



John Grossmann

Coporal, Co. A, 37th Indiana Infantry

b. ca 1842 Brienz, Switzerland.

Parents were Henri and Anna Grossmann.

Brother of Margaretha Flück, née Grossmann.

Buried in Cliff Hill Cemetery, Versailles, Indiana.



that "John Grossmann, a Civil War soldier, Henry Grossmann and Anna Grossmann are buried in Cliff Hill (Cemetery), Versailles. No stones, except govt. stone for John, Co. A 37th Ind. Inf". Using a survey of the Cemetery recently completed by the town of Versailles, I was able to locate John's monument. It was small, worn and difficult to read. I am guessing the headstone is located next to his parents who were buried without monuments. This would not have been unusual as Swiss custom dictates an interment only occupies space for twenty-five years. The Swiss belief is after that, there is no-one around who cares. Any remains are then removed, ground up, and spread on the fields. The monument will be offered to any surviving relatives or also destroyed.

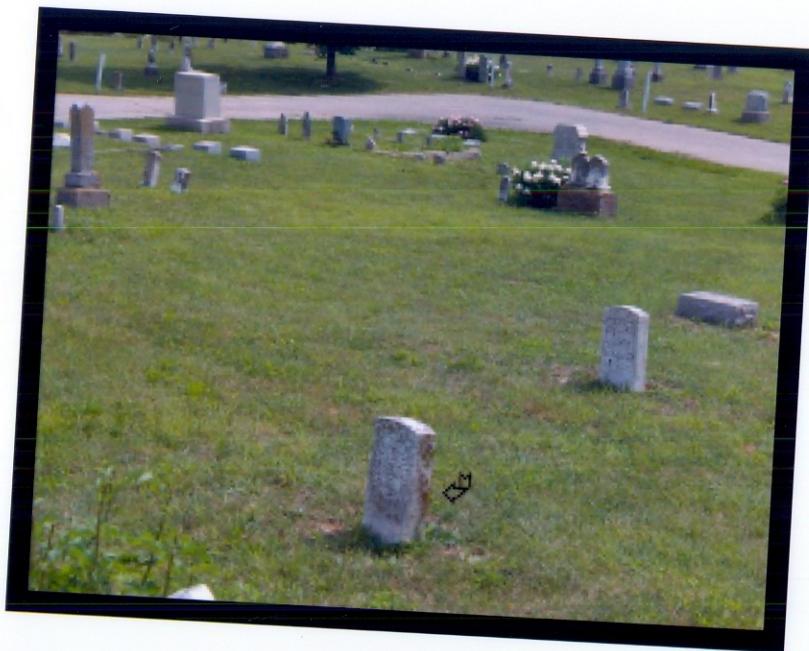
John Grossmann's headstone, in the Cliff Hill Cemetery, was obviously supplied by the government. During a trip to the National Archives in Washington, DC, I found the original records. The information concerning the headstone was found in the following microfilm file:

Card Records of Headstones Provided for Deceased Union Civil War Veterans.

Ca. 1879 – 1903

M1845 Roll 8

Headstone supplied by Gross Brothers, June 9, 1888.



*John Grossmann
Monument location in the Cliff Hill Cemetery, Versailles,
Indiana.*

What was also discovered was that John was wounded in action at the Battle of Stone's River on December 31, 1862, possibly captured by the Confederate Army and died a few days later on January 8, 1863. At the time, it was my belief that there was a good possibility he was probably interred in the National Cemetery at the Stones River battlefield site. It was very uncommon for soldiers other than officers to be disinterred and relocated to family burial sites. Additionally, at that time, hospitals were where you went to die. If John had a belly wound or

limb amputation, death would only be days away due to the unsanitary conditions and lack of nursing care. There were also a huge number of unknown soldiers after this battle. Many who were in the care of the hospital were just forgotten due to the pressure of a huge number of casualties. Add to this is the fact the monument was placed 25 years after his death.

