

Madison County Remembers...

A Publication of the Madison County Genealogical Society

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This is a special issue of our newsletter.

The American Civil War began officially on April 12, 1861, when at 4:30 A.M. Confederate troops fired on Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. This was a defining moment in American history. Northerners rushed to enlist to save the Union, and Southerners prepared to fight to preserve slavery on which their agriculture and lifestyle depended.

The clash of ideologies had festered for many years over government policies, taxes, and slavery issues, creating a huge complex mix. By 1860 the North and the South were largely polarized over slavery. Passions over the immorality of slavery fueled the coming storm. President Lincoln maintained that preserving the Union at all costs was to be the end achievement of the war, but finally recognized that slavery was the critical issue. On April 15, 1861 President Lincoln issued his first call for 75,000 troops to suppress the illegal secession of the 11 southern slave states.

Northerners volunteered by the thousands expecting the war would be short, but soon faced the reality that Confederate troops were equally determined and capable. Thousands of deaths quickly resulted from fierce battles on unfamiliar terrain, often with outdated or inadequate weapons. Many deaths came not from battle, but from disease, poor diet, lack of sanitation and clean water, and insufficient medical facilities. Civilian casualties went uncounted as their lives were torn apart, and then with weeping and despair they watched as their beloved wounded and dead were brought home.

The information that follows comes from one of our Society members, Bernice Walters. We give a big Thank You for her contribution to this newsletter.

"On this 150th memorial year of our historic Civil War there is an undercurrent of excitement in my bones as I hold original letters written in 1862 by veterans of the American Civil War. Wow—150 years ago...

I try to imagine the mixed feelings, the excitement and concern these volunteers must have felt as they hurried to enlist, and then marched into bloody battles they could not even imagine. These pen written letters create in me powerful emotions and I am elated to now share these letters with our readers as ongoing tribute to the courage of conviction and faith in our country which these volunteer enlistees carried into battle.

These Civil War papers and mini photo album deal with Ohio and Michigan, and came from an estate sale in Michigan in the mid 1980s, and sat among my collections these many years. My continuing interest in the Civil War awakened me to these unique and timely letters this 150th year of commemoration, so these historic papers now again see the light of day. Following pages show copies of the letters as originally written, with only minimal changes in spelling for clarity."



"WAIT ' TILL THE WAR IS OVER"

June 25, 1862

Covington, Kentucky
 Military Hospital
 Dear Son and Daughter

I must inform you that I came to Cincinnati yesterday morning at six o'clock and we Ohio boys was taken across the river in the above named hospital. I am not very sick. I can eat my three meals a day and we get, which is good. I am lame with the rheumatism and a pain in my side but I am getting better every day.

They may keep some of us here yet for two or three weeks for I do not wish to go home the way some of our men do. I wish to have my discharge uprightly and not sneak off like a deserter. I could get a furlough but only for twenty and pay my own fare, and then I would have to come back again to Cincinnati so think I had better stay here in the hospital. My pay still goes on until I get my discharge.

If I come home on a furlough it will cost me a good bit of money. I can only stay at home about 16 days but if you all think best I will get a furlough and come home. Sometime next month we will be paid off. You need not be alarmed about my being in the hospital. I am doing well enough. There is all care taken of us that can be done. The Doctor comes to see us twice a day. He says he will get a discharge for us as soon as he can. I have not seen Benjamin since the Battle of Corinth but I heard he was well.

The wheat is here mostly all on the shocks, plenty of ripe apples and cherries. I must come to a close.

I hope this letter may find you all well. Let mother know that I will be home now before long. I am very thankful that I am so near home. I was in three fights and seen hard times.

If you write to me direct your letter Covington Military Hospital, Kentucky.

Your Father, D. Ohlinger



Majestic monarch of the cloud, defends the Banner of the free--
While by lightning lances driven, the traitors flag in shreds is riven

Fremont, Ohio July 28th, 1862

my Dear cousin,

I take my pen in hand to answer your kind letter which I received 26 of July and was very glad to hear from you. I will tell you that I am well at the present time and I hope too that these few lines will find you and all the rest of the boys enjoying the same blessings.

