munitions of war captured with them were turned over to the 18th Tenn and the prisoners marched back to Murfreesboro on 10 Dec. While camped at Pearces Mill the love of the Southern women for the Confederate Soldier was fully proven in my care. I wished to go to Cainsville with Sam Foeas and needed a horse to make the trip. I went to the Rev Branch Owens house and his wife without knowing anything about me loaned me a horse.

About Dec 13-14 President Jeff reviewed the Army I asked again for a leave of absence for 24 or 36 hours to visit the homes of some of my mess mates but

was again refused, I then without leave went home with Harvey Jarman, spent one night with him at home, one night at Gibsons and one night at the Widow Hights, the mother of one of my mess mates, on 26 heard heavy cannonading and while going to breakfast a young brother of Harvey Jarman rode up to the gate with a message for me to report at once to my command as a battle was imminent

p.54) without waiting to eat breakfast I got my horse and rode to Murfreesboro in a gallop young Jarman going with me to take back the horse. I found the Regt had struck camp and were at the front in Line of battle. Lieut Freas who was in command of the Co was Very Angry with me for leaving camp without permission.

I found the wagon and secured a gun (not my own however which I had kept in perfect order) on the 29 AM very heavy artillery firing at the front about 3 PM ordered in line at 4 several building were fired between the lines, at dark we were ordered to support a battery and built fires but were soon ordered to put them out, began to rain about midnight heave artillery firing on the left on ~~300~~ 30 AM and occasionally infantry, the fighting began early on the 31 on our left wing and the enemy were driven from every position and were almost in complete rout, about 3 PM we were ordered to double quick

to the left wing which we did Crossing the River in water from Knee to waist deep, then across an open cotton field under a heavy fire of artillery with grass — ——— and bomb shells, wounding a number of our regiment, after crossing the field we were halted in a cedar thicket, the original battle line of the Yankees and found a great many wounded and dead yankees. I carried water from a well to the wounded until about midnight, about 2 Am we were ordered back to our old position on the right wing where we remained **quietly** except an occasional bombardment from the enemy which would force us to move about to keep out of range until the afternoon of the
p.55) 2 January when our Division (Brekenridges) was ordered to charge the enemy who were massed on our right wing, we charged across an open field and were met by a **large** force of infantry, supported by about 80 pieces of artillery massed on the River bluff < after a short but bloody fight in the open field the first line of the enemy broke and were followed to the river by our men with the Rebel yell. when they were met by the reserve force of the Yankee and forced to retreat with heavy loss. I was shot through the right thigh with minie ball soon after starting after the retreating enemy. I was the last of the color guards to fall, Geo Lowe (the Color bearer) was in the act of falling

being shot through the body. when I caught hold of the flag staff to prevent the fall of the flag and received my first wound and we fell together, Capt Nat Gooch then took the flag (and has told me since that the color bearer and the color guard had all fallen so close together that he could have covered us all with the flag) and was soon shot down, George Nelson of Murfreesboro then took the flag and carried it safely through the battle, I remained helpless and partially unconsious until our command retreated and I saw the Yankees coming and attempted to get up but could not, our men moved up a battery of three guns and planted them just over where I lay, the fire from the guns was nearly hot enough to burn my face, the Yankee bullets rattled on the gun carriages like hail and our men were forced to leave the guns as they did not have horses enough left to take them away. After the
p.56) battery was deserted I being between the lines received my second wound from a bomb shell fired by the Confederates breaking my left arm and terribly bruising my body (from concussion I was told by the Surgeon), I received several other slight wounds on my legs ~~which~~ while lying between the lines. I lay where I fell until about midnight and received brutal treatment from some of the Yankees. Yankee Genl. Jeff Davis's division marched by and over me and the commanders of companies would say as they

passed me "look out men here is a ~~wonded~~ wounded man" some of them would step over me carefully while others would give me a kick and call me a damned rebel and I was covered with black spots from the bruises.