To verify this theory, I visited the Stone's River National Cemetery. It was established in 1864 and contains more than 6,100 Union burials - with 2,562 not being identified. Most of the Confederate dead were taken to their home towns or

the nearest southern community. Some, however, were buried in a mass grave south of the town of Murfreesboro and later reinterred in another mass grave in the Evergreen Cemetery. John Grossmann was not among the known dead. I left for Indiana believing there was still a good chance he was among the unknown. While doing further research at the Ripley County Historical Society, I came across a series of civil war related letters that had been copied by Violet Toph many years ago. There were two references to John Grossmann;

1. From a Civil War letter, page 464 in the "Toph Papers".

"Almost 21 killed or wounded. John Grossmann was

among the killed". Violet had made the following annotation - "This is odd as two letters written the same day say he is alive, but the latter that he is ill."

2. From a March 1, 1863 Civil War letter by W. H. H. Gookins

"I heard there was a large congregation at Sgt. John Grossman's funeral, when he reached home. I helped take him up, he was buried. He had been dead a month from the day we took him up. We sent him to Nashville and Joe Wetzler was there. Sgt. Firth (Luke Firth, also of the 37th) went with him to Nashville.

There was some numbering confusion as to the origin of this entry. An answer to an early inquiry about a "Grossman" ancestor referenced page 1498. I finally found the actual quote on page 1503 of the retyped version (1457 of the old version).

So, the mystery was solved. I would say that John Grossmann and his family must have been well thought of as he is one of the few enlisted men I am aware was relocated home after burial.

I am including some of the original records found in the National Archives. Also I have tried to summarize this important battle focusing on the activities of the 37th. There is a huge volume of information I have researched. Much of the summary has been taken from the official guide fo the Stones River national

The image shows two overlapping historical military records for John Grossman. The left document is a 'Company Muster-in Roll' and the right is a 'Company Descriptive Book'. Both records are for John Grossman, a Corporal in the 37th Indiana Infantry. The Muster-in Roll record includes details such as his age (18 years), date of muster-in (Oct. 15, 1861), and where he was born (Switzerland). The Descriptive Book record provides a physical description (height 6 feet 1 inch, eyes blue, hair light) and notes his occupation as a clerk. Both records mention his enlistment date as August 15, 1861, and his service location as Ripley Co. The Descriptive Book also notes that he was killed in action at the Stones River battle on December 31, 1862.

Document	Organization	Name	Rank	Age	Height	Complexion	Eyes	Hair	Where born	Occupation	Enlistment Date	Where	By whom	Remarks
Company Muster-in Roll	37 Reg't Ind. Inf.	John Grossman	Capt.	18	6 feet 1 inch	Light	Blue	Light	Switzerland	Clerk	Aug 15, 1861	Ripley Co.	By whom	Remarks
Company Descriptive Book	37 Reg't Indiana Infantry	John Grossman	Capt.	18	6 feet 1 inch	Light	Blue	Light	Switzerland	Clerk	Aug 15, 1861	Ripley Co.	By whom	Remarks

The Muster Records give a good description of John Grossmann. He was tall, 6'1" for the time. His occupation was listed as a clerk. Given the fact he mustered in as a corporal, he could probably speak English quite well and could write and do math. The English would have been important given the number of immigrants enlisting at the time.

