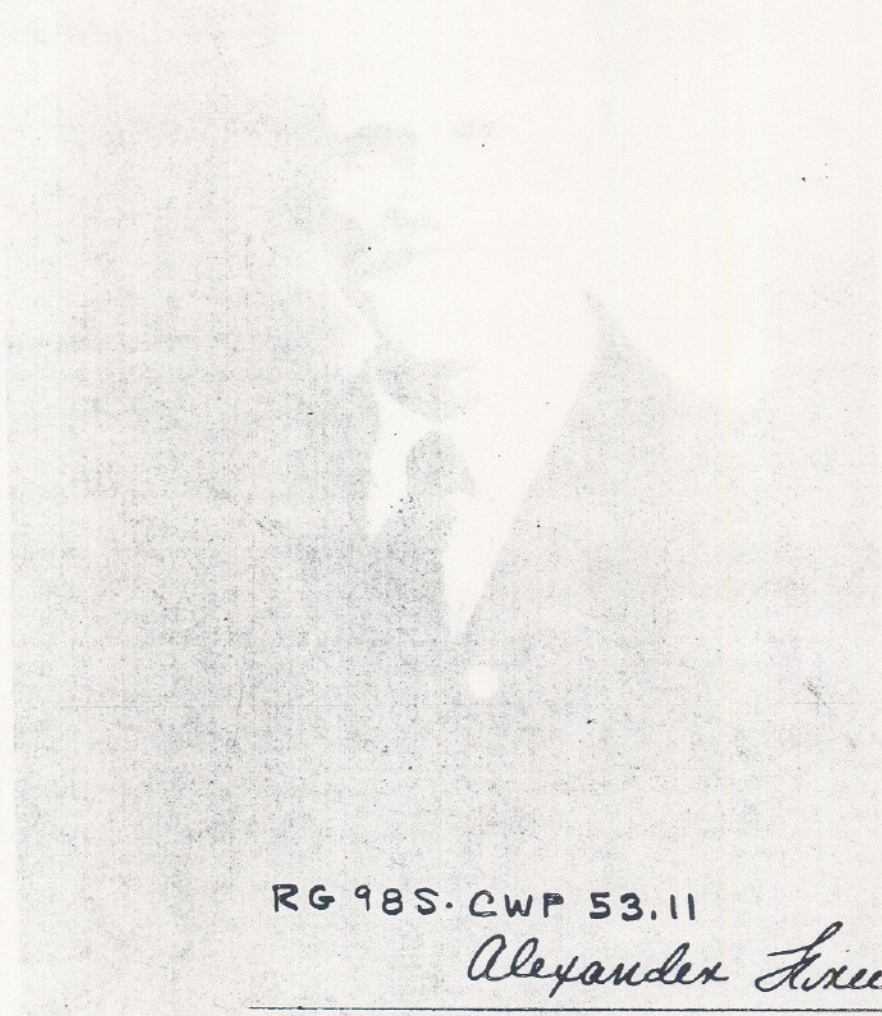




NAME: ALEXANDER STRAIN FREELAND
BORN: 20 MAR 1842 MACON (NOW MOUNTAINE) CO, ILL
DIED: 26 SEP 1920 DECATUR, ILL
MARR: 09 JAN 1868 ELIZA MARGARET HOOD
SERVICE: Co E 21st ILL INF



RG 985-CWP 53.11

Alexander Freeland

Donated by:

Rodney Hogan

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21 ILL INF

At The Battle of Stone River
Hurriedly dropped on a
rude pallet by the side of
Comrade Will Harlan as bad
wounded as my self. He with
an arm broken below the
shoulder, by a musket ball
which lodged in his back
under his shoulder blades
and myself with a thigh badly
torn by a grape shot. In
the field Hospital I lay. More
than a score badly wounded
already occupied the best room
in the Tennessee Farm House
and the few attendants were
now kept so busy that they
could not give even the dying
their proper attention. The wounded
were coming in very fast each
and every one needing immediate
attention. Of the battle its self I
cannot tell much for I did not see
only the beginning, and was

Wagoner
Co. A.

knocked out at the very commencement this I know that the tide of battle had turned against us, stubbornly our men held their ground but Regiment after Regiment and Brigade after Brigade were swept from their positions, wounded men brought in by their comrades and hurriedly left without care wept like children as they tried to tell of companies ^{and} regimental losses, all took comfort from the thought that the enemy in front never could have driven them, till they were flanked and fired upon from the rear, while the 21st Ill Inf^y under Col J. W. Alexander was hotly engaged he saw the troops to our left giving away and he ordered a part of his regiment to front in that direction till they were nearly surrounded then gave the command to retreat in order, the enemy in masses closely followed up suddenly a cry was

raised our "Colors" "Our Colors"
Several rods to the rear, lay our
color, sergeant and guards, all
shot down, a score of resolute
men sprang back for the rescue
^{they} met the enemy face to face, the
"clash was dreadful but only lasted
a few seconds shots clubbed muskets
and bayonets were used, men on
both sides were down but sergt
w^m Hunter of Co F brought them
safe to the regiment, nearer and
nearer to our Hospital came the
battle and many shots fired at
our retreating men passed
through our room death was no
respector of persons, and many
brave hearts and fond hopes were
blotted out that in wars cruel
strife that day, now amidst the
roar of battle could be heard the
hoarse shouts of officers to their
men as they strove to form
their lines and check the

