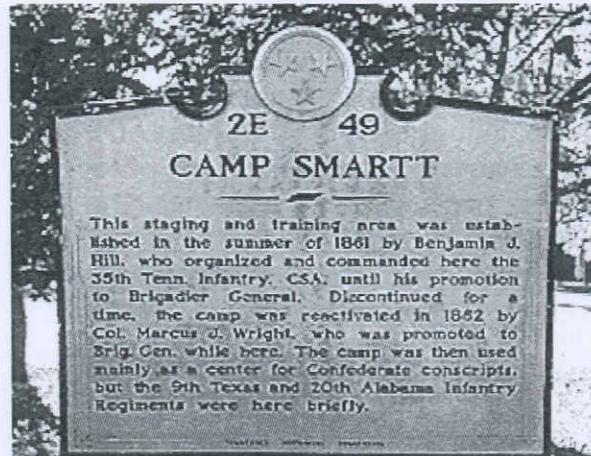


action report reads, *“Forty of my men came up from McMinnville, got arms and accoutrements, and came to us in the hottest part of the fight....”* (Source: *The Official Records*).

Just to muddy the waters a little more, the first Company D 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB activity report (Exhibit B) lists the unit at Shelbyville 26 Nov 1862-1 Jan 1863. I suspect this was backdated and intentionally manipulated to circumvent General Bragg’s order of 26 Nov 1862. We know 32 men of company D were at McMinnville on 26 Nov and we know 49 new conscripts enlisted in Murfreesboro on Dec 30<sup>th</sup>

The Tennessee roadside historical marker with details about Camp Smartt was no longer there in June 2004. However, a photo of the marker can be found at: <http://travel.nostalgiaville.com/Tennessee/Warren/mcminnville.htm>

Here is a photo of the marker:



4 relevant points about the marker:

- “Camp reactivated 1862 by Col. Marcus J Wright” (Author’s note: according to Wright’s diary, this would have been on 4 Nov 1862; however, we have evidence that Major Hunter Nicholson actually re-opened it for conscription on 1 Nov. Further, we also have evidence that Company B Allison’s Tennessee Cavalry Squadron was forming at McMinnville in October under the command of Capt. Reece).
- “Camp was then used as center for Confederate conscripts.” Five companies of the 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB and the 84<sup>th</sup> TIR were apparently drafted here. In addition, Company B Allison’s Tennessee Cavalry Squadron was formed here.
- The 9<sup>th</sup> Texas fought at Murfreesboro arrived at Camp Smartt 11 Nov 1862 and departed Camp Smartt 1 Dec 1862

- The 20<sup>th</sup> Alabama arrived on 1 Dec 1862 left for Vicksburg a few days prior to the battle of Murfreesboro (probably 29 Dec 1862).

It seems as if Edmund was the victim of an unfortunate set of circumstances:

- The war effort demanded all the military service of every available man
- He lived in a state where many Civil War battles were fought
- In Sept 1862, the draft age was raised to include his age group
- A conscription camp opened 30 miles from his house

Edmund was at the wrong place at the wrong time if he wanted to remain neutral. What an awful human carnage he must have witnessed at the Battle of Murfreesboro. A total of twenty-three thousand men died, thousands more were wounded, and the noise must have been deafening. This had to be quite a shock to the country boy from the peaceful valley on the Calfkiller River.

## Chapter 3

### 4 Jan 1863 - 11 Feb 1865

This 25-month period begins with the Rebel army retreating southeastward from Murfreesboro. One can only imagine the horror in the eyes of the combatants. It was apparently during this time that Edmund Stamps, the farm boy from Putnam County in Tennessee, chose to desert. This must have been a difficult decision. Confederate authorities sometimes shot deserters upon recapture. Edmund would have known the risks.

Certain details of his life during this period will remain unknown. We can be certain that Edmund did not exist in a vacuum. He had help; those who helped him will remain unknown. Surprisingly, very little has been written about those who helped Confederate deserters. There were only two books I could find on the subject, and one is one entitled *Disloyalty in the Confederacy* by Georgia Lee Tatum. According to Tatum, there were two peace groups operating in the area in which Edmund deserted. One was called "The Peace Society" and was known to operate in the Appalachian region of Northern Alabama, Northern Georgia and Eastern Tennessee. The other was "The Heroes of America," which operated in Southwestern Virginia, Western North Carolina and East Tennessee. It is possible that members these groups assisted Edmund.