I can't write much for this time for I don't know of any particular news. I got done harvesting last Friday but we had a hard time of it for the hands was scarce and the wages is high and living was four dollars a day. The wheat is good but it was very much down.

There is some excitement here about the war for if they commence drafting I think it will make some trouble – if they could be all captains then they would all go just so that they could make money.

I don't think that they would care very much about the union but I think if they will get the slaves free that we will have some harder times yet to come but write me what you think of it, whether you are for to have the slaves free or not. Then I will write you yet some more.

I guess we will have some good times on the second of August. I wish that you could be with us-- we would have some better times yet. There was two weddings here some two weeks ago. Moses Ulch is married. This is all that I can write for this time.

Nathan Stierwalt

[Note on reverse side of this letter:]

Answer this as soon as it comes to hand and I will do the same as before.

To my cousin Benjamin Ohlinger

From your cousin N. S.

Copies of letters as written September 10, 1862, Fremont, Ohio with minimal changes for clarity

Fremont, Ohio

September 10, 1862

Dear cousin

I take my pen in hand to write you a few lines to let you know that I am well at the present time and I hope that these few lines find you in the same state of health. I must (tell) you that the war news is exciting for there is a great many going that (have) to share one gun with them and if I was well I would be in the army this long time but I can't for my health is so poor.

But if I could get in a hospital I go in a minute for the times are dull here for we expect that every man that is able to go must go ___ for it will be draft board next week.

I wrote you a letter sometime ago but I didn't get no answer yet so I thought I would write a few lines to let you know that I am still a thinking of you, yet my hope and pray is that this war may come to a close soon that we may talk with one another and have peace in the land again.

This is all that I can write for this time but answer this as soon as it comes into hand and I will do the same. So goodbye for this time.

from your cousin

Nathan Stierwalt to B.O.

Second letter on Union stationery:

September 10th, 1862

My Dear cousin

I take my pen in hand to write a few lines to you to let you know that we are all well at present time hoping this will find you enjoying the same. Further I let you know that I received your kind letter dated September the 4 and was glad to hear form you again. Now I must let you know that we got hard times here now. There went about 40 down to Cincinnati this morning with their guns. Now I must let you know something about the weather-we got nice weather here it was pretty dry but it was raining tonight now. I must let you know that Deliah is well at present and Samuel was well a Sunday but I must bring my letter to a close. I hope you will write to me as soon this comes to hand. I sent my love and best respects to you so good night for this time.

From your cousin

William Stierwalt,
Deliah S Benjamin O.

Following are photocopies of the actual letters (pages 5 and 6) written on one page of stationery, and appear to be two similar letters, apparently to be sent to two cousins. They survived intact and for unknown reasons were not sent.

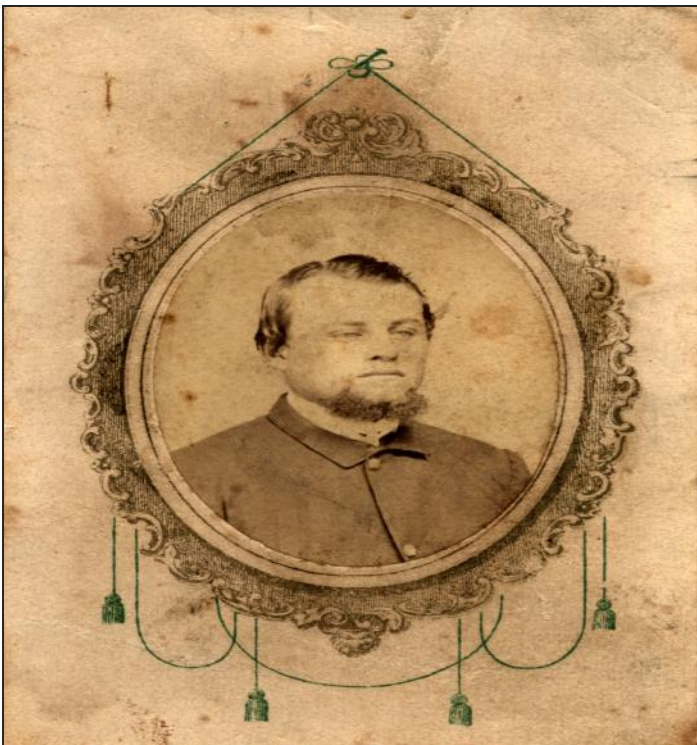
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 close I hope I will
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 this comes to hand
 I sent my love and
 best ~~of~~ respects to
 you so good night for
 this time from your
 Obairn
 Deliah & Samuel
 Benjamin

