

Holmesburg in the Civil War

On April 15, 1861, the day after Fort Sumter fell to the Confederacy, President Lincoln issued a proclamation calling for 75,000 volunteers to maintain the laws of the United States. In Petersburg, Virginia, Holmesburg native Robert Johnson, grandson of Joseph Aston, had a gas-fitting business. He was also an active member of a military company. When Virginia seceded, his company was called to service in the Confederate Army. On April 19, Johnson, in peril of his life, headed north to Holmesburg.

John Willian of Bustleton, one of the proprietors of the Pennypack Print Works, rallied the men of Holmesburg and Bustleton into a company of House Guards. Upon his arrival, Johnson, who had learned military drills in Petersburg, began instructing the nascent company in the upper floor of Lower Dublin Academy. Robert DeSilver, who had made a fortune in Chinese trade and was owner of 23 acres south of Decatur St on the east side of the Bristol Pike (later the property of Samuel Stokes), offered the use of his property for the company's drill field. DeSilver also provided the men with uniforms. They would henceforth be known as the "DeSilver Grays".

On April 30, 1861, the Pennsylvania Legislature called for the organization of a division to be called "The Reserve Volunteer Corps of the Commonwealth", composed of fifteen regiments. (Pennsylvania had met its initial quota of volunteers within 10 days of Lincoln's proclamation with 25 regiments. In recognition of the magnitude of the war, the reserves were organized.) The 3rd Pennsylvania Reserve Regiment was formed in Philadelphia on May 20. It included the DeSilver Grays as Company "E" under command of Captain John Clark (replacing Captain Willian) and Robert Johnson as First Lieutenant. Clark was a commissioner from the new 23rd Ward at the commencement of the War and was a prominent Holmesburg resident.

The 3rd Pennsylvania Reserves was mustered in at Easton, PA on May 31, 1861 and sent to Washington, DC where they were assigned to the I Corps of the Army of the Potomac. The regiment was engaged in the Seven Days Battles near Richmond, Virginia, in late June, 1862; at 2nd Bull Run (Manassas, Virginia), August 28-30, 1862; in western Maryland at the Battle of South Mountain (Turner's Gap) on September 14, 1862 and at Antietam (the bloodiest single-day battle in American history - 23,000 casualties) on September 17; at Fredericksburg (Virginia), December 11-15, 1862; and at Cloyd's Mountain in western Virginia at the end of the war in the spring of 1864. The regiment was mustered out of service on June 17, 1864, at Philadelphia.

John Clark (1822-1872) was a railroad contractor along with his father, George Clark. He moved to Holmesburg in 1858 and purchased and resided in the house at the northwest corner of Welsh and Main. Captain Clark was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel for meritorious service during the Seven Days Battle and took command of the 3rd Reserves Regiment. He was wounded in the hand at Antietam but refused to leave the battlefield. Neglect to the wound resulted in permanent injury to his hand.

Shortly after the Battle of Fredericksburg, Colonel Clark was detailed for special duty in the engineer corps. The Union was carrying on campaigns over almost the entire continent and the building and repair of railroads for the transfer of troops and supplies was essential. Colonel Clark's earlier experience in railroad construction would prove invaluable. He was mustered out of the engineer corps in July, 1864. John Clark was subsequently chosen a member of the City Council of Philadelphia and a member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, of which body he was elected Speaker. After a short illness, he died at his home at the corner of Welsh and Main. He was only 50 years old.

Upon Clark's promotion, Lieutenant Robert Johnson was promoted to Captain and took command of Company E. Johnson had four brothers in the conflict. Jacob Johnson was killed at Fredericksburg, December 12, 1862. His body lay on the field of battle all night. The next day Captain Johnson retrieved his brother's body through heavy enemy fire and had it carefully buried.

In terms of casualties, the Battle of Fredericksburg was the low point for the DeSilver Grays. According to the muster roll below, Jacob Smith was also killed. Richard Bambrick, Charles Dewees, Nelson Shemaley, and Joseph L Toy were wounded (and Toy missing) and Lynford Williams was taken prisoner. George Egee and George Fletcher deserted.