The Union occupation of middle Tennessee was a turbulent time. I highly recommend reading *With Blood and Fire* by Dr. Michael Bradley, who teaches at Motlow State in Tullahoma, Tennessee. It gives a flavor of the brutality of the Union occupation. Edmund had it doubly hard, of course, since he was also running from the rebel army.

I could find no record that Confederate authorities visited Edmund's house during the war, but it is possible, even probable, that they did.

Upon his desertion, he most likely had the clothes on his back, a rifle, some money, and maybe a little food. The weather was brutally cold and snowy. It's probable that the deserters of the 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB had to rely on each other for support initially, since these men at least knew each other. There are plenty of caves in this area that would have made good temporary hideouts. Some southern middle Tennessee locals, sympathetic to the cause of the deserters, would have taken a great risk to help Edmund. The desperate men were probably sandwiched between the Union and Confederate armies for some time.

Relevant occupation activity/skirmishes/patrols for the area in and around Edmund's home are listed below:

**4 Jan 1863** We don't know the exact date of desertion, however, there is some circumstantial evidence that Edmund deserted about 4 January 1863. How he (and others) escaped from the retreating Confederate Army; where he went into hiding; and how he notified his family of his circumstances may never be known.

The records reflect that several members of the 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB and the 84<sup>th</sup> TIR deserted during or immediately after the Battle of Stones River/Murfreesboro:

Frank Gauff Company A deserted 4 Jan 1863  
Private William Hilton Company A deserted 4 Jan 1863 recaptured 24 Feb 1863  
Private JA Hutson Company A deserted 4 Jan 1863  
Private JW McCarter Company C deserted 2 Jan 1863  
Private George McCarter Company C deserted 2 Jan 1863  
Private Pink Micky Company A deserted 1 Jan 1863  
Private Joseph Phillips Company H deserted 2 Jan 1863  
Private Taylor Shannon Company C deserted 3 Jan 1863  
Private Joel Simpson Company C deserted 3 Jan 1863  
Private Allen Webb Company A deserted 4 Jan 1863  
Private Jeremiah Webb Company D deserted 4 Jan 1863  
Private G.W. Henry Company D 84<sup>th</sup> TIR and Co D 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB deserted 4 Jan 1863

Note: Although many members of Company D are listed as AWOL, Jeremiah Webb and GW Henry are the only ones with a definitive date of desertion. Since GW Henry is listed as both a member of Company D 84<sup>th</sup> TIR and 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB we have a clue as to when Edmund deserted. We are probably safe in saying he left about 4 Jan 1863 after participating in the Battle of Murfreesboro. A close review of the records reveals a mass desertion during the Confederate Army's southeasterly retreat. The Tennessee Adjutant General's office kept detailed records on deserters; however, I could only find about a dozen remaining records. If a more accurate record of his desertion was filled out, it no longer exists.

**Mid Jan 1863:** (TCWP p. 166) The 22<sup>nd</sup> Tennessee Infantry Battalion was officially recognized by the Confederate War Department at Shelbyville. It formed by joining 5 companies of the 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB that had been recruited since September 1862 (including the undermanned Company D) with 4 Companies of the recently disbanded 4<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Calvary Regiment. Of course, Edmund was long gone by this point.

According to his diary, Brig Gen. Wright was assigned "command of Hanson's Brigade" "in Breckenridge's division, Hardee's corps." The 22<sup>nd</sup> Tennessee Infantry Battalion was assigned to Wright.

Captain Pittman was injured (probably at Murfreesboro) and recuperating at McMinnville according to his microfilm file.

