

SPRINGS

VALL

THURSDAY, AUGUST 18, 1966

Entered At The Post Office At French Lick, I

Wesley Johnson Victim Of War Between States

Wesley Johnson, a Civil War soldier of this vicinity, died more than a hundred years ago. Yet every person who reads the letters he sent to his family has the feeling he personally knew this young man.

Perhaps this is true because Johnson was a sensitive person with the same hopes and fears which must face the youthful soldiers of today. Or maybe it is just because Johnson had the ability to put his thoughts into the words which have been preserved all these years.

Mrs. Zeta Cleaver, R.R. 2, West Baden, granddaughter of Johnson, is the owner of the yellowed, time-worn letters written during his service with the Northern Army.

The name of Wesley Johnson will not be found on the rolls of any Civil War veterans' organization. He was one of the 359,528 Union casualties of that war. He was fatally wounded in the battle of Stone River in Tennessee.

Born Aug. 23, 1824, son of Michael and Elizabeth (Grisom) Johnson, he was married at the age of 19 to Emeline Dillinger. Although he was the father of seven children, he joined Co. F, 81st Regiment of the Indiana Volunteer Infantry in 1862.

An adventurer at heart, he had gone on a gold-seeking trip to California, 12 years earlier. Mrs. Cleaver also owns letters written from that state. In one headed "California—Hangtown, Aug. 18, 1850," he relates his group had to pack their provisions on their backs 200 miles. Provisions were running short, he said, and none were for sale. The team gave out, and they sold the wagon for \$20. Upon reaching the desert, he says "The speckelaters met us with provisions.

"We paid \$40 for 27 pounds of flour . . . We was the first that arrived in California from Orange County." He later comments, "Gold is not half as plenty here as it has been represented to be." In partnership with Joseph Rhodes, the pair sank a pit and "I think by the last of this month we will get a pile of the pure metal."

It is not known whether or not the youthful Johnson came home with his pile of gold. He does admit it was a pleasure trip. Such was not the case when he left for the war.

From army camps he writes to ask about the wheat crop, about his farm record books, and his longing to walk through the fields at home. In two of the letters he mentions his hunger for cornbread and milk.

One of the earliest letters owned by Mrs. Cleaver, written Aug. 24, 1862 from Camp Noble, Ind., tells his wife that he has sent her \$40 by William Abel. He adds that he drew \$17, his first month's pay.

He was in Louisville, Ky. on Sept. 24, 1862 when he wrote: "General (Braxton) Bragg is within 25 miles of here with 30,000 troops and

Jeff Reynolds At EUB Church Sunday

The Rev. Harry Taylor, pastor of the French Lick E.U.B. Church, announces student pastor Jeff Reynolds will be guest speaker at Sunday evening services, beginning at 7:30.

Many of the letters refer to his young son William. Although not the youngest (John T. Johnson, father of Mrs. Cleaver was just 11 months old when his father went to war), William was next to the baby, at the "cute" age, and obviously the apple of his dad's eye. "Have his picture made and send it to me", he asks once. And again, "I can see William's eyes every day." And "Tell William to be a good boy. I'll bring my rifle and sword home for him."

Two days after the Union victory at Perryville, Ky., on Oct. 10, 1862, Johnson wrote: "Dead and wounded rebbles are laying all over the ground. I have no idea how many were killed on either side . . . I have talked to some of the wounded rebbles. They say they are tired of the war but will fight till they die . . . The sights here would bring tears out of a rock." In the same letter he asks his wife to send him a needle and some thread in a letter so he can patch his torn clothing. He also asks for stamps.

A month later, Nov. 8, 1862, he penned: "We arrived yesterday and we had a fight yesterday with (Col. John Hunt) Morgan's men. We killed 14 men and had not a man hurt. We have but 350 men in our Regiment and many not fit for duty because of sickness. There are 38 in our company . . . I want to know how the election went. Who was elected assessor in French Lick? . . . I have 10c in money and no use for it. Our sergeants are all in the hospital."

Another letter describes a long, hot, dusty walk about which he says "I'm glad Harrison is out of it as it would be too hard for him." The reference is to his brother who joined the same company but was discharged Aug. 1, 1862 because of failing health. He tells of hearing of the death of Isaiah Briner, Israel Leonard being mortally wounded, and John Hazlewood and Henry Henson slightly wounded.

Johnson's letter of Dec. 21, 1862 has a different tone. He complained he was in bad health with the "fever" and does not add, as he usually did, that it was no concern for his wife's worry. He mentions sending money to the family by Hence Talbot and Vol Pinnick. "Tell Josiah (a brother) . . . when I get home I have a good watch I will give him." This was the only one of his letters which ended "Yours till death."

