

CIVIL WAR ANCESTORS

By Sandra Cox

Since joining the BRCWRT several years ago, I have heard members talk about their ancestors who served with the Blue or the Gray. Admittedly, I was becoming envious! The only rumor I heard about my Civil War relatives was that Abe Lincoln was in our family tree, but no one living knew where.

Then I 'happened' to find my maternal family tree while surfing the net. There it was dating all the way to John Grigsby, Maidstone, Kent, England, 1505, traced by my cousin's daughter whom I have never met. And I thought I was German! Not only were Civil War relatives listed, but their regiments, The 42nd Indiana Volunteers and The 10th Indiana Cavalry.

BRCWRT Past President Keith Young provided additional information from his National Archives CD, and I found a website for the 42nd. I have had a ball surfing, printing, sorting and reading.

I heard about Keith's presentation '**Genealogy and the Civil War**' on October 20 and 27 sponsored by the Centreville Library and signed up. The first session we learned the how-tos of determining if an individual is a Civil War veteran; identifying his unit; reconstructing likely activities, battles and travels of his unit; getting additional information on his wartime service and other things military. Keith provided an abundance of resources like books, CDs, internet sites, and state rosters. **Jerilyn Polson** brought in plenty of books available at the Centreville library. I added these to the package BRCWRT member **Tim Duskin**, who is also Archives Technician, Research Support Branch at the National Archives, offered to mail members at our October round table meeting. During the second session we learned how to reconstruct and write the Civil War history of our ancestors. Keith showed us those he wrote about his great grandfathers, Abraham Deeter and the 5th Iowa Volunteers, and Jasper Briskey and the 14th Alabama Infantry.

I am sure **Lyle Loveall, Mark Knowles, Dale Maschino, Tony Meeks, Tim Duskin** and other attendees will agree, it was a good learning experience and will help us immensely wherever we are in our search for Civil War ancestors.

Oh, that family rumor, one click on the family tree and there it was! My 2nd great grandfa-

ther's brother Aaron Grigsby married Sarah Lincoln, daughter of Thomas and Nancy Hanks Lincoln, older sister of Abraham and Thomas Lincoln. Unfortunately Sarah and her first child did not survive childbirth. She and infant Nathaniel are buried near Aaron in Little Pigeon Creek Church Cemetery in Lincoln State Park, Spencer County, Indiana. And now I have stories of my own. May I tell you just one I found on my relative's website?

Nathaniel Grigsby, brother of Aaron, was known as a 'dear friend of Abraham Lincoln'. "In 1860 he was living in Norborne, Illinois. He wrote to Lincoln and received an appointment as Republican Precinct Committee Man. He placed Lincoln's name on the 1860 ballot. All of Natty's neighbors were Southern sympathizers. He had been talking about electing Lincoln for president in town. One morning at about 2 or 3 a.m. a neighbor rode up and told Natty not to light any lights. The neighbor wanted to warn him that his neighbors were planning to murder him and if he wanted to live he should be on his way. After the warning, Natty moved back to Spencer Co., Indiana..."

The really interesting part of the story is his tombstone, still visible in Attica, Kansas which reads, "*N. Grigsby, Died Apr 16 1890 Aged 78 Yrs 6 Mo 5 Days 2nd Lieut. Co. C 10th Ind Cavy Went to school with Lincoln. Brother to Aaron Grigsby who married Abe Lincoln's oldest sister. Visited the White House.*" And that is just the front! The back reads "*Through this inscription I wish to enter my dying protest against what is called the Democratic Party. I have watched it closely since the days of Jackson and know that all the misfortunes of our nation has come to it through this so-called party, therefore beware of this party of treason.*" Good Story!

Source: <http://thestoms.com/stomtree> and "From the Grave, A Cry of Treason" by Roy Wenzl, *Wichita Eagle* (Wichita, KS) 18 Jan. 1999

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As we proceeded to walk downhill from the McIntosh Artillery Battalion toward the Second Corps line, a tour participant noted that, from our vantage point it was impossible to observe the townhouse development that CENTEX had constructed between the opposite slope of the hill and Route 28. Thus, it was truly possible for us to visualize the events that occurred on that most historic slice of Prince William County almost exactly 142 years earlier without undue intrusion by "improvements" of the 21st century.

