

Albuquerque, NM 87123
May 7, 2002



Dear Greg & Louise,

Although I've not done anything approaching a thorough research program on the Brown family history, I did want to learn more about Robert K. Brown, our great great uncle, who died in the Civil War. Robert was an older brother of David Brown, our great grandfather, and an uncle of Grandad Brown and Aunt Helen.

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I therefore contacted the National Archives with the information I already had and asked them to send me copies of all documents that they have on file. (I'm going to do the same with the State of Indiana.) The documents I received were the Inventory of Effects, Casualty Sheet, Record of Death & Interment, Hospital Record, and Company Muster Roll.

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Remarks:

I've summarized what I have learned below:

Robert's age when he died isn't clear. According to an undated birth record compiled by his sister, Margaret, he was 22; but according to the documents sent to me, he was either 18 or 20, depending on which document you believe.

He is described as 5' 8" tall with a light complexion, light hair, and blue eyes. He was a farmer. His home is given as Harrison Corners, Allen County, Indiana. He was unmarried.

Robert enlisted for three years on August 5, 1862 in Fort Wayne. The "Bounty & Prem. paid" was \$27.00. He was then mustered in on August 29, 1862 in Indianapolis. He subsequently served as a private under the command of Captain Augustus C. Brown (his brother and therefore another great great uncle!) in Company E of the 88th Indiana Infantry.

Robert was wounded at the Battle of Stones River near Murfreesboro, Tenn. One document lists the date as Dec. 31, 1862 and another as Jan. 3, 1863. (I'm inclined to believe the former, as histories list the battle as lasting from Dec. 31 to Jan. 2.) He was then sent to the No. 1 U.S.A. General Hospital in Nashville where he died on Jan. 11. The cause of the death was listed as "amputated leg." (It isn't clear whether he died during or following the amputation--Union surgeons had ready access to ether, so I assume and certainly hope the amputation was done under anesthesia.)

He was then buried in Jan. 13 in grave 2569 of College Hill Cemetery, Nashville. His effects were turned over to his brother, the company commander, on March 10 at a camp near Murfreesboro. The effects included a forage cap, great coat, uniform coat, trousers, shoes, and a blanket.

The documents sent me end with the disposition of the effects. What they do not report is that the body was later disinterred and returned to Indiana. The following is from a letter dated May 30, 1964 from Grandad Brown (Robert's nephew):

"Our Grandfather Henry Brown and a neighbor drove a team of horses and wagon to Murfreesboro and brought home the body of their son our uncle and buried it in Eel River Cemetery. The distance must be about 400 miles and that must have been a trip to remember. It is no wonder that Grandfather Brown died some months later." (Greg--you

and I saw the gravesite during our visit to Indiana in '93 or '94 with Aunt Eleanor, Eleanor Brown, and some of the kids.)

Aunt Helen (our great aunt and Robert's neice) speaks of her memories of her grandmother, Elizabeth French Brown (Robert's mother), in a letter to Grandad Brown (her brother) dated Feb. 16, 1965:

"In summer, when our Mother had to be out of doors with garden, chickens, etc., I stayed with Grandmother because she raised the roof when she thought she was alone. She always began by telling me to open the door to her room, and look at that old tin-type picture on the wall--that was herself and Henry on their wedding day. Then bring my little chair, and sit beside her. . . . Then on she went [speaking of family history] until Civil-War days--Henry went down into Tenn. to bring back the body of her son--that was as far as she got. She would start crying, and after a while, fall off in sleep."

(Perhaps we should not forget that Southern families weren't the only ones who suffered in that war.)

Please share this with your own "descendants." And remember that the second largest collection of geneological material in the country just happens to be housed in the Allen County Library in Fort Wayne! As Rob put it, that place should be a "treasure trove" of information for anyone interested in our family histories.

Aunt Eleanor spoke of a "Confederate ancestor" and a Confederate flag that she had in her possession. I have found absolutely no evidence that anyone in the Brown family or its branches ever went south of the border to fight with the C.S.A. The same is true of the Kingsburys and I would bet money that it is also true of the Stuckys. Maybe Aunt Eleanor assumed that because Robert died in Nashville he was fighting for the South, although that would not of course explain the flag. Louise--if you have any information about that ancestor or the flag, please do let me know.

Louise--Greg and I have condo time shares on Hilton Head Island in S. C. (ironically, in the Deep South). We typically have a family reunion there every May during the week preceding Memorial Day. This year is no exception. You and Charlie and your kids would always be very, very welcome. Think about it.

I hope that you and your loved ones are all doing fine.

Love,

ccs: Superintendent, Stones River National Battlefield
Rob (whose name is also Robert K. Brown)