Perhaps it was a premonition, for it was his last letter. Dr. T. H. Hammond wrote to Mrs. Johnson that her husband was wounded in the leg above the knee with a musketball and died Jan. 15, 1863

Funeral Friday For Carrie Larson Who Died Tuesday

Mrs. Carrie O. (Sutton) Larson, 83, died at 10:20 p.m. Tuesday at the home of Mrs. Mary Harrison, R.R.1, French Lick, where she had lived the past year. She was the widow of Gus Larson who passed away in 1941.

Surviving are a son, Perry Pondley of Mitchell; two daughters, Mrs. Mary Springton of Selvin and Mrs. Lucinda Morrison; 10 grandchildren, and several great-grandchildren.

The funeral will be held at 1 p.m. Friday at the Brosmer-Drabing Funeral Home. Burial will be in the Cuzco Cemetery.

Mae Brewer Dies Thursday Following Lengthy Illness

Mrs. Mae Belle Brewer of French Lick died Thursday night at the Orange County Hospital where she had been a patient for two months.

Mrs. Brewer, 83, was the widow of Samuel Brewer who died in November 1965.

The body lay in state at the Brosmer-Drabing Funeral Home before it was taken to Cane Creek Christian Church where the funeral was conducted at 2 p.m. Saturday. The Rev. James Runner officiated at the funeral service. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Surviving are a son, Dale Brewer, R.R.2, French Lick; two daughters, Mrs. Robert Hatfield, R.R.2, French Lick and Mrs. Edith Evans, French Lick; a brother, Hugh Thurston of Evansville; two sisters, Mrs. Myrtle Nicholson and Mrs. Maude Muff, both of R.R.2, French Lick; 15 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

Down In The Valley

No challenges to the Tomato King championship, held by Cecil Andrews, have been called to our attention. Mr. Andrews brought in the 1½ pound wonder last week.

Following our lavish praise of its appearance, plus a note concerning our ignorance of its inside perfection and flavor, Mr. Andrews brought a sample of his gardening skill to us.

Now we are qualified to testify that the tomatoes are just as delicious as they look!

Another article in last week's Herald also has brought results. A missing handbag has been returned to Mrs. Ora Jones. Recuperating from surgery at the home of a daughter, Bonnie Winger, the purse mysteriously vanished last week. Missing were papers, pictures, and eye glasses, all valuable to Mrs. Jones but worthless to anyone else.

Mrs. Winger reports local residents took up the search where the

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He was in Louisville, Ky. on Sept. 24, 1862 when he wrote: "General (Braxton) Bragg is within 25 miles of here with 30,000 troops and General (Don C.) Buell is one day's march behind him. If Bragg comes here, we can hold him in check till Buell gets up. We have 75 or 80,000 troops here. The women and children were all ordered out of Louisville yesterday."