Vermont Ohio
 September 10, 1862,
 Dear son I take my pen
 in hand to write you a few
 lines to let you know that
 I am well at the present time
 and I hope that these few lines
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 health I must you that
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September 11 1862

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 from your cousin
 Nathan Shewell A. B. C



*before his marriage
to my mother
Mrs B Wilcox
Bertha*

H. A. BALCH'S
STAR PHOTOGRAPH GALLERY,
Nos. 219 and 221 Main Street,
Memphis, Tenn.

*your affec. Brother
Benje Ohlinger
Com. Co.
72nd Co. 72nd Regt.*

All negatives preserved.
Duplicates can be had by sending name and address.

The photo on the upper right is of Nathan Stierwalt. The photo on the upper left is of his cousin Benjamin Ohlinger who served in Co. F & S.. The back of the photo is shown below his picture.

At the outbreak of the Civil War Benjamin Ohlinger volunteered in the 72nd Regiment Ohio Infantry as a Private, and fought in the battles of Shiloh, Corinth and Vicksburg. Benjamin's first tour of duty ended in 1863 but he quickly re-enlisted in the same Regiment and Company of the fighting 72nd Ohio. His final discharge was September 22, 1865 as First Sergeant. He moved to Michigan and was a successful farmer and raised his family. As Commander of the Charles T. Foster Post at Lansing, retirement years, the duties of that Post of the Civil War veterans. Benjamin and is buried in the Maple Ridge wife, Anna K. Ohlinger, was born March the Maple Ridge Cemetery.

Michigan, he was happy to carry out well into his in the Grand Army of the Republic for the benefit Ohlinger died April 16, 1932 at 89 years of age Cemetery, Holt, Ingham County, Michigan. His 1, 1841 and died July 22, 1902, and is buried in

Remembering our Veterans who Served our Country.



Commander Ralph P. Buckland was born January 20, 1812, in Leyden, Massachusetts and moved to Ohio as a child. He studied law, was admitted to the bar in 1837, and became Colonel on October 30, 1861 when he was given command of the 72nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry. Despite lack of military training he showed exemplary leadership and courage as in the battle at Shiloh. Seeing hesitancy in his troops to advance as ordered, he seized the flag and sprang forward, to the cheers of his following troops. Calm and steady under fire was his great strength and history records that his unit was the only one in Gen. Sherman's Division to survive the battle intact. Promoted to Brigadier General he went on to successful battles at Memphis and Vicksburg. He resigned his Commission December 22, 1864, and was brevetted Major General on March 13, 1865 for meritorious service during the Civil War.

Major General Buckland died May 27, 1892 at Fremont, Ohio, and is buried in the Oakwood Cemetery, Fremont, Ohio. He married Charlotte Boughton of Canfield, Ohio, on January 18, 1838, and they had 8 children. She was born in 1817 and died in 1901.

