A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

WARREN D. EARHART

bу

James Malcolm Earhart

Laredo, Texas

1985

A Biographical Sketch of Warren D. Earhart 1840 - 1864

Warren D. Earhart was born in 1840 in Coweta County,
Georgia, the first son of Godfrey Earhart and Mary Ann (Polly
Ann) Waltom Earhart. He began his life in the area where
his maternal grandparants were established. His
school-teacher father moved his family to Coosa County,
Alabama sometime during Warren's first decade. Warren, his
parents, four sisters and two brothers appear on the 1850
Federal census rolls for that county.

From Alabama the family moved westward to Texas, settling in the Black Oak Community near Carrol's Prairie (now Como). Godfrey homesteaded 160 acres of land a few miles south of present-day Como, and established a school in a one room log building. It is likely that Warren taught school with his father, since the 1860 census indicates that

Eighth Census of the United States, 1860.

M653. Tx. 1297. Hopkins County.

Godfrey Earhart, "Ciphering Book," pp. 115, 140, and 183.

Seventh Census of the United States, 1850. M432.

Ala. 4. Coosa County.

Walter Prescott Webb, ed., The Handbook of Texas, Vol. I,

(Austin: The State Historical Association, 1952), p. 388.

(herinafter cited as Webb, Handbook.)

"Land Patent," No. 145, Vol. 19, Fete 321, Lamar Scrip,

Clinton Earhart. interview, Sulphur Springs, Tx., July 1985.

he was a community school teacher.

Responding to the call of the Confederate States of America for troops, Warren enlisted in the Confederate army at Sulphur Springs, Texas on October 12, 1861. Although drawn by the excitement of the unknown, he must have departed with some apprehension. Before leaving for training camp he walked slowly through the yard and sat down on a log near the roadside. Perhaps he was remembering his experiences of the last four years in Texas, recalling interactions with his family and friends, and contemplating what might lie ahead in his uncertain future. His mother, quietly looking on, had a premonition that she would never see him again. mustered in at Camp Rusk, Lamar County, Texas on Nov. 26, 1861, becoming a member of Company F of Young's ninth Texas Infantry. This unit was a part of Maxey's Regiment, raised by Sam Bell Maxey, a prominent Paris Texas lawyer and distinguished veteran of the Mexican War.

Warren served with the ninth infantry until June 4, 1863 when he was left ill at the hospital in Canton, 10 Mississippi. The ninth infantry served under General Braxton Bragg at the Battle of Stone's River (Murfreesboro,

Estelle Crumbley, interview, Overton, Tx. July 1985.

W. D. Earhart, Military Service Record, Co. F, 9 (Young's)

Texas Infantry (Maxey's Reg't. 8 Texas Reg't)

(Confederate), National Archives, Washington, DC.

(hereinafter cited as Earhart, Military SR.)

Webb, Handbook, Vol. II, p. 162.

Earhart, Military SR.

Tennessee), December 31, 1862 through January 2, 1863. The Texas Ninth, under the direct command of Col. W. H. Young, was in the fourth brigade of the first division of Polk's Corps. The corps was commanded by General Leonidas Polk; the first division by General B. F. Cheatham; and the fourth brigade by Col. A. J. Vaughan.

Two letters, written by Warren to his family in Texas, 12 remain in existence. One is dated January 10, 1863; the second, April 11, 1863. Both letters were written from Shelbyville, Tennessee. This was the town to which Bragg and his forces retreated following the Battle of Stone's River. They spent several months here recuperating from the damage inflicted during the battle. Both confederate and union forces suffered heavily during that encounter, including those killed, wounded, and suffering from exposure to the

Yoseloff, Thomas, Retreat from Gettysburg, Battles and Leaders of the Civil War Volume III, (New York and London: Thomas Yoseloff, 1956.) (hereinafter cited as Yoseloff, Retreat.)

Warren D. Earhart to Godfrey and Mary Ann Earhart, Shelbyville, Tennessee, 10 January 1863.

(hereinafter cited as Earhart, <u>January Letter.</u>)

Warren D. Earhart to Godfrey and Mary Ann Earhart,
Shelbyville, Tennessee, 11 April, 1863.

(hereinafter cited as Earhart, April Letter.)

(hereinafter cited as Earhart, April Letter.)
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Yoseloff, Retreat, pp. 611 and 612.

elements. In his January 10th letter, Warren indicated that some of the men in camp experienced problems from exposure to the inclement weather which persisted at that time. "So we have had to lay out without fire or tents, which gave some of our men bad colds, though we gained the day." He also indicated that his unit lost several men in the battle, including a friend of the family, J. M. Byrd. According to Warren, "...he spoke a few words before he died. He said that 'I am ded [sic], but---Thank God, I am happy."