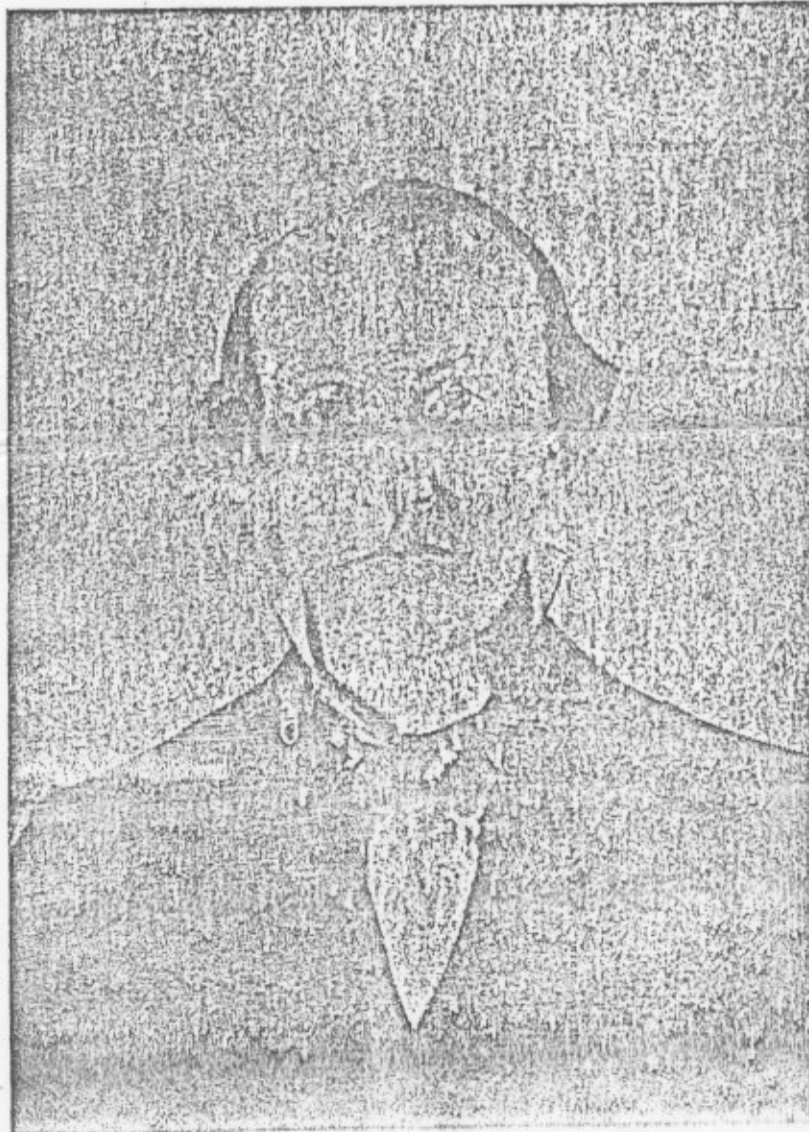
In the same letter he says, "There is no room to drill. We are quartered between two pork houses . . . I want to see you so bad I can't hardly wait my time out." He adds later that he wouldn't be satisfied to be at home, however, unless the war was over.

Another letter describes a long, hot, dusty walk about which he says "I'm glad Harrison is out of it as it would be too hard for him." The reference is to his brother who joined the same company but was discharged Aug. 1, 1862 because of failing health. He tells of hearing of the death of Isaiah Briner, Israel Leonard being mortally wounded, and John Hazlewood and Henry Heason slightly wounded.

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The young widow never knew where her husband was buried. But in 1918, Lon Speece visited a military cemetery in Nashville and photographed the grave and marker. Mrs. Cleaver has this picture, too, among her relics.



WESLEY JOHNSON

ters, Mrs. Robert Hatfield, R.R.2, French Lick and Mrs. Edith Evans, French Lick; a brother, Hugh Thurston of Evansville; two sisters, Mrs. Myrtle Nicholson and Mrs. Maude Muff, both of R.R.2, French Lick; 15 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

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Mrs. Winger reports local residents took up the search where the Herald left off. From neighbors to businessmen, inquiries were returned Monday. It isn't known what motive prompted the "borrower" to give back the purse — guilt, sympathy, fear or threats.

True to their promise, no questions were asked by either Mrs. Jones or Mrs. Winger who are grateful to everyone in the community for their concern, assistance and kindness in recovering the lost article.

Even with this worry erased, problems aplenty plague the household. Mrs. Jones is attempting to adjust to a device which is designed to regulate her heart beats. And Mr. Winger, a semi-invalid for some time, was rushed on Sunday to Memorial Hospital where he is reported critically ill.

Mrs. Hazel Roberts is concerned that a rapidly growing number of persons are hanging horseshoes the wrong way above their doors.

If they're superstitious enough to hang them at all, they should be told to place them in the shape of a U, she insists. "This is supposed to keep the good luck from pouring out," explained Mrs. Roberts.

We might add that if you have any door-slammers in your home, you should insure their good luck by making sure the horseshoe is firmly anchored.

And a final word of advice: Before hanging the shoe above your door, carefully remove any horse which might be attached.

Special Services Announced By Nazarene Church

The Rev. Frank Sargent, pastor of the Springs Valley Church of the Nazarene, announces special services are planned for Sunday, Aug. 21.

Janet Miller, accordionist and singer, will be present for both the morning and afternoon worship services. She will present numbers at the regular Sunday School hour at 9:30 a.m. and during the morning worship period at 10:30.

Mrs. Miller will also be featured in afternoon gospel singing from 2 to 4. The public is invited.

DECLARATION--WIDOW'S ARMY PENSION.