Author's note: *After leaving Murfreesboro in Union hands, the Confederates had consolidated their positions in three places: Shelbyville, Wartrace and Tullahoma.*

**22 Jan - 28 Feb 1863** (microfilm records): Several men are detached from Shelbyville TN by General Pillow for conscription duty. Pillow was the General in charge of conscription for the Confederate Army. This is the first known detachment that would have been sent looking for Edmund after his desertion. At least 2 members of the 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB were in this detachment:

Private JH McCully Company D  
First Sergeant OJ York Company E

From the 84<sup>th</sup> TIR the following members were sent on this conscription detachment:

First Sergeant Elisha Chambers  
1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Sherord Horn  
1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant HP Reaves

These detachments were fairly effective in picking up deserters, because I found several members of the 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB (including Thomas Bohannon and GW Henry of Putnam County) who deserted and were apparently picked up and appeared on later muster rolls. The conscription detachments were not able to find new recruits for the 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB. Only 3 new members joined in 1863 (2 from Fayetteville and 1 from Shelbyville). This is due to several factors:

- 1) The Union controlled much of middle Tennessee, except for the extreme southern region (including Fayetteville and Shelbyville).
- 2) East Tennessee was staunchly pro-Union.
- 3) The Upper Cumberland area where Edmund lived was sparsely populated with split loyalties
- 4) The Confederates had already drafted every available man in the run-up to the Battle of Murfreesboro

**25 Jan 1863:** Lieutenant H.M. Apple's microfilm records show him being promoted from Private to Second Lieutenant at McMinnville, and receiving \$88.00 in pay for services from 25 Jan -1 March 1863. He was with Company B, 84<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment.

**Jan/Feb 1863** (Exhibit C): Individual muster roll again lists Edmund (and many other members of Company D) as AWOL.

**10 Feb 1862:** Another mass desertion from several companies of the 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB

**12 Feb 1863 - 16 Mar 1863** (from TCWP1 p. 75): 2 Companies from the 9<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Cavalry Regiment (CSA) were deployed to the Upper Cumberland area in search of conscripts and deserters. They were possibly under the overall command of Maj. Hunter Nicholson. This is the second time Confederate forces were sent to the area of Edmund's

home in search of deserters. Private Charles West was the last person I could find who joined the 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB. He was probably conscripted into the 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB on 1 March 1863 at Shelbyville. He died 6 weeks later at a Chattanooga hospital.

**24 Feb 1863:** Andrew Lenox enlisted (probably drafted) into the 28<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Consolidated Infantry Regiment at McMinnville. It appears that McMinnville was still being used as a conscription center at this time. It is to be assumed that Major Nicholson was still in charge at Camp Smartt.

**8 March 1863:** The undermanned 84<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment was declared an illegal formation by the Confederate War Department and consolidated with the 28<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment.

**10 March 1863** (from microfilm): Another mass desertion from several companies of the 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB

**13-14 Mar 1863** (from microfilm records): Major Nicholson recruiting in Columbia TN (southern middle Tennessee)

**23 March 1863** (from Major Nicholson's microfilm): Major Nicholson stopped recruiting in southern middle Tennessee. He must have been assigned to other duties, because he submitted a pay requisition for his services to the Confederate Treasury in Richmond. It was approved and is transcribed below:

Treasury Department  
2<sup>nd</sup> Auditors Office  
Richmond July 15<sup>th</sup> 1863

To Major Hunter Nicholson  
Columbia Tennessee

Sir,

Your claim for pay as acting commander of conscripts from 31<sup>st</sup> Oct 1862 to 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1863 has been examined by this office and the sum of Seven hundred and twenty dollars has been found due, which can be remitted to you by the Treasurer of the Confederate States.

Respectfully  
(Unreadable 1<sup>st</sup> name) Taylor  
Auditor

**28 March 1863** (From microfilm): Since Company D never signed enough men to legally form a company, the Confederate War Department ordered it disbanded and the men distributed to other units. The final roster for Mar/April 1863 (Exhibit D) again lists Edmund (and many others from Company D) as AWOL. Under the "Remarks" section

(Confederate)

S | 22 Battalion | Tenn

Edmund Stamps

Pat. Co. D. Murray's Batt'n Tennessee Inf.

Appears on  
Company Muster Roll  
of the organization named above,  
for Jan. 7 Feb., 1863.

