

CIVIL WAR LETTER OF S. R. ADKINS

(This Civil War letter is submitted by Billie Faye Drost who also asks that we add William Harvey Merritt to our list of Civil War casualties, KIA. The letter below was addressed to Sarah Adaline Thorn Merritt, who married Joseph Addison Carothers ca 1865. They were living in Mecklenburg County, NC at the time of Sarah's death in 1904.)

Dear Ant

I hardely no what to say to you as I am so dissturbed and fatigt. we are yet in line of battle and has bin ever since the 20 of May. we have very strong fortifocations. wee are in tolerable close quarters with the yanks. our lines are in seventy five yard of them in some places wee have not ha any general engagements for severl days but tho the canonning and sharp shooting is heavy we have suferd severly since wee came to VA. our company and regt has redust alomost one half and wee have bin a fiting and dying in _____ breastwork and building fortifications until I am compleetely worn out but tho I am thankful that I have come through what I have and have not bin hurt. Otherwise me and brother Jasper has come through and has not in hurt while others have sunk and is now under the clods of the earth and you husband is numbered with them. He did not speake after he was shot. I saw him after he was caired out. He was shot through the sholder and the ball was araging through is hart. He was beryed neare the battle feeld. I did not get anything that he had with him. He had bin serched his knapsack is with _____ I will try and have it taken care of if I can but the blanket he had with him was stolen. I will attend to his business as I promus to do and do the best that I can for you and send it to you. So I will have to close for this time Nothing more but sending my love and respect to you and the family Rite soon if you can direct your letters to Peetersburg

S. R. Adkins to Mrs. S. A. Merritt
6 July 1864

ROBERT T. LEEPER & LYMAN C. DRAPER CORRESPONDENCE Part Four

(Lyman C. Draper began collecting reminiscences of veterans and descendants of veterans of the Revolutionary War when he was fifteen. Eventually he became Secretary of the Historical Society of Wisconsin. One of the many correspondents was Robert T. Leeper who personally knew Col. James Hawthorn, who was also York County's first sheriff and Leeper was a grandson of Col. Thomas Neel of York County. The following was transcribed from microfilm by Ann Burton, 43779 Valley Rd, Decatur, MI 49045-8905, editor of *Craig-Links*, surname quarterly for Craigs, who has generously shared her work with us. The numbers in parentheses represent the page number in the files.)

(p. 178) Yellville, AR 23 Jun 1875. Robert E. Trimble, son of Robert Trimble says Andrew and Thomas Hawthorne had no children. Trimble says he has 2 sisters living in this county and that one has some family records and papers of Trimble and Hawthorne and he hopes to get some answers for Mr. Draper. This from W. H. Peery, P. M. of Yellville. Rob't E. Trimble at Lead Hill, Boone Co., AR.

(191) Tells of Hawthorne's parents being murdered and that he was stolen off by the Indians and raised. In the war he was wounded twice, once in the thigh and once through the body, the ball entered under the right breast and passed out near the spinal column. . . He was sent by a small escort to the settlement to gain his health; but on the way they were intercepted by a squad of British. His men fled, all but one—the brave Thos. Neal (afterwards his brother in law) who chose to die with him (Col. Hawthorne) rather than desert him in his hour of danger; the two succeeded in beating off the British and made their escape. The men who had fled reported Hawthorne and Neal were both killed; there was great rejoicing when they arrived safely. (193) (more about Hawthorne's and Lacey's adventures in the war) (also 194). (195) After the war he married Mary Neal, daughter of Thos Neal of South Carolina, and sister of Thos. Neal that was with Co. H. during the war. They had born to them 4 children: Andrew Neal, Thos. Neal, Elizabeth and James McCree Hawthorn. They must have lived in SC for some time as my Mother, the third child, could remember when they left home

and emigrated to Kentucky and settled at or near what was then called Centerville; he lived at this place until his family were all about of an age, except the youngest son James McCree; my uncle. Thos. N. completed his study of law at that place under Reason Davige and Matthew Gage, two lawyers of that place. (196) About this time Col. Hawthorn started back to SC and died on the way with influenza. My grandmother and two uncles, Andrew and Thos came to the country with my father. Grandmother died in AR on White River about 60 yrs of age near a place known as Trimbles Island, White County now . . . then nothing but an Indian territory with a few white settlers. (thinks James Mc. Hawthorn may have died at New Orleans.) (197) Uncle Andrew and Thos both died without children and there are but 3 of mothers children living, myself and two sisters.

Col. James Hawthorne was about 5' 10" high, well proportioned, weighed 170, light complexion, sandy hair, grey eyes of quick temper, though very prudent toward his officers and men as was quite a favorite with his superiors. I am not aware that he was a professor though he never used profane language "I'll be burned: being the nearest my mother ever heard him approach profanity. He was a quiet man in his settlement never had any (198) aspirations for civil office nor held any that I am aware. There was nothing remarkable in his character—only he never passed any one of the tribe of Indians that murdered his mother and sisters without dispatching him on the spot. Even after peace was made. The old '76 veterans would frequently meet with their rifles and shoot at a mark for pastime; one occasion there was an Indian came to the party who was a stranger to them all. Grandfather soon found he was one of the tribe he had sworn vengeance against, and sent a ball through his head "What did you do that for" said one of his companions. "I'll be burned if old Black Snake (meaning his gun) wouldn't burst if she didn't go off when she saw one of that tribe," was his cool reply. . . Very truly yours R. E. Trimble.
(Draper sends Trimble a list of questions.)