72nd OHIO VOLUNTEER INFANTRY

Ohio organized its volunteers quickly in answer to President Lincoln's call for troops. The 72nd Infantry was organized in Fremont, Ohio in October 1861-February 1862, for 3 years service under the command of Colonel Ralph P. Buckland. The Regiment was attached to the Army of the Tennessee under General Ulysses S. Grant, and soon became engaged in one of the fiercest and most costly battles in life and limb of the Civil War. The 72nd Infantry fought its first major battle on April 6th and 7th, 1862 at Pittsburg Landing on the west bank of the Tennessee River. Southerners called it Shiloh for a small log church there—ironic that Shiloh means "place of peace" in Hebrew. It was here in this low-lying area near the southwest Tennessee border 150 years ago that Pvt. Benjamin Ohlinger was one of the Ohio 72nd Infantrymen engaged in the most desperate battle of their lives. The battle positions of both Confederate and Union forces created such a maelstrom of death and destruction, it was aptly called a "hornets nest".

Confederate forces enjoyed success that first day, but Major General Grant in command of the Army of the Tennessee with greater Union forces and resources, won the battle the next day. The outcome made history.

The Army of the Tennessee including the 72nd Ohio Infantry moved on in April and May and succeeded in the siege of Corinth, on Mississippi's north border, which was a vital crossroads of rail and river transportation for the South.

Figures vary but the Regiment lost a total of 298 men during service; 4 officers and 56 enlisted men killed or mortally wounded. It is shocking to learn that 236 of the enlisted men died of disease.

(continued on next page)

Pvt. Benjamin Ohlinger was in Companies F and S, attained the rank of 1st Sergeant during his war service, and survived these horrific battles as indicated in the letter written by his father, June 25, 1862.

Today Shiloh is part of a National Military Park with its tranquility and peace somber consolation for the heroic battles fought here, to save the Union.

Military Hospitals

Military hospitals were hastily organized and erected in Covington, Kentucky, as the natural water highway with steamboat traffic made Covington, (and other river ports), the quickest and most accessible location for northern Kentucky. Wounded soldiers were also routed from nearby battlefields via the railroad terminal there.

The first Union military hospital in Covington was the Main Street U. S. General Hospital, located between Third and Fourth Streets in the former Ellison House Hotel. It opened in April of 1862, only days after the devastating battle of Shiloh. Its first patients arrived by steamer on April 18th, carried in on litters and tended by volunteer Doctors and nurses. This was the largest of the Covington Military Hospitals with 300 beds, and remained open until June, 1865.

It is very possible that David Ohlinger, father of Benjamin, was taken from Cincinnati to this hospital, from which he wrote to his family on June 25, 1862.

Two additional military hospitals were opened in Covington in September of 1862: the Seminary and one in the former Bridge Hotel. Several convalescent facilities operated for brief periods, and many buildings including schools, churches and private homes, were hastily converted in the beginning to handle the huge unanticipated inflow. Women volunteers attended to the wounded and provided supplies.



Congressional Medal of Honor

Captain Charles H. McCleary served in the Union Army and was awarded the Civil War Congressional Medal of Honor as a 1st Lieutenant in Company C, 72nd Ohio Infantry, for action on December 16, 1864, at Nashville, Tennessee. His Citation reads: "Capture of flag of 4th Florida Infantry (C.S.A.) while in advance of his lines." He was born in September, 1842 in Sandusky County, Ohio and died June 23, 1906. He is buried in the McPherson Cemetery, Clyde, Sandusky County, Ohio.