Enlisted:  
When Dec 30, 1862

Where Murfreesboro.

By whom T. B. Murray

Period 3 yrs

Last paid:  
By whom

To what time, 186

Present or absent Absent

Remarks Absent without leave

*W. B. Campbell*  
Copyist.

(Confederate)

S | 22 Battalion | Tenn

Edmund Stamps

Pat. Co. D. Murray's Batt'n Tennessee Inf.

Appears on  
Company Muster Roll  
of the organization named above,  
for Feb. 7 Apr., 1863.

Enlisted:  
When Dec 30, 1862

Where Murfreesboro

By whom T. B. Murray

Period 3 yrs

Last paid:  
By whom

To what time, 186

Present or absent

Remarks Ordered by war department to be dropped from the roll

*W. B. Campbell*  
Copyist.

Regiment 22 (also known as the 2d and as Murray's) Battalion Tennessee Infantry was composed of nine companies, A to H and K. Companies F, G, H and K had formerly served in the 4th (Murray's) Regiment Tennessee Cavalry and they were transferred to this Battalion when that regiment was disbanded in January, 1863. The Battalion was temporarily consolidated with the 38th Regiment Tennessee Infantry in 1863, but each company of the two organizations was mustered separately and under its original designation during the period covered by this consolidation.

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the document states "ordered by the war department to be dropped from the roll." That part of the order was ignored, because there are company activity reports from Company D later in the summer of 1863.

**July -Aug 1863:** On 4 July 1863, Edmund's neighbor G.W. Henry deserted for a second time after being attached to the 28<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment.

Dibbrell's 8<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Cavalry Regiment (a.k.a. 13<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Cavalry Regiment) moved from Chattanooga to Sparta in late July and engaged in several skirmishes with 4<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB retreated with the Army of Tennessee to Chattanooga in July. General Bragg dispatched Major Murray and the following officers on recruiting duty in Middle Tennessee (this is at least the third patrol looking for deserters in White/Putnam counties):

Captain James M Freily Company C  
Lieutenant James T. Gleson Company A  
Captain James S Gribble Company B (paroled in McMinnville 12 Aug 1863)  
Lieutenant WB Grissom  
1st Lieutenant GB Johnson  
1st Lieutenant SR Mitchell  
2nd Lieutenant FC Moore (Captured north of Chattanooga at Sale Creek 16 Nov 1863)  
Captain MB Wood Company E

The mission was a colossal failure, as Murray was the only one ever heard from by Confederate authorities again. The above listed officers were dropped from the rolls in Nov/Dec 1864. Federals reported that Murray was operating some type of guerilla force at this time. Murray himself was captured and apparently exchanged as a Prisoner of War (POW). We have no way of knowing if Murray ever came close to finding Edmund Stamps, Sr.

**27-29 July 1863:** Shelbyville fell into Union hands.

A few miles to the southwest of McMinnville, Manchester was in Union hands by July 28<sup>th</sup> because Private Lewis Taylor of Company C 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB took his loyalty oath there.

Camp Smartt at McMinnville appears to have been in Union hands by 29 July 1863. The following people of the 22<sup>nd</sup> TIB were paroled by Colonel RW McClain 51<sup>st</sup> Regiment (USA) Provost Marshal on that date:

Private Thomas Boyle Co (C 84<sup>th</sup> TIR)  
Private Jacob Carrol, Company C  
Private John Crim Company B  
Private D.C. Dollar (84TIR)

William Ellis  
James Ellis  
JF Fuston  
Private JRB Goodson of Dekalb County  
Captain James Gribble Company B  
Private John Gribble  
Private SB Harriman  
Private Adam Mayfield Company E  
Private James Maize Company E  
Private SM Womack

Also, Winchester (west of Chattanooga) was in Union control because Union forces there captured a conscripted Confederate Private named Thomas Underwood.