After serving faithfully for three years, the DeSilver Grays returned home in June 1864, where they were gratefully received under a Triumphal Arch with a ceremony in front of the American Hotel on Main St in Holmesburg.

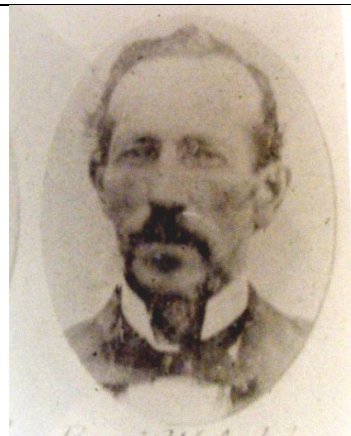
Muster Roll, Company E, the "DeSilver Grays", 3rd Pennsylvania Reserve Regiment

COMPANY E, RECRUITED IN PHILADELPHIA.			
NAME.	RANK.	DATE OF MUSTER.	REMARKS.
John Clark.....	Captain.....	May '31, '61.....	Rank from May 24, 1861. Promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel, July 10, 1862.
Robert Johnson.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Promoted from 1st Lieutenant to Captain, Aug. 1, 1862. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Thomas H. Bradford.....	1st Lieutenant...	May 31, '61.....	Promoted to Sergeant, Aug. 1, 1861; to 1st Lieutenant, Aug. 1, 1862. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
George H. Lindsey.....	2d Lieutenant...	May 31, '61.....	Rank from May 24, 1861. Resigned July 19, 1862.
Edwin A Glenn.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Promoted to Sergeant, Aug. 1, 1861; to 2d Lieutenant, Aug. 1, 1862. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Alfred B. Day.....	1st Sergeant	May 31, '61.....	Promoted to Sergeant, Aug. 1, 1862; to 1st Sergeant, Oct. 1, 1862. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
John Blaker.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Died of wounds received at Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862.
Dennis C. Duggan.....	Sergeant	May 31, '61.....	Promoted to Sergeant, Aug. 1, 1862. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Jesse Wells.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Promoted to Sergeant, Oct. 1, 1862. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
J. Y. Martindale.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Promoted to Sergeant, Nov. 1, 1862. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Charles W. Stout.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Prisoner at Gaines' Mill, June 27, 1862. Promoted to Sergeant, March 1, 1863. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
John B. Clift.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Discharged on Surgeon's certificate, July 11, 1862.
Samuel Flemming.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Discharged, Nov. 12, 1862, for wounds received at Mechanicsville, June 26, 1862.
Harry S. Jones.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Promoted to Sergeant-Major, July 1, 1861; to 2d Lieutenant, Company F, July 29, 1862.
George Wells.....	Corporal.....	May 31, '61.....	Promoted to Corporal, Aug. 2, 1862. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
John R. Wagner.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Promoted to Corporal, Oct. 1, 1862. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
James P. Brown.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Promoted to Corporal, Nov. 1, 1862. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Edward Tustin.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Promoted to Corporal, March 1, 1863. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Edward J. Haines.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Promoted to Corporal, March 1, 1863. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Lynford Finlayson.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Discharged on Surgeon's certificate, Feb. 18, 1863.
George T. Mills.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Discharged on Surgeon's certificate, Feb. 20, 1863.
Samuel Cartledge.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Transferred to Signal Corps, July 18, 1861. Discharged at expiration of term.
Henry B. Weed.....	"	July 9, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864.
Alfred Haines.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864. Veteran.
Jacob Thomas.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Killed at White Oak Swamp, June 30, 1862.
George Morgan.....	Musician.....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
John Stack.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Achuff, Isaac.....	Private.....	May 31, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864. Veteran.
Atkinson, William H.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864. Veteran.
Ackley, Benjamin.....	"	July 16, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864.
Artman, Owen.....	"	July 17, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864.
Ashton, William.....	"	May '31, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864. Veteran.
Booth, Walter.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Bambrick, Richard.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Wounded at Fredericksburg. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Bennett, David R.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Prisoner at Charles City Cross Roads. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Boileau, Tustin.....	"	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.