PRESERVATION UPDATE BRISTOE STATION

By John De Pue

On 15 October, 2005, Mr. Chris Borne and other employees of the Prince William Department of Parks and Recreation conducted a tour of the portion of the Bristoe Station Battlefield that the CENTEX Corporation had previously ceded to the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT). As most of our members are aware, the tract consists of approximately 127 acres of the core area of the battlefield on the west side of Virginia Route 619 (Bristow Road) and embraces such key sites as the location of McIntosh's Artillery Battalion and the field over which Cook's Brigade of Heth's Division advanced in assaulting Union Second Corps forces concealed in the Orange and Alexandria Railroad cut. It also includes several smaller parcels along the railroad right-of-way and the west side of Route 619 subsequently acquired by CWPT. Also attending the event were Jim Burgess, Vice Chairman of the Prince William Historical Commission; and Robert "Red" Barbour, of the Fincastle Rifles Camp, Sons of the Confederate Veterans (SCV), both of whom have played key roles in the fight to preserve the battlefield.

And, to add a measure of authenticity, reenactors representing the 27th Virginia Infantry, several North Carolina regiments, the Second Corp's First Minnesota Infantry, and a Pennsylvania Artillery Battery, complete with a Parrot Rifle and limber, were also in attendance. At the time of my arrival, the North Carolinians were completing the grim task of burying their dead comrades and marking their graves with barn boards.

Chris, who comes to Prince William County from previous employment supervising the Saylor's Creek Battlefield Park; will be responsible not only for administering Bristoe Station but also for the County's historic sites at the Ben Lomond Manor, Brentsville Historic District, and Rippon Lodge in eastern Prince William County as well. During our hour-long excursion, Chris provided many helpful insights as to what the County had in store for the site. Perhaps most significant, the County anticipates acquiring title to the CWPT tract sometime during November of early December and in having the trails, interpretive signage, and other visitor amenities completed in time for a substantial commemoration of the 2006 anniversary of the battle.

The County's vision for the battlefield also contemplates the acquisition of additional parcels

of key terrain. Specifically, it is presently seeking to purchase a six acre tract at the intersection of Bristow Road and the Southern Railway rail bed. It has also learned that the owner of the property south of the rail bed, which was the site of Arnold's Second Corps battery, is seeking to sell ten acre parcels for development. It hopes to purchase the tracts that are the most proximate to the Union lines and embrace the sites of its artillery positions. Although no plans are presently in the offing for acquiring land on the eastern side of Bristow Road, the County is interested in preserving the original "Village of Bristoe," by promoting the preservation of the remaining dwellings constructed during the years immediately following the Civil War.

The County's plans also include the eventual demolition of the ranch-type bungalow and adjacent structures at the top of the hill above the McIntosh Battalion position, but contemplate the conversion of the now-defunct Rollins General Store or an adjacent building as a visitors' center with a parking lot leading to the interpretative trails. Chris would also be most happy to have the assistance of Roundtable members in manning a visitors' center and assisting in interpreting the site for visitors. He has offered to attend a meeting of the Roundtable to discuss such opportunities and the County's plans for the site and - if there is sufficient interest - to address the Battle of Saylor's Creek.

During our discussion of the County's plans for the battlefield, Red Barbour raised concerns relating to the fate of the two known Confederate cemeteries, which mark the final resting place of several hundred Confederate soldiers from Mississippi and who succumbed to disease during the summer and fall of 1861. After Chris assured Red that the County would cooperate in every way possible with the SCV in protecting and maintaining the site, he indicated probable need for our assistance in an effort to remove brush and undergrowth from the known internment areas, as a precursor to the erection of an appropriate monument and protective fence. Red also made it clear that he has no intention of abandoning his efforts to locate the final resting places of the Confederate combat casualties from the October 14, 1863 battle and hopes that we will continue to support him in that effort.

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