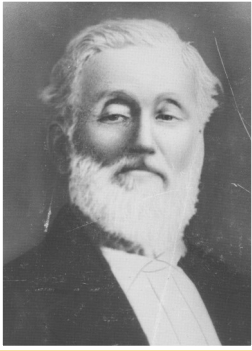


July, 2015



EWING FAMILY NEWS

Descendants of William Alexander Ewing

Everyone was impacted

The Civil War Changed the Nation

After decades of discussion and argument, the issue of slavery led to physical violence and bloodshed in the latter half of the 1850s. By the time Kansas became the 34th state in late January, 1861, six southern states had already seceded from the union and had formed the Confederacy. Texas joined them in March. Four more states joined the southern cause in the three months following the siege of Ft. Sumter in April, 1861.

Many people in the northern states viewed the conflict at Ft. Sumter as merely a disagreement that would last only a short time and then all would return to normal. But when first blood was shed in July near Manassas Junction, Virginia, and the conflict resulted in an overwhelming victory for the fledgling Confederacy, it became clear that the country was truly involved in a war. Both sides ramped up their efforts to recruit manpower and to train and supply their armies. Neither side could have known that they would be engaged in battle for the next four years, each side fighting to further their beliefs.

Over the course of the war, both armies would suffer enormous loss of lives that would impact every family in the country as men of all ages left their homes to take part in the conflict. A large percentage of families on both sides of the issue would have their heredity drastically altered.

While our Ewing family didn't lose any members to the war (as far as presently known), we did have some that participated in the conflict. Here are the ones that we know about.

Cyrus C. Ewing — younger brother of William Alexander Ewing, enlisted in Company E of the 74th Illinois Volunteer Infantry at Cherry Valley, Illinois, on August 14, 1862. At age 22, Cyrus would have a very short military career, being discharged at Gallatin, Tennessee, on March 3, 1863. Not much detail is known, but he evidently was an early victim of the soldier's grueling lifestyle. Being constantly on the move (afoot) in the

Newsletters online

Visit:

williamalexanderewing.info

On this website you will find previous issues of the newsletter as well as numerous photos and historical information about the family of William Alexander Ewing

Editor's note:

Most of this information was first published in a 2001 newsletter. It has been re-created here with a few updates and photos and will be posted on the website:

williamalexanderewing.info

worst of weather with very little protection from the elements, eating meager rations and being constantly subjected to unsanitary conditions, Cyrus quickly became ill and spent most of his time in military field hospitals ... such as they were. Dysentery, food poisoning, disease and afflictions resulting from the conditions resulted in nearly as many casualties as the warfare.

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Joseph Coxley
Father of Gustavus Coxley

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Joseph Coxley — father of Gustavus Adolphus Coxley, joined the army when Gus was about ten years old. When Joseph **Cochley** enlisted into Company I, 55th Ohio Volunteer Infantry at Centerton, Ohio, on October 12, 1861, they misspelled his last name as **"Coxley"**... a mistake that he never corrected. In fact, he kept the new spelling throughout his military experience and even took the name with him when he returned to private life after the war.

Leaving his young family in the fall of 1861, Joseph Coxley travelled south with the army and also found the conditions to be very harsh. On an expedition near Grafton, Virginia, that lasted for 12 days in February, 1862, the soldiers were forced to melt snow for drinking water. Sleeping on the cold, wet ground without shelter and eating fresh meat that had been improperly cooked soon took a heavy toll on the personnel.

Joseph became ill from food poisoning with severe diarrhea and a bladder infection that landed him in a hospital near Middleton, Virginia, where he spent the months of May and June. Con-

tinued complications kept him in hospitals in Baltimore, Maryland, and Alexandria, Virginia, until October of 1862. When he finally re-joined his unit, he was still too weak to be of much use. By spring of 1863, Joseph was back in the hospital at Washington, D.C., where he was discharged from the army on April 12, 1863.

Joseph Coxley returned to his home in Ohio where he recuperated enough to live a normal life for a while. But he must have been very concerned about the ongoing war because on July 6, 1863, Joseph once again volunteered to enter the conflict. This time he joined the 1st Ohio Heavy Artillery unit at Sandusky, Ohio.