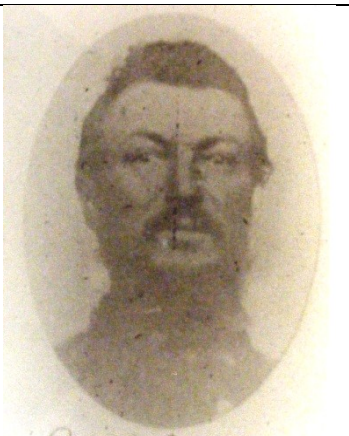
Boulton, James.....	Private.....	May 31, '61.....	Wounded at Antietam. Discharged on Surgeon's certificate, January 18, 1863.
Bartlow, Warren.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864. Veteran.
Benger, William H.....	".....	July 22, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864.
Boyd, James.....	".....	Sept. 10, '62.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864.
Brophy, James.....	".....	May 31, '62.....	Deserted, June 5, 1861. Released on writ of <i>habeas corpus</i> . Minor.
Chambers, Robert.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Clark, William.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Clinton, John.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Cripps, William.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Clark, Robert.....	".....	July 18, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864.
Cochran, Matthew.....	".....	July 21, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864.
Carman, William.....	".....	March 16, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864.
Deweese, Charles.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Wounded at Fredericksburg. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Dugan, Michael.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Drexler, Frederick.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Discharged on Surgeon's certificate, Sept. 21, 1862.
Downing, William.....	".....	Sept. 11, '62.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864.
Eckley, Amos.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, July 17, 1864.
Eckley, John T.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Discharged on Surgeon's certificate, Jan. 20, 1863.
Eckley, Joseph.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Discharged on Surgeon's certificate, May 11, 1863.
Egee, George H.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Deserted, Dec. 12, 1862.
Fullerton, John.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Fletcher, John W.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Absent at muster-out.
Fletcher, George W.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Deserted, Dec. 12, 1862.
Hoff, Henry K.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Johnson, John.....	".....	July 15, '61.....	Discharged on Surgeon's certificate, Dec. 23, 1862.
Johnson, Jacob A.....	Private.....	July 22, '61.....	Killed at Fredericksburg, Dec. 13, 1862.
Kreuson, Luther.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Died from wounds received at Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862; buried in National Cemetery at Antietam, grave No. 179, lot B, section 26.
Kennedy, John.....	".....	Jan. 22, '64.....	Not on muster-out roll.
Kelly, John F.....	".....	Nov. 11, '64.....	Not on muster-out roll.
Lynn, John.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864. Veteran.
Mooney, George W.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Miller, Frederick C.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Maybery, Martin.....	".....	Sept. 27, '61.....	Deserted, Jan. 21, 1862.
M'Bride, John.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
M'Callough, Joseph jr.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
M'Creedy, Charles.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Nield, William J.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Pidcock, Benjamin.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Pidcock, Jason.....	".....	Aug. 2, '62.....	Killed at Cloyd Mountain, May 9, 1864.
Ryan, William.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Rich, Charles H.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Solly, William W.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Prisoner at Mechanicsville, June 26, 1862. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Saul, Robert B.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Discharged on Surgeon's certificate, Feb. 2, 1863.
Scott, David.....	".....	March 1, '62.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864.
Shemaley, Nelson.....	".....	July 16, '61.....	Wounded at Fredericksburg, Dec. 13, 1862. Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864. Veteran.
Shaw, William F.....	".....	Sept. 9, '62.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864.
Smith, Jacob.....	".....	July 16, '61.....	Killed at Fredericksburg, Dec. 13, 1862.
Scott, Frederick B.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Wounded and missing in action at Mechanicsville, June 26, 1862.
Switzer, Frederick.....	".....	July 15, '61.....	Missing in action at second Bull Run, Aug. 28, 1862.
Seaver, Samuel.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Deserted, Jan. 21, 1862.
Travis, James.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Thompson, William B.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Toy, Joseph H.....	Private.....	May 31, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864. Veteran.
Tomlinson, E. L.....	".....	July 15, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864. Veteran.
Taylor, Hallowell.....	".....	Sept. 27, '62.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864.
Toy, Joseph L.....	".....	May 31, '62.....	Wounded and missing at Fredericksburg, Dec. 13, 1862.
Vanhorn, George.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Wilson, Robert.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Wells, Joseph H.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Wright, Richard.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Williams, Lynford.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Prisoner at Fredericksburg, Dec. 13, 1862. Mustered out with company, June 17, 1864.
Wilson, David M.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Wounded at Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862. Discharged on Surgeon's certificate, Dec. 1, 1863.
Ward, Samuel P.....	".....	July 15, '61.....	Transferred to 54th Regiment, Pa. Vols., July 4, 1864. Veteran.
Yonker, Samuel.....	".....	May 31, '61.....	Wounded at Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862. Discharged on Surgeon's certificate, Oct. 1, 1862.