About 12 or 1 o'clock two yankee boys who were searching the battle field for a friend, they seemed very sorry for me and determined to have me taken to the hospital, one of them would stay with me holding my hand while the other would hunt for an ambulance, it was some time before they could get one as they were hauling off their own wounded first; they finally secured one and helped to lift me in it. I was taken to a hospital camp and laid out on the ground they thinking I was too near dead to waste time on, it was then raining, I lay all day Saturday in the rain without any attention being paid me when I would ask for water they would say you don't need water we will take you to the grave yard after a while. I did not suffer however as I could suck the water out of my coat sleeve as it rained on me, about dark Saturday finding I would not die I was picked up and laid in a tent out of the rain, during the night two wounded confederates
p.57) died in this tent, one of them having fallen across my legs and lay there several hours.

Sunday about noon I was moved to another tent where I could have more room and attention, this

tent was occupied by both Confederate and Yankee wounded, on Monday I was given breakfast, the first food offered me and the first I had eaten since Friday.

This Monday morning the surgeons eight in number going the rounds of the camp examining the wounded, one of them examined me and decided to amputate my leg, my arm could be saved, I at first rebelled and said they should not, but finding that this would not do I then begged them not to cut it off. this attracted the attention of the Chief, a big dutch surgeon who came and examined me and said let him alone, if de dam Rebel wants to die let him go so they left me and examined a Florida soldier who was wounded almost exactly like myself through the thigh but did not have the arm and body wounds, he made no objections to the amputation; they took him out cut off his leg and brought him back and the next day he died, on my other side was a handsome young Yankee soldier shot through the calf of his leg, no bones broken. he seemed unable to stand the pain just gave up and died, the surgeon said there was no reason for him to die, just simply gave up, the man at my head (a yankee died). so three men nearest me died and neither of them seemed to be wounded as badly as I was. the young surgeon in charge of the tent was a nice gentlemen and very kind to me, paid me special attention, he was from near Chicago

and gave me his address so I might write to him but unfortunatly I lost it. About the 7 or 8 Casper Freas (a Union or Yankee sympathizer) the only man in his neighborhood who would venture inside the yankee lines came with Mrs RR Clemmons in search of her husband who was missing and his wife hoped to find him in the hospital (He was never found) his two brothers "Hall & Tollic" were both killed on Friday. I was reported killed on the field and Bob Dillon reported that he had turned me over and knew that I was dead. So Mr. Freas and Mrs C. were very much surprised to find me. Mr. Freas took a great interest in me, he procured a certificate from the Surgeon that I was mortally wounded and with this he got a pass to take me out of the lines,
Elias Casper Provast Marshall General came and issued me a parole and gave me a good cursing saying that a great many of my kind had been found behind rock fences & cedar bushes bushwhacking with paroles in their pockets. Mr. Freas came for me about 10 (my memory is not clear as to dates during this time) with spring wagon and feather bed, the young Surgeon before mentioned, gave me a pair of blankets - a bottle of whiskey some tea - coffee & sugar but as soon as the wagon was out of his sight the yankee guards and camp loaters took ~~stole~~ from under my head the whiskey and the blankets from over me, the other things they did not find as they were under the feather bed. Mr Freas ~~tok~~ me to his home about 10 miles from Murfreesboro in Wilson County, his

family consisted of a wife and six children and
his house had only one large room. I could
p.59) not understand until afterwards why he would burden
himself with a wounded man. he was a Union
man and feared the Confederates would take his ~~house~~ horses,
but knew that if he had a wounded man in his
house they would not disturb him, he took especially
good care of me and no doubt saved my life with
his good nursing, when he got his affairs in shape
so that he could leave the county he sent to
Murfreesboro for a squad of men to be sent out to
guard him to town, Capt Faver Cason came with
his Co of Calvary and saw him safe to Murfreesboro
from where he went to Indiana, I have never heard
from him since but have repeatedly tried to do so,
the night he left me proved to be the most horrible
of all my trials, he sold all of his effects that he
could not move to the Negroes in the neighborhood
who had been notified of his intention to leave, the
small bed that I was on had been sold to a big
negro fellow who lived near and he promised Mr.
Freas that he would stay with me until morning (the
family left about midnight) the wagons were not out
of hearing before the negro began bringing in fence
rails to make a fire by putting one end on the fire and
the other out on the floor as he did not take time
to cut or break them, I begged him to desist but
he would not obey me - said he would make me a

good fire and then go home, he filled the fire place with the rails and left me. I had a fine fire for a time but did not enjoy it as I expected the house to burn and me with it as I was perfectly helpless, but fortunately the rails were cedar and the fire died out before reaching the floor, the next morning Mr. Cason hearing from the Negroes that Mr. Freas had gone came over early to see what had become of me. he found me very cold and despondent. he back home and got some breakfast and bed clothing for me, he then
p.60) notified Mr. MW (Gunn) Huddleston of my conditi
and he at once came with wagon & feather bed and took me to his house and nursed me until I was able to walk on crutches, some time during the early summer of 163...