(204) Lead Hill, (AR) 19 July 1874

Mr. Trimble's sisters live near Big Flat, Baxter Co. One named Yoakum. Says his father may have been reckless in KY and kept his past secret from his children (pp 206, 207 and 208 from pastor of Bethel Church, York Co., SC, S. L. Watson.) Also (209-217), (218) 1 May 1873 S. L. Watson to Draper, Bethel, York Co. Capt. Neal was a son of Col. Neil. A younger son is buried beside him in our cemetery at Bethel Ch. Another son, a colonel was killed by the Tories at Rocky Mount on Catawba River (also 219-222).

End of that section of VV11 having to do with Hawthorne-Neil/Neel/Neal.

Ann Burton, transcriber of this four-part section on the Neels, Hawthornes and Leepers, has also sent us further information on these families from other correspondence with Lyman C. Draper:

11VV. Col. James Hawthorne's father was from Ireland and settled near Charleston. James was the oldest child (two other brothers were probably Robert and Adam). Indians captured the family while father was out scouting. James, his mother and two sisters were captured. The women were killed. James was adopted by Indians (ca 12 years old or younger) for four years. Father found him dressed as Indian. Father died in a river driving horses on a horse drive. James apprenticed himself to a blacksmith. Someone else says that he was raised by Thomas Neil (I believe I have read that Thos. Neil was a blacksmith). Hawthorne went in the war at age 18, wounded twice. Rose from private to colonel. Says after 2nd wound, on the way to recover, attacked by British, "All men fled but trust brother-in-law-to-be Thomas Neil who chose to die with Colonel rather than to desert." They escaped. After the war he married Mary/Polly Neil, daughter of Col. Thomas Neil. They had 3 sons: Andrew, Thomas, James McCree, and daughter Elizabeth who m. Robert Trimble. His two wounds were at Hanging Rock and Cowpens.

In Draper's section 9VV there is the following statement, "Cornwallis took Mrs. Neil's 40 slaves and she went to Charlotte to plead with Cornwallis to get them back. Said she had mostly daughters at home and they couldn't work the land. He said 'learn your daughters to work! She said, 'well, at least let me have the children as we are very attached to each other.

He said, "Ha! Give you the calves and the cows will come looking for them.!" And he dismissed her."

In Draper's section 14VV it is stated that Col. James Hawthorn owned land in Livingston Co., in 1807 but lived in Centreville, Caldwell County, KY in 1809. (Caldwell Co. was formed from Livingston Co. in 1809.) A family of Tates lived near Hawthorne in Centreville and Gen. Edward Lacey and Maj. Charles Miles lived not too far away. Lacey and Hawthorne served together. Lacey came first to Kentucky. Col. Hawthorne's daughter was named Elizabeth. Lacey died in March 1813 and Hawthorne d. in fall before [other sources say he died in 1809]. Hawthorne's sons were Thompson and Andrew. Hawthorne came from Robeson Co., NC and was a "pale white skinned man, flaxen hair." A blacksmith, he had "moderate mental power but generous. . . better follower than leader." His children did badly with one son lynched in Kentucky for breaking and entering.

The End.

THOMAS M. CARROLL SPEAKS AT CLOVER

The only event to disturb the quiet monotony of our town, occurred on the evening of the 31st ultimo [31 May 1878]. On that afternoon people were seen coming in from all directions, for the purpose of hearing an address which had been previously announced, to be delivered by Hon. Thomas M. Carroll, of Pike county, Missouri. By early candle-lighting, quite a crowd had assembled, and with the Clover String Band at their head, marched to the residence at which he was stopping, when after the Band had performed several enlivening airs, Mr. Carroll was called. He responded in an address of about an hour. He commenced by referring to the home of his fathers, which was near this place, and then passed to National politics. He also gave a full history of the origin and objects of the Patrons of Husbandry. Every subject he treated was fully and clearly explained, showing that he is not only well posted on the past history of the government, but has fine conceptions of the policy that should be pursued in the future. Some Western man—he gave no name—with Wade Hampton, would form the Presidential ticket to sweep the county in 1880.

Mr. Carroll's father removed from this country in 1816, going West in search of a goodly land, not stopping until he passed beyond the banks of the great Mississippi. Finally he located in Missouri, where he reared a large family. Mr. Carroll is on a visit to this country to see the graves of his fathers and ascertain if any of his kinsmen are still living. He found many relatives, among them our esteemed townsman, Mr. Zimri Carroll, with whom he spent several days.