**Aug 1863-April 1864** (From Microfilm of Col. John Hughs): Confederate General Braxton Bragg sent yet another patrol to the Upper Cumberland to round up conscripts and fresh recruits (by my count, this was the fourth Confederate patrol that Edmund dodged). Colonel Hughs, led 20 men from the 25<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment (CSA) into Middle Tennessee. They remained cut off and operated behind enemy lines. In his after action report, Hughs says he rounded up 18-20 deserters but, with so many Federals in the area, he had to let them go. We will probably never know if Edmund was among these captured deserters. Hughs also reported that he ran into several other unnamed Confederate officers in the area on a similar mission who would not cooperate with him. Most likely this was Murray and his group.

Hughs fought Several Battles against Captain Dowdy, and Captain "Tinker" Dave Beaty (USA) of Fentress County Tennessee. He also fought skirmishes in southern Kentucky. His command during this time numbered up to 200. In January 1864, he linked up with Major Bledsoe of the 4<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Cavalry who was on a similar mission (the 5<sup>th</sup> patrol that was looking for deserters in the area) and remained cut off from Confederate lines. It was agreed that Major Bledsoe would keep rounding up stragglers from White County and Hughs would remain in Overton County. Bledsoe had no mention of this mission in his files. Hughs' report states that he could have raised a cavalry regiment of first timers, if he had the authority to do so. This is an overstatement. On page 153 of the book *Disloyalty in the Confederacy*, General Pillow (chief of conscription) reported to Inspector General Cooper in August 1863 that no more conscripts could be obtained from Tennessee. The Union Army was active in Alexandria and McMinnville, Tennessee during this timeframe.

**Sept-Oct 1863** (from TCWP 1 p. 383): The 4th Tennessee Volunteer Infantry Regiment (USA) under Major Patterson, marched from Nashville to McMinnville, in mid-September 1863 and was captured 3 weeks later by Confederate forces under Major General Joseph Wheeler. The men were paroled and went first towards Sparta, then headed to their East Tennessee homes. General Spears, commanding the 5<sup>th</sup> Tennessee

Volunteer Infantry Brigade (USA) moved from McMinnville on September 13 towards Chattanooga, leaving two companies in Carthage Tennessee (TCWPI p. 386).

**25 Nov 1863:** Edmund's Confederate service record will probably forever remain incomplete. The *TCWPI* says that the Union Army destroyed most of the regimental records in Brig. Gen. Wright's retreat from Missionary Ridge (Chattanooga). We need to be thankful for the sparse documentation we have.

**10-28 Mar 1864** (from *TCWPI* p.400): An African-American unit known as the 14<sup>th</sup> US Colored Infantry Regiment under Colonel Morgan took the unit on a recruiting expedition in the Sequatchie, Caney Fork and Calkiller River Valleys. He was instructed not to conscript African Americans, but he was allowed to accept volunteers. These units were successful in recruiting in Sparta and later joined other African-American units in Chattanooga

**Jan-Feb. 1864** (*TCWPI* p. 331): Colonel Stokes Federal Cavalry moved to Sparta and several skirmishes were fought in Putnam and White Counties along the Calkfiller River. The Confederate forces included the notorious Confederate guerilla Captain Champ Ferguson who lived in the valley. Union patrols also went to Overton and Jackson Counties to rid the area of guerrillas.

Authors Note: *This is the closest proximity the war ever got to Edmund's home.*

**9 May 1864** (*TCWPI* p. 258): Men of what was the original 22<sup>nd</sup> Tennessee Infantry Battalion (which was consolidated with the 38<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment) fought a battle at Rocky Face, Georgia.

Author's note: *This date is important, because that is about the time that Edmund's last child (Edmund Jr. born 12 Feb 1865) was conceived. Had Edmund Sr. chosen not to go AWOL, he might have very well been captured, killed, wounded, or fighting in Georgia during the month of May instead of having a romantic interlude with Elvy. Since I owe my lineage to Edmund Jr., I am glad he deserted! This is the first time we are certain that Edmund had contact with a family member. I am not sure where this liaison took place.*

**2 Sept 1864** (*TCWPI* p. 84): 13<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Cavalry Regiment (a.k.a. 8<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Cavalry) was furloughed for 4 days at Sparta to rest and recruit. According to their regimental history (written by the commander, Brig. Gen. G.G. Dibrell) they went from 140 "effectives" in Aug of 1864 to 1100 men (only about 300 were armed though). That is probably another exaggeration on the part of the commander. Dibrell claimed that people who had deserted saw the error of their ways and were glad to rejoin. Again, it is important to remember that 13 months earlier General Pillow reported that no more conscripts could be obtained in Tennessee.