G 83 Ind.	G 83 Ind.	G 83 Ind.
<i>Henry Grossman</i>	<i>Henry Grossman</i>	<i>Henry Grossman</i>
Part, Regt. Loyd's Co, 83 Reg't Indiana Inf.	Co. E, 83 Reg't Indiana Infantry.	Co. C, 83 Reg't Indiana Infantry.
Age <i>22</i> years.	Age <i>22</i> years.	Age <i>22</i> years.
Appears on	Appears on	Appears on
Company Muster-in Roll	Company Descriptive Book	Co. Muster-out Roll
of the organization named above. Roll dated	of the organization named above.	dated
<i>Lawrenceburg Ind. Sept 9, 1862</i>	DESCRIPTION.	<i>Washington D.C. June 2, 1865</i>
Master-in to date <i>Sept 9, 1862</i>	Age <i>22</i> years; height <i>5</i> feet, <i>11</i> inches.	Master-out to date <i>June 2, 1865</i>
Joined for duty and service:	Complexion <i>Lt</i>	Last paid to <i>June 2, 1865</i>
When <i>Aug. 20, 1862</i>	Eyes <i>Blue</i> ; hair <i>Lt</i>	Getting account:
Where <i>Versailles</i>	Where born <i>Switzerland</i>	Last settled <i>Aug. 1863</i> ; drawn store \$ <i>3.15</i>
Period <i>3</i> years.	Occupation <i>farmer</i>	Due soldier \$ <i>500</i> ; due U. S. \$ <i>100</i>
Bounty paid \$ <i>25</i> ; due \$ <i>100</i>	ENLISTMENT.	Amt for cloth'g in kind or money adv'd \$ <i>100</i>
Remarks:	When <i>Aug</i> , 1862	Due U. S. for arns, equipments, &c, \$ <i>500</i>
	Where <i>Versailles</i>	Bounty paid \$ <i>25</i> ; due \$ <i>100</i>
	By whom <i>R. A. Loyd</i> ; term <i>3</i> yrs.	Remarks:
	Remarks:	
<small>*This organization subsequently became Co. E, 83 Reg't Ind. Inf. *200 Must be full above enrollment of all rolls of this company as of this date. See manual on subsequent card or cards.</small>		
Book mark:		Book mark:
<i>Cisco</i>	<i>Crittenden</i>	<i>P. P. P. P.</i>
(206)	(207)	(208)

Henry Grossmann

John's brother Henry enlisted on September 9, 1862 in Company E of the 83rd Indiana Infantry. He mustered out June 2, 1865 after participating in the Grand Review at Washington DC. I have been unable to determine any further information about Henry in terms of where he went after the war or what might have happened to him.

Battlefield and discussions with the Park Ranger. Serious students of the Civil War should review the actual records. Of more interest are two letters I've reproduced here written by members of the 37th Indiana Infantry as they were in some of the hardest fighting. It is unfortunate that much of the official discussion around this battle revolved around General Alexander M. McCook, one of the famous "Fighting McCooks" of Ohio and other "political" figures such as Philip Sheridan. McCook was an inadequate commander at best, not liked by his troops and made considerable mistakes at Stone's River. McCook was as invisible as Sheridan was ubiquitous. Instead of helping his division commanders, McCook drifted aimlessly about. Arguably, the brunt of the hard fighting, at least on December 31st, was born as much by the troops under the command of General James S. Negley, which included the 37th Indiana, as were those under General Phillip Sheridan. Both these troops occupied an area known as "The Slaughter Pen".

I have scanned portions of a map supplied by the National Park Service titled "Stone's River National Battlefield, Troop Movement Maps". They give a good although truncated view as to the location and movement of the 37th Indiana on December 31, 1862. It is my guess that John Grossmann was wounded and captured between 11:00 AM and noon during the confusion

surrounding McCooks retreat, as the Union right flank collapsed and the apex of the Union line, held by Sheridan and Negley, was pushed back as they ran out of ammunition.

MEMORANDUM FROM PRISONER OF WAR RECORDS. No. _____
(This blank to be used only in the arrangement of said records.)

NAME	RANK	ORGANIZATION				INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM				
		No. of Reg't.	State	Arms of Service	Co.	Records of—	Vol.	Page.	Vol.	Page.
Grossmann John	Sgt	37	Ind		A	Miss Rollins name 734				
Captured at <u>Northfork Tenn.</u> , Dec 31, 1862, confined at Richmond, Va., _____, 186 _____,										
Admitted to Hospital at _____										
where he died _____, 186 _____, of _____										
Paroled at <u>Northfork Tenn.</u> , Dec 31, 1862; reported at Camp Parole, Md., _____, 186 _____.										
Copied by <u>TWP</u> ✓										

The Prisoner Of War Record, along with other records indicates John Grossmann was promoted to sergeant. I also suspect he was released the same day he was captured due to either his wounds or the changing nature of the battle.