I here add from Lieut Geo W Dillon's diary the following

Feby 9' 1863
Camp 18 Tenn vol

Corporal WL McKay was unanimously chosen by C. I 18" Tenn to be presented to the President for promotion for his superior gallantry on the battle field at Murfreesboro on the 2d day of Jany 186

signed SH Freas Commanding Co

I am inclined to think that the above compliment was paid me simply because I was the worst wounded man in the company that did not die, it seemed

almost a miracle that I ever got up at all. during the year 1863 I remained in the neighborhood Cainsville a good part of the time.

My friend Jim Rhodes gave me a little roan pony (very fast) to keep out of the way of the yankees. I joined Capt. Jim Phillips Co. of Calvary and tried to go with them but broke down on account of my wounds and was forced to go back to Mrs. Martha Freas's where I was stopping and was confined to bed again several weeks and became satisfied that I could not either ride or walk and abandoed all idea of trying to serve in the army again had I been inside the confederate lines I could have served in the Commisary or Quarter-master's department or in a clerical capacity at
p. 61 some post but had no opportunity to go south and not a dollar to pay my way. I remained in the neighborhood of Cainsville until about 1st of 1864 I felt that I had lived on the good people long enough. I asked Rev Wm Grimmit a truly loyal citizen and relative of Capt Waters of Stokes Cavalry to go to Murfreesboro (with me or rather let me go with him) to have my parole renewed so that I could come home safely. he went my security that I would fight no more until exchanged. I then traded my fast pony back to my friend Jim Rhodes for a big black

condemned Artillery horse about 17 hands high (that he had found wandering in the cedars) and started home when I got to Lavergne my old horse was about played out I stopped all night with Mr. Pate Watson who next morning proposed to trade horses with me, my old black looked good to him standing in the stable and he gave me a little bay mare and 10¢ and my nights lodging for my horse and told me afterwards that it was the worst trade he ever made. I reached my Grandfathers house on Sunday morning, the date forgotten.

By a Prisoner of war (Geo. W Dillon)

I

A prisoner grew weary of camp noise and fuss
withdrew to his bunk and soliloquized thus,
My coat all in tatters, my shirt without collar
A thousand miles from home and have not a dollar

p.62

II

Scanty the fare on which we are fed.
Tis butter bean coffee and gun-wadding bread.
The bacon is old as I, if not older,
the hogs of the yankees are surely all shoulder

3

The butter we buy is old enough to walk
The milk we buy is whitewashed with chalk
The yanks take the beef to feed their own ranks
And give us poor Reb's the heads-necks & shanks

4

But this is not half the trouble we brook
Our rations of wood are so short we can't cook
The tough shank bones of old brick and ball
Neither can we make our bean coffee boil.

5

Sometimes we get water from the hydrants outsi
Sometimes when thirsty we're coldly denied
by armed yankee soldiers who say with a sneer
You damned rebel trash can't get water here

6

We snuggle in papers if we get them to read
The last news from Richmond is sinful indeed
They are sorely pressed on every hand
The blessings of heaven are all contraband

7

Then all of our letters are opened and gleaned
By the meddlesome hand of some yankee fiend
Sometimes they take letter money and all
Without giving us any reason at all.

8

p63 But of late they agree to pay us one half of
The money sent to us minus the tariff
The money when paid my advice is
must be taken in goods at sutter high prices

9

And thus they continue committing such crimes
Unequalled perhaps in all modern times
There is nothing so base theyed scruple to do
For the pitiful sum of a dollar or two

10

But not satisfied with their postal furloin
And thinking perhaps we've secritied some coin
They marched us out of our quarters line upon line
And searched our barracks committing great crime

11

Tobacco - Jack Knives - money and watches
All fell a prey to their pilfering clutches
They took books from some and clothing from others
And from some the pictures of their dead mothers

12

Thus we are treated by a nation that boast
Of all other nations of liberty the most
They are all villians and such I eschew
The devil is being greatly robbed of his due.