Isaac Achuff



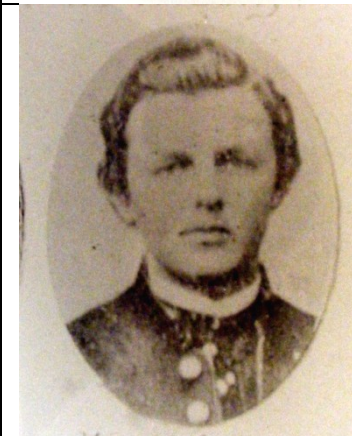
Benj. W. Ackley



Owen Artman



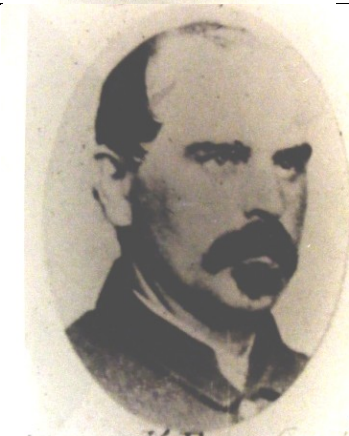
William R. Ashton



Wm. H. Atkinson



Richard Bambr



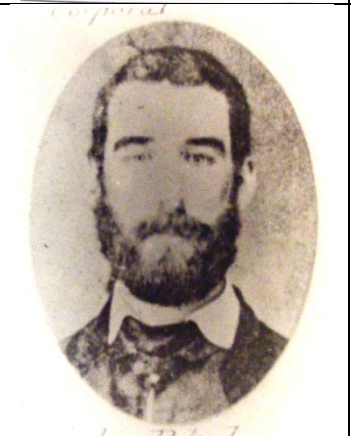
Thomas H. Bamford



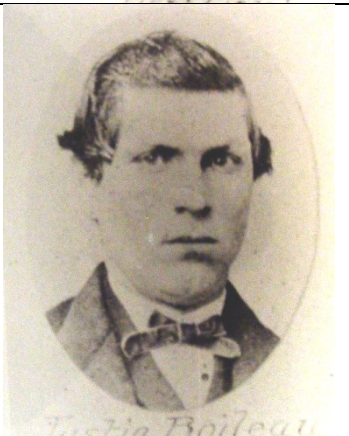
Warren B. Barlow



David R. Bennett



John Blaker



Justin Boileau
Sergeant



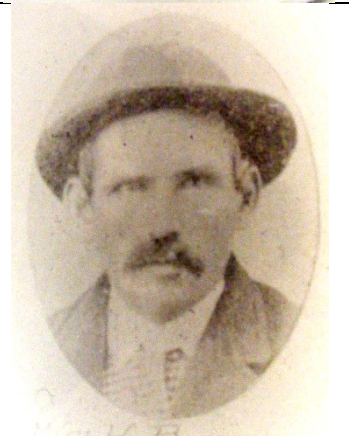
James Boyd



James Boyd



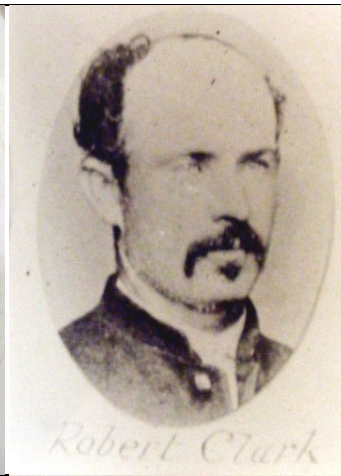
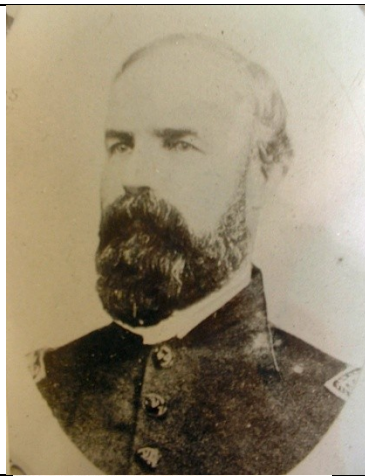
Jas. P. Brown