The evidence clearly shows that the Confederate Army was constantly patrolling middle Tennessee in search of deserters like Edmund Stamps. We know that Edmund made at least two contacts with his family while he was in hiding. The first, when Edmund Jr. was

conceived at an unknown location in mid-May 1864. In the next chapter, we will see that he made contact with his family at least one more time.

## Chapter 4

### February and March 1865

Much of Edmund's final weeks will probably remain unknown. Here is what we do know:

**12 Feb 1865:** Edmund and Elvy's last child, Edmund, Jr., is born in Tennessee (according to census records).

**24 Feb 1865-3 March 1865:** In the mid-1970's, I first saw the original letter written by Eligah Stamps describing the death of his father in March 1865 (transcribed below). About 25 years later, I wanted to find it again. I thought that once I was able to re-read the letter, all my questions would be resolved about the death of Edmund Stamps Sr. As with so many other things in this saga, the discovery of one vital piece of information only led to more questions.

Here is the transcription of Eligah's letter:

*Eleander Tenn*

*March the 2 1865*

*Dear Mother*

*It is with a sad heart that I try to write you a few lines this morning my father was takend sick this day was a week ago and died this morning about eight o clock he had new money fever I had a doctor with him nursing him as well as I could he is dressed in brown jeans cloths as nice as circumstances will admit he will be buried this evening or tomorrow if Jess (last name unintelligible) is their tell him to stay untill I come I am a going to come home before long I would have had caried home if I could I can't have him take without a scout of men and I can't get them now*

*Your affectionate son untill death*

*Eligah Stamps*

*To his mother*

*Elvy Stamps*

As you can see Eligah was not much of a writer!

The time (March 2 1865at 8 am) and cause of Edmund, Sr.'s death (pneumonia, or "new money fever") are clear. He was sick for exactly a week because Eligah writes, "my

father was taken sick this day was a week ago." Since 1865 was not a leap year, that means that Edmund caught pneumonia on 24 Feb 1865. We know that this was at least the second contact with a family member that he his desertion in Jan of 1863. Edmund Sr. probably knew about the birth of his new son, Edmund, Jr., on February 12, 1865.

With the discovery and analysis of the letter, there is much more we would like to know.

Some unanswered questions include:

### **Where is Eleander, Tennessee?**

An extensive search of the Internet and three "Tennessee place name" books bore no fruit as to the location of "Eleander" Tennessee. I found an Elender creek in southeastern Weakly County and northwestern Carroll County. The nearest town of any size is McKenzie (west Tennessee). The Overton County historian said it probably was not Linder Mountain that Eligah is describing. Orlinda Tennessee is ruled out because it did not get its name until 1882.

It is possible that Eleander is not a real place but a code word for a place known only to Elvy and Eligah. Edmund was avoiding Confederate patrols for the last two years of his life. If that is the case, we may never know where Eleander really is. Eligah would have wanted his true location to remain secret if the letter was intercepted.

There is a Leander Mountain in Johnson County on the North Carolina border. The community of Leander is just across the line in Watauga County NC near Boone. As mentioned in a previous chapter, we are pretty safe in assuming that Edmund had outside help after his desertion in January 1863. Were underground members of the *Order of the Heroes of America* or the *Peace Society* helping him while was dying of pneumonia? They were very strong in nearby East Tennessee. It is possible that Edmund was somehow able to make his way to the Tennessee/North Carolina border region and into the safe haven of pro-Union, Southern Appalachia. "Eleander" may in fact be Leander Mountain Tennessee or the community of Leander, North Carolina. Very little is written about these two groups, and we may never know for certain. It might have been beneficial for him to be in North Carolina since the Confederate Governor did not enforce conscription.