Serving as a harness-maker and a chaplain, Joseph continued in the Union army until the end of the Civil War. He mustered out of the service at Knoxville, Tennessee, on July 25, 1865. Though he managed to stay out of the hospital during his second enlistment, Joseph continued to experience trouble with his kidneys, bladder and bowels, especially in the last few months of service. According to pension documents, he would have problems related to this for the rest of his life.

George Kryder — Joseph Coxley's wife, Saloma (Kryder) Coxley, was the oldest daughter of Michael and Elizabeth (Leininger) Kryder. Among Michael and Elizabeth's seven children

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A letter written by Saloma Coxley to George Kryder's wife, Elizabeth, gives us some insight into the stress and worry that was a constant companion of those who had loved-ones in the war:

"... I also had a letter from George about two weeks ago and he said that he was quite unwell at that time but I hope that he is better by this time, and I had a letter from Joseph a week ago yesterday and he was in Knoxville, Tenn., and he enjoyed quite good health this spring — the war news is very good but the last battle made many a heart sad by the loss of loved ones. Mrs. Runey got a letter the other day from Kuncy and he was wounded in the right thumb and he said he would give the names of the killed and wounded. The names of the wounded are as follows: Sargent Sikes, wounded in the left lung; Miran Day, wounded, George Pratt, wounded; and Randolph Bard, killed... those that was killed in Company I. And he gave the names of a few in other companies. Cornel Gamby killed of Co. B, and Major Robins and Capt. Beck of Co. H was killed. Those are all the names that he mentioned, and I was to Centerville yesterday and I told some there that Randolph was killed and they said that Mariett had not heard it yet as she had been there on Friday and said she wished she could hear from him. I think that must be an awful shock to her as she is left all alone now, and we don't know but the next will be our men. Oh, it makes my blood run cold to think of it. There is hardly enough men left at home to raise bread and I can't get anybody to plough a furrow for me, or at least I have no one yet. I have no garden yet..."

"...Now I must stop writing as I am getting so nervous that I can't hold the pen."

*Yours in haste,
Saloma Coxley*

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were three boys: John S., George and Ezra, all born in Ohio. All three of the brothers joined the war effort and served in the Union army during the Civil War. John (also known as Samuel) served in the 74th Indiana Infantry and Ezra in the 1st Indiana Light Artillery. Other than that, not much is presently known of the military experience for those two brothers. But George is another story.

George Kryder, along with his brother-in-law, Henry Sweetland, enlisted as a volunteer in the 3rd Ohio Volunteer Cavalry at Monroeville, Ohio, when the unit was formed in November, 1861. They were soon heavily engaged in the battles of the war in Kentucky and Tennessee.

Throughout his four-year enlistment and reenlistment, George wrote letters home to his wife, Elizabeth (Sweetland), and also kept a daily journal during some of his service time. His writings were kept by his family and provide some insight into the life of a soldier in the Civil War. The letters, which number over 100, and the journals were transcribed and typewritten by a descendant of George's and those transcriptions were later donated to the Center for Archival Collections at Bowling Green State University. The Center now has them available online, where they make interesting reading for anyone who would like to look at them. The George Kryder Papers, as the collection of data is known, provide details of the war from the viewpoint of an enlisted man.

In his writings, George shows that his health also was effected by the weather and living conditions. From aches and pains to sore throat and coughs. At times he was unable to stay on his horse and had to ride in an ambulance that trailed the troops. During the siege of Atlanta, George became very ill with dysentery and, after about a week, was sent on a train back to a camp hospital at Columbia, Tennessee, to recuperate. It was a month before he could rejoin his unit.

George Kryder was one of 400 men in January of 1864, out of the 1151 who enlisted in the unit in November, 1861, that were "still fit for service"... an indication of the heavy casualties from war and disease that were experienced by all units.

While the letters written by George are available for study on the internet, the website also provides an overview of the letters' contents. According to the summary, George Kryder tended to play down the involvement in the war in earlier letters so that his wife would not have increased cause to worry. But as the war ground on, his activities were described in greater detail. Toward the end of the war, he had obviously become weary of the battles and carnage that he witnessed.