Warren's correspondence indicated other problems and deprivations experienced by these troops. He mentioned two hometown boys who suffered illnesses; one, Noel Bullock, whose family played a prominent role in the development of the Black Oak Community, was hospitalized in Chattanooga, Tennessee as a result of an illness. Another of his young friends, John Fanning, died of smallpox. In less than two months Warren himself would be hospitalized in Canton, Mississippi; and his battlefield experiences would be over.

Money was scarce and prices were high. Chickens sold from two to four dollars each, eggs two dollars and fifty cents per dozen, flour thirty cents per pound. Everything else was proportionately expensive. Private Earhart received only \$11 per month, and that was not on a regular basis. It is likely that he had little or no money in his pocket. The diet described by Warren, "We have plenty of cornbread and bacon to

Thomas Lawrence Connelly, Autumn of Glory, The Army of Tennessee, 1862 - 1865, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), pp. 53 and 66.

Vera, Gober, "Black Oak Community History,"

Como, Tx. 75431.

eat," must have been very monotonous; and he continues "Once and a while I get a mess of wilde [sic] greens, which helps me out a great deal, though in this country greens is very scarce." You can sense that his mouth is watering for his mother's cooking when he says "I think that if I was home now, I could get plenty of milk and butter to eat and bacon and greens, chickens and eggs.

You can also sense Warren's lonliness as he thinks of and writes to his family. "I want to see you all verry [sic] bad. I don't think that I shall get the chance to come home soon. I wrote 2 letters, one to Henry and Miranda and one to you fifteen days ago." And again, he writes "I should like to come to see you all very much if I could. Perhaps I may get the chance to come home some of these days. I should like very much to see old Hopkins again and all of the old neighbors and friends." He continues "I received the letter that you sent by Jacob Lindley, also one that was wrote in January. I am always glad to hear from you. I wish that I could get a letter from you every week." Then, presumably referring to his grandmother Waltom, "I have not heard from grandmother's this year. I have wrote them several letters. I am looking for a letter from them every day."

Although he obviously loved and missed his family, Warren, was a mature young man ready to do what he had to do. Shortly after the battle at Murfreesboro, he penned these words, "This is a world of trouble, but I take everything fair and easy and try to think the less of it. I have not drawn any money yet. Tell the children 'howdy' for me. I send you all my best respects."

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18</sup>Earhart, April Letter.
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Earhart, January Letter.
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Earhart, January Letter.
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Earhart, January Letter.

Despite deprivation and lonliness Warren, in his letters, expressed the excitement and vigor characteristic of youthfulness. One can sense a bit of humor when he raised a question that he knew all the kids at home were asking, at least mentally, if not verbally. "Well the next is 'Tell us something about the fight.' I will. The battle at Murfreesboro, Tennessee commenced December 30th, 1862 at 12 o'clock. The work now began. The pickets fought all day until about 4 o'clock in the evening. Then the yanks made a charge at our men and tride [sic] to brake [sic] our lines. They failed to do so. Then our men pored [sic] the shot and shell at them like hail. So they fell back and tried the trick again and still failed. The last charge they made that day was at dusk---it being dark before the firing ceased. ...we passed the knight [sic] off verry [sic] well".

"We was ready for them the next morning. The sun rose through the thin clouds that passed over——made everything look gloomy. At this time the cannons and muskets kept up a continual roar. The news now came that the 9th Texas had to try her hand at the enemy. All in good spirits, the word was 'forward'. We marcht [sic] up in a short distance of the enemy. We then fired on them. Our gallant col. said "Boys, yonder they are! Charge them!' We then charged them and broke there lines. The fight was still going on. The shot and shell fell verry [sic] fast. The ground now was covered with yanks, ded [sic] and wounded. The sean [sic] was an awful one. Our men charged them again and broke there lines and drove them back 3 miles. They left the ground covered with ded [sic] and wounded yanks."

"I was (on) a detail to carry the wounded off the field,

²¹ Ibid. 22 Ibid.

myself and 29 more. So I was all over the field generly [sic]. The second day's fight lasted all day. As I said I was all over the battlefield. I stood in my tracks and counted 50 ded [sic] yanks and not one of our men. We killed 451 and gained the day. I should like to give you a full detail of the fight,(but) paper is scarce. Our force was 40,000 strong and the enemy was 70,000 strong. Our loss, killed and wounded, was 5,000; the enemy was 20,000. We taken 4 batrys [sic] and their horses. My captain got wounded. Lee Carter and Noel Bullock is well. The rest of the Texas boys is well and got through safe."

The expert confederate cavalry was a thorn in the side of General Rosecrans during the Tennessee conflict. Warren's observation in his April 11th letter from Shelbyville is consistent with this historical fact. "We have bin [sic] here at this place longer than we have ever bin [sic] at a place yet; though I doo [sic] not know how long we will sta [sic] here. Some thinks that we will have a battle at this place, but we have not had no appearances of it yet. The cavalry has a little skirmish and takes 2 or 3 regts. prisnnors [sic] without very little fiting [sic] every week or 2."