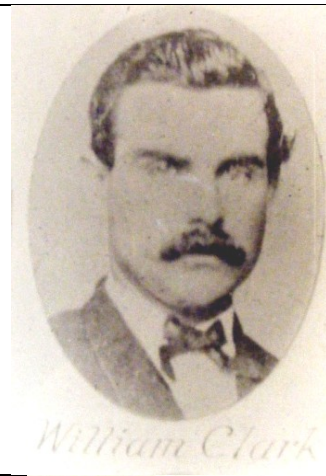
Wm. H. Burger



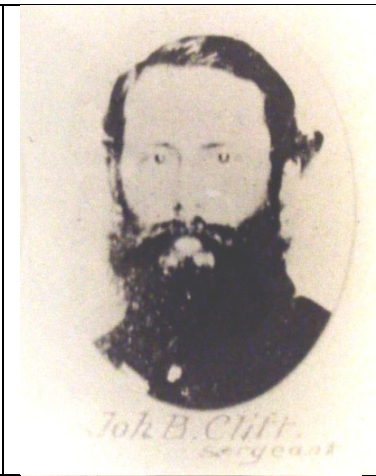
Sam'l Carledge
Corporal



Robert Clark



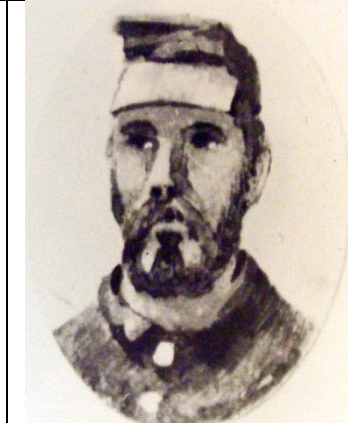
William Clark



Joh B. Clift
Sergeant



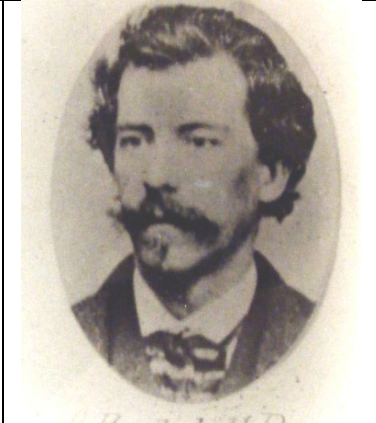
John Clinton



Matthew Cochran



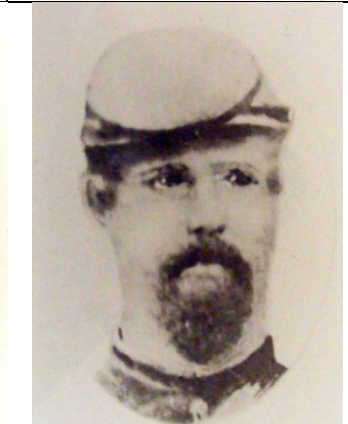
William Crym



H Barrolett Day
First Sergeant



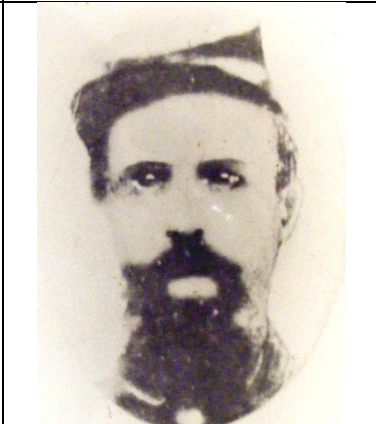
Charles Deween



William Downie



Dennis C. Dwyer
Sergeant



Michael Dugan



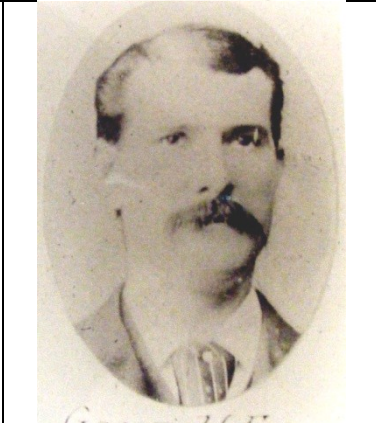