In May and June of 1863, the 3rd Ohio Volunteers engaged in heavy battle with the rebels in which over 250 men from George Kryder's unit were captured by the Confederates. George and his brother-in-law, Hen-



George Kryder
Brother of Saloma Coxley



Saloma (Kryder) Coxley
Mother of Gustavus Coxley



George and his wife, Elizabeth (Sweetland) Kryder

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ry Sweetland, were among a few who escaped. The rest of the captives were harassed and humiliated but later paroled by the rebels.

From late September through the end of October, 1863, the 3rd Ohio Volunteers engaged in numerous battles with Generals Wheeler and Roddy around Chickamauga, Georgia. In nearby Courtland, they suffered heavy casualties in repeated cavalry charges that lasted for hours, according to the regimental history's reports.

In January of 1864, George Kryder reenlisted along with the 400 surviving veterans of the 3rd Ohio unit and were joined by 600 new recruits to bring their strength to 1000. They were reassigned to the Army of the Cumberland which accompanied General Sherman through his devastating march to the sea. He participated

See the
George Kryder Papers

online at

bgsu.edu/colleges/library

in the siege of Atlanta, Georgia. On rapid and sustained day and night marches near the Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia borders, George Kryder spent most of his time in the saddle and engaged in combat.

When they weren't on the move or in the heat of battle, the soldiers spent much of their time foraging for food in the area around their camp ground, sometimes ranging up to ten miles in search of wild berries, garden produce, local crops or pigs and chickens.

Other journal entries indicate that leisure time between battles sometimes led to trouble within the camp. George wrote: *"The boys feel merry as larks. We drew some whiskey, some of them were a little tipsey."* And on another date: *"Our Battalion officers are under arrest for plundering."* On another occasion he wrote: *"Last night several drunken men were on a row with the Lieutenant. And today they were put under arrest."* On yet another occasion: *"There is another excitement about a soldier and a wench. The boys tied them together and drove them through the camp and had great cheering."* Then there is this entry: *"The 1st, 3rd and 4th Ohio got into a fight. I got my nose bled. They went at it with sabres."* Maybe it was a good thing they were on the march most of the time.

By mid-to-late 1864, the 3rd Ohio Volunteers were heavily involved in hard-fought campaigns in Eastern Tennessee. General Sherman's decision to attack rebel positions in the Kennesaw mountains resulted in heavy casualties on both sides. September through November of 1864 found them engaging the enemy in northern Georgia and Alabama.

The spring of 1865 brought more battles, campaigns and skirmishes, as the Confederacy was making its last stand. The western army, of which George Kryder was a part, engaged in massive mop-up operations in Georgia and Alabama. From March to July, George experienced the roughest action yet. In the Selma and Montgomery, Alabama, campaigns his unit covered 500 miles in twelve days. It was not unusual for them to move 30 to 50 miles in a day and participate in a battle as soon as they finished the long march. In his journals of 1864 and 1865, George noted most of the movements of his unit, often starting their day before 3:00 A.M. and sometimes not ending the day until midnight or later.

The Union's heavy schedule of pursuit finally paid off in May of 1865 when they captured "Old Jeff" ... Jefferson Davis, the President of the Confederacy, and the war drew to a close.

George Kryder spent the last few months of his military time performing various official supervisory duties on the plantations and assisting in gunboat errands to inventory government property in Florida and on the Gulf Coast.

George and the 3rd Ohio Volunteer Cavalry were mustered out of the service at Edgefield, Tennessee, on August 4, 1865, with a total of 881 troops out of the original 1000. Fifty-eight enlisted men and six officers had died of disease, making a total of 294 men from the 3rd Ohio who had died during the war.

We get a glimpse of George's younger brother, Ezra Kryder, in a letter that Saloma Coxley wrote to George at the end of the war:

"... I had a letter from Ezra about a month ago and he was well at that time. He was at Montgomery, Ala., and he has got him a wife, a French lady by the name of Louise Miller. He thought he would make it his home in New Orleans for a year or two after he is a free man."

Saloma Coxley