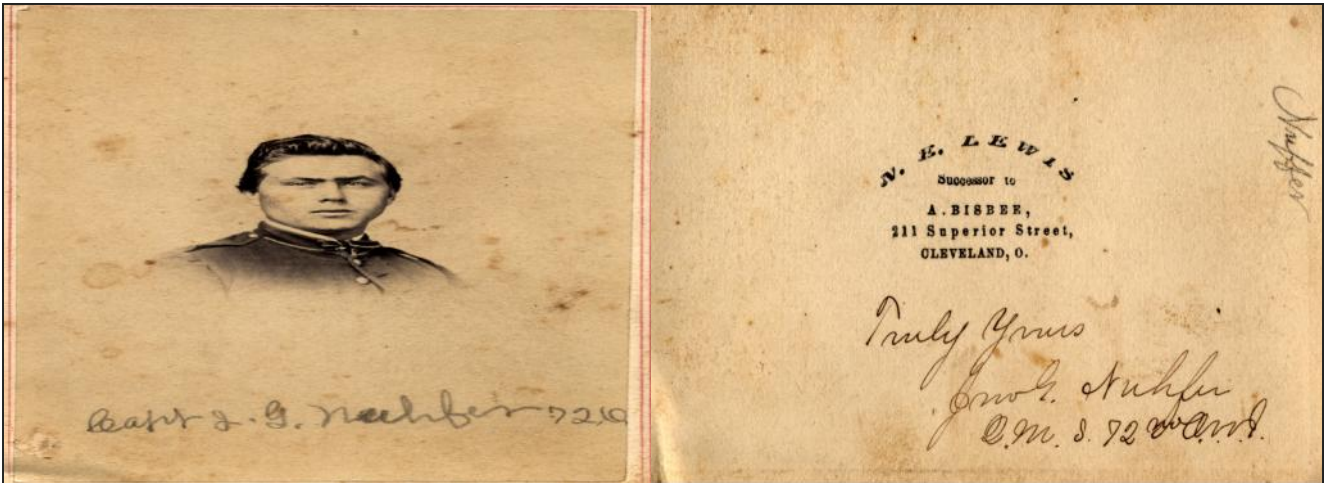
★ **DAVID OHLINGER** was born March 13, 1806 in Berks County, Pennsylvania and died October 20, 1870. He married **HANNAH MILLER**, born April 17, 1809 in Berks County, Pennsylvania, and died August 30, 1888. They were the parents of George; Aaron; Hannah M.; twins Louisa and Benjamin; Franklin; and Israel. At the age of 57 years David volunteered in the 57th Regiment Ohio Infantry and saw service in the battles of Shiloh, Corinth and others, as did several of his sons. David and his wife Hannah are buried in the Pioneer Cemetery, Holt, Ingham County, Michigan. ★



On the left is a copy of this actual album cover of the Civil War era. It had become popular to use miniature photos (2 by 4 in.) as calling cards. People made or bought mini photos of a friend or family member and requested the individual to autograph and return it. Originating in Europe, it developed into a mania over here. Signed cards were much sought after from celebrities or other noteworthy people and became valuable to collectors. Originals and reprints were sold, and many family albums were created during the War using these mini photos of loved ones, especially of and for those in the Service. Albums were designed just for these mini photo cards- this one is made of heavy block pages, gilt edged, with photos back to back, with a heavy tooled leather binding and brass hinges. It contains photos of Ohlinger and Stierwalt families, as well as soldiers in the 72nd Ohio Infantry, and other military leaders.