Amos Eckley



John T. Eckley



Joseph Eckley



George H. Egee



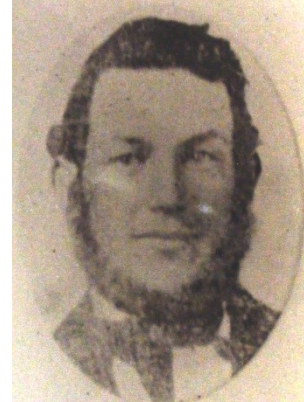
L. A. Finlayson
Corporal



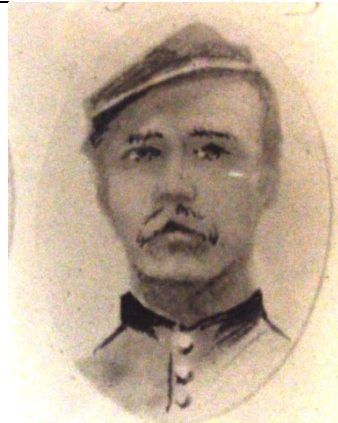
Samuel Florio
Private



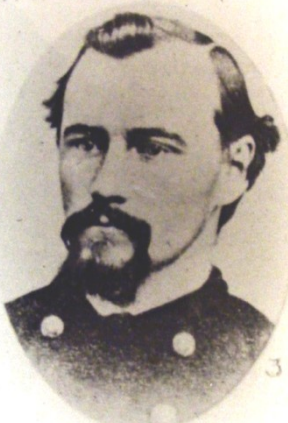
Geo. W. Fletcher



John W. Fletcher



John Fullerton



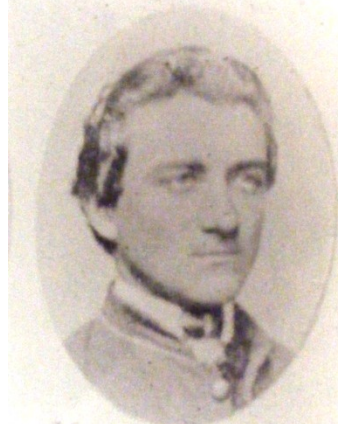
Edwin A. Glenn



Alfred Haines
Corporal



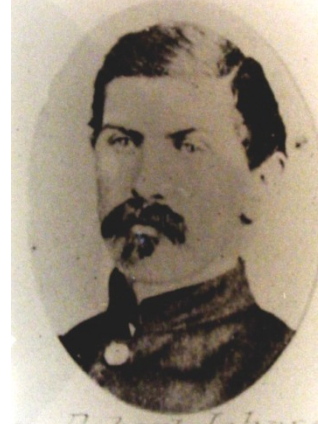
Edward J. Haine



Henry K. Hoff



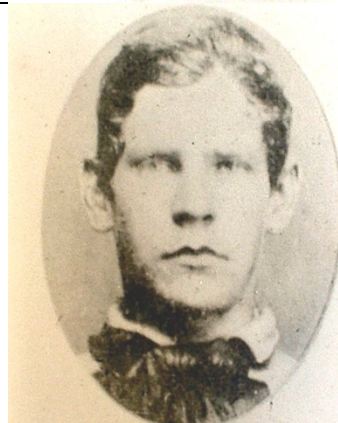
Jacob A. Johnson