The town of Alexandria TN is about 60 miles from the Calfkiller valley. "Eleander" may be Eligah's misspelling of Alexandria. One might assume that "Eleander" is somewhere fairly close to Calfkiller. Fifteen year-old Eligah says that he could bring the body home if he had a "scout of men." We know that people were traveling from McMinnville to Murfreesboro (60 miles) on horseback in a day. If we assume that a horse-drawn wagon carrying a casket would travel 30 miles a day Alexandria would be about a two day trip.

### **Question #2: Why were Eligah and Edmund in "Eleander" in late Feb and early March 1865?**

We don't know for certain why Edmund was in "Eleander." Perhaps he was still hiding even though the Confederacy was in its final days. It is also possible that he was picked up by a Confederate patrols at some point, and we have no record of it. Just about all of the Tennessee units retreated from the Battle of Nashville in late Dec 1864, and fought in South Carolina in Feb 1865. There were still small bands of Confederates scattered about that could have "re-enlisted" him into the army.

He could have possibly checked into the Union camp in Alexandria. I found numerous records of "refugees" who were admitted into Union posts seeking asylum. I searched the Provost Marshall's records from Oct 1864-March 1865 and could not find Edmund's name.

Eligah may have been sent to tell his father about his newborn son, Edmund, Jr. It's also possible that Eligah heard Edmund was sick and wanted to be near.

**Question #3: Who killed Eligah Stamps on 3 March 1865 (the day after this letter was written)?**

Sadly, Eligah was killed the following day, on March 3, 1865. My grandpa, Mitchell Stamps (born in 1894), told me that the family never knew who killed Eligah. Eligah knew the area was dangerous, because he talked about his inability to get a "scout of men" to bring Edmund's body home. It's pretty obvious that you don't need a "scout of men" unless there's danger. He said he wanted to meet "Jess" when he got back home. It does not sound as if Eligah was sick. Again, I checked the Provost Marshall's records for Eligah's murder, but came up empty.

**Question #4: The burials**

I am not sure who recovered the bodies of Edmund and Eligah, but they were taken to a remote area at the head of Stamps Hollow in the Calfkiller Valley for burial. Eligah decided to wait on burying Edmund, Sr. until March 3 but was killed before he could do so. This is more evidence that "Eleander" is a nearby place. Most people in the mid 1860's were buried near the place of death, since the logistics of transporting bodies by mule and wagon were rather limited. Trains moved human remains in this era, but that was expensive, and the nearest stop would have been miles away from Stamps Hollow.

The reader is welcome to entertain other conclusions.

## Chapter 5

### May 1865-2007

Many of Edmund's descendants stayed in Putnam County, Tennessee. Several moved to the Midwest or to California in search of jobs after World War II.

Despite several searches, I have yet to find the final resting-places of Edmund and Eligah Stamps, although I have located the field in which they were buried. Violet Stamps, who was in her early 90s in July 2005, told me they were buried at the head of Stamps Hollow, at the edge of a field across from the old Virgil Stamps place. The field and the foundation are still there (about 2 miles behind the Verble Church on Highway 84 south of Monterey), but sadly the grave markers aren't. Tennessee fieldstone brings a good price on the market, and I would guess the markers were used for that purpose. The current owner of the property is a man named Bob Walker.

Edmund, Eligah, Elvy and the rest of the family were victims of war. As is usually the case, the civilians suffered as much as the combatants. There were no pensions, memorials or medals – just two lonely graves.

Benjamin Franklin said, "There never was a good war or a bad peace," and I hope this story reinforces that sentiment. Edmund was almost certainly drafted into the Confederate cause. Conscription erodes the foundation of a free society, and was part of the reason the Confederacy lost the support of its own people. We will probably never know Edmund's political beliefs on the issues of slavery or secession. We don't know if he was a conscientious objector or just opposed service in the Confederate Army. From the remaining evidence, our best assumption is that he wanted to remain neutral during. That was just not possible, given his geographical location and age.

As of 2007 there are at least 180 descendants of Edmund Stamps, Jr., the youngest child of Elvy and Edmund Stamps, Sr. As one of those descendants, I owe my very existence to his decision to desert from the Confederate Army. That is a debt I can never repay.

*War is never the answer.*