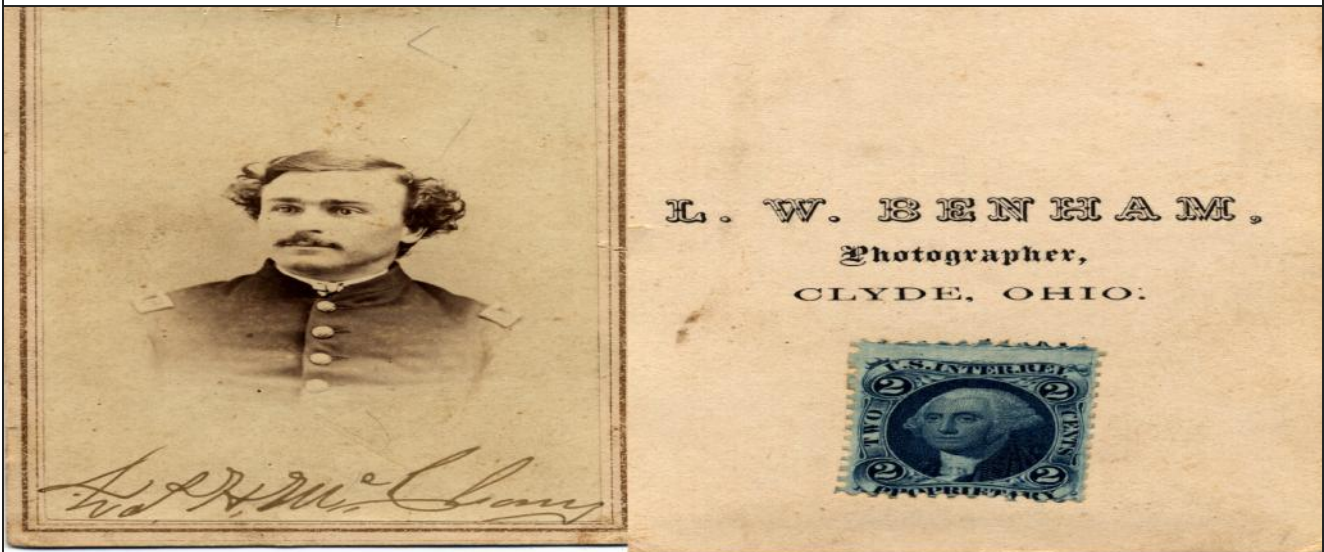
The man on the left in this photo is most likely Benjamin Ohlinger with the other 3 men not identified at this time.



Capt. John G. Nuhfer and back of photo . He served in Co. F & S.

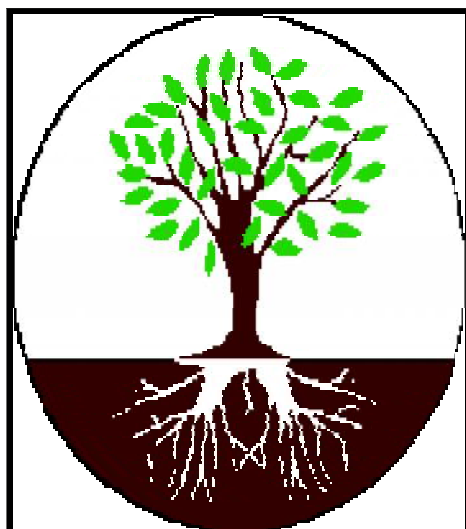


1st Lieut. Daniel W. Huffman and back of photo, Co. CB. Born Sept. 12, 1839 Dauphin Co. PA. Died Aug. 22, 1920 Grand Rapids, Wood Co., Ohio. Buried Tontogany, Ohio, Otsego Cemetery



Pvt. / Capt. Charles H. McCleary and back of photo. Served in Co. F & S.

Madison County Genealogical Society
PO Box 1031, Norfolk, NE 68702—1031



Your membership renewal date is on the address label.

TEMP RETURN SERVICE FIRST CLASS

2011—2012 Officers

President: Richard Streng Vice-President: Phyllis McCain
Secretary: Frances Beck Treasurer: Bernice Walters

Our future meetings:

June 16 July 21
August 18 September 15

Madison County Genealogical Society
PO Box 1031, Norfolk, NE 68702—1031

Join us and bring some one along with you.

You may reach our society by mail at the address above or by e-mail at **mcgs@telebeep.com**

Send your newsletter information to **mcgs.nebraska@centurylink.net**

Memberships are \$15 per year starting at the time of your membership and it includes our bi-monthly newsletter.

Meetings: 3rd Saturday of each month except December and January at 10 a.m. at 515 Queen City Blvd., Norfolk, NE., Elkhorn Valley Museum and Research Center.

Website: <http://mcgs.nesgs.org> or www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nemcgs/

"Material in this Newsletter is from original Civil War documents, and research in genealogical, historical and library sources, as well as U. S. Archives and U. S. Army Center of Military History."