Robert Johnson
Captain



Harry S. Jones
First Sergeant



Luther Krewson



Geo. H. Lindsey



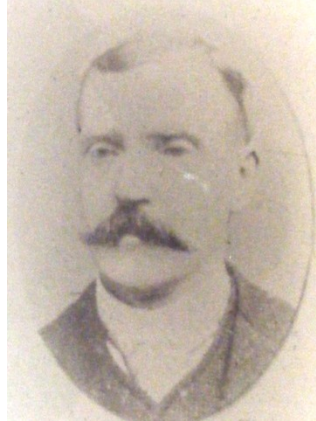
John Lynn



T. Y. Martindale



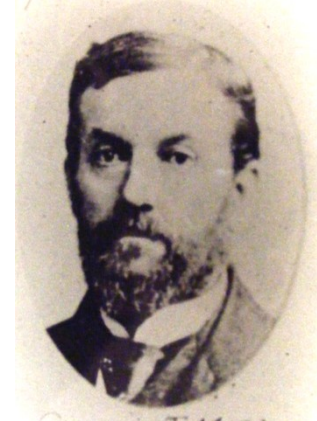
John McBride



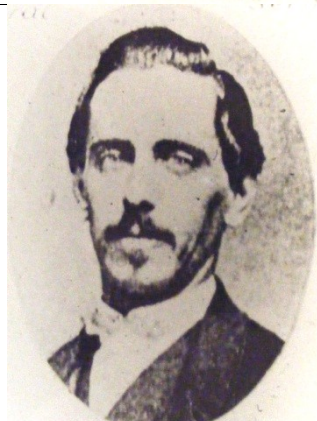
Charles McGreer



Fred C. Miller



George T. Mills
Corporal



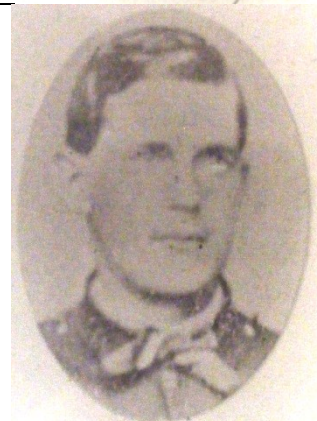
Geo W Moore



George Morgan



Wm J. Neill



Benj. Pidcock



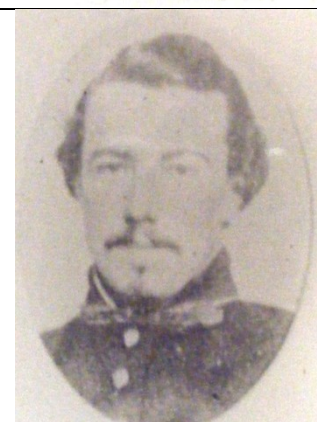
Jason B. Pidcock



Charles H. Rich



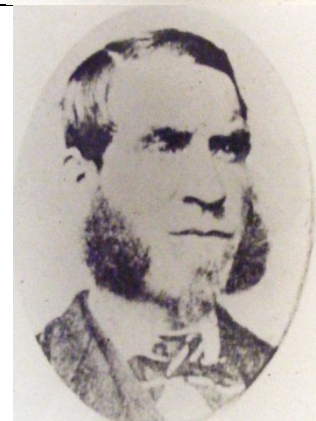