our rush of the now almost victorious Confederates our officers were an especial mark for their bullets and maney killed and wounded general Sill a dearly beloved commander was killed, fell from his horse dead, and brought by loving arms and laid on the back porch of our Hospital, an old officer Col Williams of the 25th Ill gray with years, wounded and dying was brought in by some of his soldiers who after looking for a better place laid him on the hard floor by my side and then hurried away to join their comrades, Lying helpless, Oh how useless, none but an old soldier can tell how acutely we suffered lying on our backs when our fighting comrades so sorely needed our help, deprived of action paralized maney though only slightly wounded unable to move

so queerly do wounds affect the nerves,
Abandoned by all of our attendants
who fled to escape capture, The
battle roled by us and far beyond
into the great Cedar brake that
stretched for miles to the north
and west of us, from ^{where} no news
of battle reached us but the
dreadful sounds of musketry
that came from gloomy depths
of the great thicket where
brave men fought the enemy
in small groups or singly
from tree to tree or stone to stone
Many soldiers got separated
from comrades were killed
or mortally wounded lay down
to die, where they remained un-
discovered for years till woodchop-
pers found their bones and
remains of their equipments,
John Kuch of my co was shot through
the body and left by his Chum also
wounded, much search was made

for him afterwards, but he was found several years later and identified by his name on his belt plate, and he has been buried in the Myshresboro National Cemetery, the fighting of these men helped in a large measure to save the Army of the Cumberland, for by the delay caused to the enemy Gen Rosecrans was able to form a new line, closing up and reinforcing all of the gaps and weak places and when Gen Bragg renewed the attack he only hastened the defeat of his men. by their furious assaults on our solid ranks, our Hospital with about Three Hundred men was now fully in the enemys hands and they immediately removed all of our hospital stores some of our surgeons remained with us but their assistants were gone and their instruments were taken away to be used by the Confederates, all of the slightly wounded fled with our army

only badly wounded remained, men were dying all around us, mangled shot and shell, some were bleeding to death and as they realized their condition cried piteously for the help they needed, others bravely waited in silence till death closed their eyes, Twenty eight years have gone and I have not forgotten the faces of them men and what they suffered for ^{their} country, As night came on we began fully to realize our helpless condition weakened by the loss of blood we were suffering even more with cold of a freezing night than from wounds, Early in the day I had given my place to the dying Officer, and later took my place in the hall beside a Norwegian a 15th Wisconsin man, shot through the loins, His cries even in horse was most distressing. Towards morning some Johnny's came along and built up a fire of rails

in the yard near the end of the house I determined to share some of its warmth, with much pain and difficulty I dragged myself out through the door then along the porch to the roaring fire, at its further end, I still remember is comfort to me how I lay in the dirt taking in its generous heat. Thinking of my poor Norse friend before returning to my bed I drew some bricks from under the porch and heated them in the fire and wrapping them up made my way back with more ease than I came out I placed two of the hot bricks against the feet of the Norwegian, though I could not understand a single word of his I am sure by his intonation thanks and blessings without number were bestowed on me. The next two days passed without much change in our prospects, many of men had succeeded in dressing their own ^{wounds} and a few could help others who

were worse off. The Confederate Sol-
-diers who came around were
kind to us building fires and
removing the dead from among
the living. (The dead made a long
trench that reached nearly across
the yard) but the Confederate
officers who visited us tried to
quarrel with our helpless
men and went of mad when
told the truth, we were told that
Gen Braggs Cavalry had surroun-
-ded Rosecrans army and that
weems are just shooting youms
all to death, after the heavy
fighting of the third day we
noticed a great change, all
wounded men who could walk
were got into line and ordered
to go to Murphresboro where they
were put on a train, and sent
to Atlanta ga. I saw two of
these men that had been shot
in the head and were pitiable,

beyond description one (my cousin)
I know to have died, Officers were
sent to parole, those unable to go
fire ^{arms} and camp equipage were gather-
ed up and hauled away, one
small piece of wheat bread was
given to each of us the first food
we had after our own ran out, by
dark the johnnys began to disappear
from the Hospital and by morning
only two or three were seen hurrying
by, many were our conjectures
some thought our army had sur-
rendered many others that Gen
Rosenberans had retreated, thus
were we in doubt till near noon
when some one ^{saw} a soldier in blue
running out of the woods to the
North of us, every one who could
do so got on his feet to look
at him, before he reached us
another and then a half doz
were in sight and a glad sight
it was to us. The poor fellows

were hurrying to us on the hunt
of friends they found some alive
others beyond help, soon two
came carrying in Andy Lynn of
my company, a new recruit of
only a few weeks leaving a
young wife, and baby at home,
shot across the back he fell
he fell between the cotton
rows where he had lain all
those four long cold nights and
days, the suns warmth had
sufficiently revived him to
call our men to his help
which the enemy had refused but
he died the shock was too great
for his recovery, one man with
five wounds dressed them himself
while a man by his side died
with only the end of his finger
shot off, he must have died
with lock jaw, such was our condition
many being compelled to lie in
the dirt and ashes around the fires

without shelter, that it was deter-
mined to remove all except the
dangerously wounded to Nashville
thirty miles away, so Ambulances were
brought around and we were loaded
up and on the road the Fourth of Jan
63 soon after noon, But the distress
of that of that painful Cold! Cold, ride
never can be told, Ice must have
formed nearly an inch thick
and the heavy swinging of the
Ambulances from side to side
as they dropped into the ruts was
more than flesh and blood could
bear Mrs. J. L. Jemison?

Mrs. J. L. Jemison Miller
Monticello
Ill