-*The Yorkville Enquirer*, 13 June 1878.

The 1876 York County tax assessment from the County Auditor reveals that the county folks owned 3,728 dogs valued at \$19,092. Contrast this with 6,864 sheep and goats valued at \$6,864. Or, the value of all stocks of out-of-state companies or corporations (excepting national banks): \$19,755. The total taxable property was \$4,652,177 of which the largest proportion was real estate, "\$3,125, 988. But, why were dogs so heavily taxed?"

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JAMES JEFFERYS, ESQ. OF YORKVILLE

by Louise Pettus

On the 24th of February in 1883 the oldest male resident of the town of Yorkville died. James Jefferys, Esq. had an unusual background. He was born August 6, 1800 of poor parents on the Island of Aldeney in the English channel. The parents moved to Guernsey Island, about 21 miles distant, when Jefferys was still an infant. When he was 12 years of age he was apprenticed to a cabinet maker, Thomas Dews.

Under the contract Dews made with Jefferys parents, Dews would provide room, board and clothing for the boy until he was 18 years of age. During that time Dews was to instruct young Jefferys in "the arts and mysteries" of the cabinet maker's trade. Four years after the contract was made Dews decided to emigrate to the United States. He asked the parents to allow him to bring along his 17-year-old apprentice and they consented.

In 1817 Dews, his wife and children, and James Jefferys landed in Philadelphia. They stayed there for seven months and then moved to New York city for about two years. After that Dews was at Richmond, Va. for two months, then to Petersburg, Va., Raleigh, Salisbury and Lincolnton, N. C.-- never finding a satisfactory situation.

Jefferys' apprenticeship was extended by two years in order to pay his passage over. The apprenticeship expired August 6, 1821. Believing that there was not enough business in Lincolnton to employ both Dews and himself, on his 21st birthday, Jefferys bid Dews goodbye and set out on foot to find employment for himself. His only money was \$2 loaned to him by a friend.

Jefferys walked to Providence community in lower Mecklenburg County where he expected to find employment but was disappointed. Again he set out on foot and was at the crossroads at Tirzah Church where a fingerboard pointed in one direction to Yorkville and in another to Chesterville. Jefferys later said that he asked for Divine Guidance and always believed that his prayer directed him to Yorkville.

He arrived in Yorkville on foot in the middle of November 1821. At that time Yorkville had only about 200 people and nearly all of the homes were constructed of logs. The first person he met was Samuel Chambers, one of the leading men of the village. Chambers directed Jefferys to the house of Samuel Wright. Wright invited Jefferys to spend the night and the next morning they made a nine-month contract. Jefferys was to work as cabinet maker and Mr. Wright would furnish him a shop, materials and board. Each was to get one-half of the gross sales.

When the nine-month contract ended Jefferys had enough money to go into business for himself both as a cabinet maker and storekeeper. In 1838 he dropped cabinet making and became one of Yorkville's leading merchants. His store prospered and he accumulated much property in Yorkville.

From 1838 to 1862, he was magistrate and thereafter known as James Jefferys, Esq. (The title of "Esquire" was generally given to any judge, no matter the type of court.) It is estimated that, as magistrate, Jefferys handled at least 2800 local cases and additional state cases in his court. His reputation for fairness was widely known. He kept such meticulous records as magistrate that he was often called upon to settle disputes. According to Jefferys' obituary in the *Yorkville Enquirer*, his decisions were never questioned.

A pious man, Jefferys was one of the first 8 organizers of the Yorkville Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1829 he organized the first Sunday School in Yorkville. All of his life he was a zealous and active worker for the church.

Jefferys married Elizabeth H. Smith, daughter of Capt. Thomas H. Smith of Yorkville. They had twelve children, eight sons and four daughters.

The name of James Jefferys is not listed among those immigrants to York District who swore allegiance to the United States of America. Perhaps he did and the record is lost. Whatever the case, he was long remembered and respected in Yorkville as one of the town's best and finest citizens.

BANKRUPTCIES OF 1867-1868

One of the post-Civil War's traumas was the lack of an adequate amount of money in circulation. The war had drained the area of most of the gold and silver coins. Confederate paper money, notes and bonds now had no value whatsoever. The Union had issued paper money (Greenbacks) during the war and these were in circulation but pitifully few of them reached the average Southerner.

Probably the most telling sign of the poverty of York County in 1867 was the number of auction sales notices printed in the *Yorkville Enquirer*. For instance, the November 7, 1867 issue had the following notice from R. H. Glenn, S. Y. D. (Sheriff of York District): "Sheriff's Sales. By virtue of Writs of Fieri Facias, to me directed, will be sold between the legal hours of Sheriff's Sale, on the First Monday in December Next, at York Court House, the following property . . ." There follows more than 70 pieces of property to be auctioned. All of them auctioned because the owners could not pay their property taxes. All notices had the same wording with only the name of the property owner changing. The first one listed was "One tract of land, bounded by lands of Miss M. A. Boyd and others, levied on as the property of J. L. Rataree, at the suit of the State for double taxes."