William Ryan



Robert B. Saut



David Scott



Samuel Seaver



William F. Shaw



Nelson Shemate



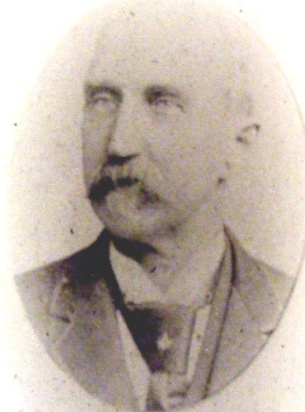
Wm W. Solly



John Stack



Charles W. Stodd
Sergeant



Hallowell Taylor



Jacob Thomas,
Corporal



Wm B. Thompson



Joseph H. Toy



Joseph L. Toy



James Travis



Edw. L. Tustin
Corporal



Geo. W. Van Horn



Jno R. Wagner



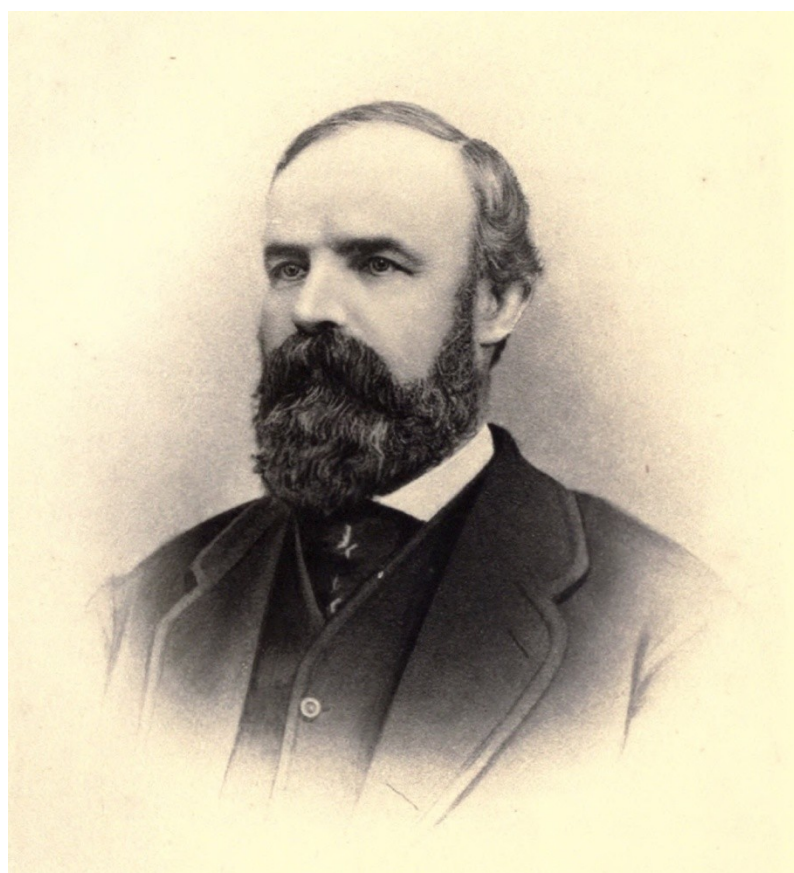
Samuel Ward



Henry B. Wood



Geo. Wells,
Corporal



Lieutenant Colonel John Clark



Captain Robert Johnson