Warren's intense pride in his military unit, is demonstrated by the following passage which also gives insight into some of the routine activities of a civil war military camp. "We have to drill about 5 hours every day; 3 in the morning; 2 in the afternoon. Our regiment is about as good driled [sic] troops as they is in this army, with the exceptions of a few regiments from Georgia. And I flatter myself that they are as good pluck as ever faste [sic] the yanks. It is given up that they done the best fiting [sic] that was done at the battle before Murfreesboro on the 31st day of last December. We men (were) neither supported on the right nor left, but we routed the enemy killing and wounding

²³ Ibid.

about 150 yanks."24

After the manner of his father Godfrey and grandfather Jacob, Warren appears to have been concerned with living a life consistent with Biblical teachings. Following the Murfreesboro conflict, he wrote "Life is short and uncertain. Then, let us all prepare to meet each other in heaven where parting is no more. I often think of you all and the time seems so long. I hope the time is not far off when peace may be made." As a postscript to his January 10th letter he says "I want you to read the 3rd chapter of Mark just to remember me. I have been reading that chapter today." In his April 11th letter he writes "... most of the people think that peace will be made in a short time. I am in hoaps [sic] so myself so that we can all enjoy this life a little better than we have for the past. We have preaching most every Sabbath. We had preaching last Sabbath at 10 o'clock. The text was the 11th chapter of Matthew 28, 29, 30th verses. I have heard the same chapter preacht [sic] from a grate [sic] many times and it is of grate [sic] interest."

Warren would not be with Bragg's forces at Chattanooga nor Chicamauga, for he was left at the hospital in Canton, Mississippi on June 4, 1863. The details concerning the reason for or the length of his hospitalization are not shown in available service records. However, it may be that he remained in the hospital until October, suggesting a very serious illness. Granted a furlough, he drew his pay on October 20, 1863 in Meridian, Mississippi. The pay for the period of service from March 1st to August 31st, 1863, amounted to \$66.00. Warren then went to his grandmother Waltom's home in Coweta County, Georgia, arriving there in late October. According to his cousin Lizzie Cates in a letter

²⁴ Earhart, April Letter. Earhart, Military SR.

to his parents, Warren was "sick with chronic diarrhea when he got there." In February he took a turn for the worse and wanted to go to the hospital in Newnan, Georgia. His uncle Lafayette took him to the hospital where he died on February 19, 1864.

Lizzie Cates, in her letter to her aunt Polly and uncle Godfrey, wrote the following words which serve as a fitting epitaph for this young man. "He was a good and intelligent young man and all his relatives here mourn his death. He was the most patient person in sickness I have ever yet seen. I do not doubt his being better off. I feel that he is now where the roll of drum and cannon roar will never more disturb his sweet repose."

Lizzie Cates to Godfrey and Mary Ann Earhart, Coweta County, Georgia, 21 September 1864, personal files of Joseph A Hannabass, Purvis, Miss. 27

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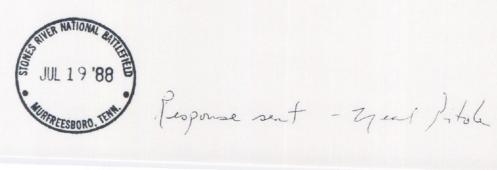
July 11, 1988

Dear Sir:

Enclosed are papers and letters Concerning my great uncles C.S.A. Service at the battle of Murfreesbow, Denn,

Please forward information on Cover material to protect letters and documents (transparent).

Sincerely, Joseph a. Hannabass Route 2 Box 201 Puwis, Mississippi 39475



Dear Father 9. Mather Brother & Sister & Ball my Sely this Evening to let you know that I and to the at foresaid Hoping when the Dines Come to Hand ma find you all will I doing will I have not much news to write thickey) is Fenerally healthy I say to you the are have had a Baller of Many real or our To we have had to Lay out without the or Lends which gave some of our men these Colds though we gained the day I Shall Endeaver to give gon a Aketch of the Ban and the Seans of the Battle Field 3 Nava got live to lovile berry much and granning is a going to Start home in the mone he is a member of the Reg-) he die we will County well the next is tell to Something about the Fight & will, The Balle of Monfrestono Tenn Commence Des 30/80 (12) Oclock the book now began the sich to

in the Evening then the gantes made Change at au men and tride to Brake our Lines they failed to do to then our men pored the shot to shell at them dike hail sothy fell back to tried the trick again to Still failed the Last Charge they made that day was at doste it being being dark thefine Closet that knight we past the King the of berry well we was Ready for them next morning. The Sun Rose through the Thin Clouds that past over made Every thing Look Flooring at this time the Cannons and Musket; Refet up a continual roas the news now dame that the 9.4. Lyas had to by her hand at the Enemy all in good Spirits the word was folward we march up in a Short Distance of the Enemy we then fired on them our galiant Col- Said Boys gander they are Charge them we then Charged them & Broke there Lines here we lost several men are of tohom you all know J. M. Byrd the Spake a few words before he Died he Said that I am Ded But thank God is am Nappy

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