State of Indiana }
Crawce County. }

On this 7th day of Nov A. D. 1863, before me, Clerk of Circuit
Court a Court of Record in and for the County and State aforesaid, personally
appeared Emeline Johnson a resident of Crawce County
in the State of Indiana aged forty
years, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth, on her oath, make the following declaration, in order to obtain the
benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress, approved July 14, 1862. That she is the widow of Wesley
Johnson who was a sergeant
in Company "F" commanded by Oliver in the 81st
Regiment of Indiana 10th Inf. Volunteers, in the war of 1861, and who*
died (from wounds received at the Battle of Memphis Tenn
at Nashville (Hester's) on or about the 15th day of June
A. D. 1863, while in the service of the United States. She further declares that she was married to the said Wesley
Johnson on the ninth day of March
A. D. 1843, at same County by one Darius Johnson
a minister of the M. E. Church; that her name before her said marriage was Emeline
Johnson and that she has remained a widow since the death of her said husband,
as will more fully appear by reference to the proof hereto annexed; and that the following are the names, ages, and residence of
the surviving children of said soldier, who were under sixteen years of age at the time of his decease, to-wit: Martha
Johnson who is aged seven years, James H. Johnson aged six
years, William H. Johnson aged six years & John J. Johnson aged
years all of whom reside with declarant in Crawce
County Indiana

She also declares that she has not in any manner been engaged in or aided or abetted the Rebellion in the United States.
She hereby constitutes and appoints Whitney & Lewis of Washington City her
attorneys, with full power of substitution, to prosecute this claim, and authorizes to receive from the Department her
Pension Certificate when issued.

Emeline Johnson

Sworn to and subscribed before me the day and year first above written; and on the same day personally appeared
Green H. Kaylor and Jasiah Kaylor
residents of Crawce County Indiana, persons whom I certify to be respectable and entitled to credit;
who, being by me, duly sworn according to law, say that they were present and saw the
declarant to the foregoing declaration.
They further swear that they have every reason to believe, from the appearance of the applicant and their acquaintance with her,
that she is the identical person she represents herself to be; that they are personally acquainted with said declarant, and were ac-
quainted with her and her said husband before he entered the service, and know that they lived together as man and wife and
were so reputed, and that deponents never heard the fact of their marriage disputed or questioned; that she is the widow of the
identical Wesley Johnson who performed military service mentioned in said declaration, and
who died while in the service of the United States, as therein stated, and that she has remained a widow since his death.
They further swear that they verily believe her foregoing statement of the names, ages, and residence of her children under sixteen
years of age to be correct; and they have no interest in the prosecution of this claim.

Green Kaylor
Jasiah Kaylor

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 7th day of Nov A. D. 1863; and I
hereby certify that I have no interest, direct or indirect, in the prosecution of this claim.

WIDOW'S APPLICATION FOR INCREASE OF PENSION,

Under Section 2, Act July 25, 1866.

State of Indiana
County of Orange

On this 4th day of September A. D. one thousand eight hundred and sixty six
personally appeared before me, John L. Mezey Clerk of the Circuit Court
Emeline Johnson, a resident of West Baden, in the
County of Orange, State of Indiana, aged 42
years, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on her oath make the following declaration
in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the 2d Section of the Act of Congress,
increasing the pensions of widows and orphans, approved July 25, 1866. That she is the widow of
Wesley Johnson who was a Sergeant in Company "F"
commanded by Captain Mason in the 81st Regiment of
Ind Infy in the war of 1861, and that by reason of his death in the service
aforesaid, she has been granted a pension of eight dollars per month, in accordance with a certificate
numbered 23818 bearing date the 4 day of June 1864 which certificate is
herewith surrendered. She further swears that she has the following named children, to wit:

Martha Johnson who was born on 14 day of May 1852
James H. Johnson who was born on 13th of June 1854
John J. Johnson who was born on 11 day of Aug 1861
William H. Johnson who was born on 1857

She further declares that she has not remarried since the death of her said husband, nor has she
abandoned the support of any one of the children aboved named, nor permitted any one of the same to be
adopted by any other person or persons as his, her, or their child.

My Post-Office address is as follows: West Baden Orange County Ind

She hereby appoints John H. McCutchen, of Washington, D. C., her attorney, with power of
substitution to prosecute her claim and receive the certificate.

Signature of Claimant.

Emeline Johnson

AFFIDAVIT OF WITNESSES.

Also personally appeared before me, John L. Mezey Clerk, Levi H. Francis
resident of Pasli and Mary Perry resident of West Baden
county of Orange State of Indiana
persons whom I certify to be respectable and entitled to credit, and who being by me duly sworn, say that
they were present and saw Mrs. Emeline Johnson sign her name to the
foregoing declaration; and they further swear that they have every reason to believe from the appearance
of the applicant and their acquaintance with her, that she is the identical person she represents herself
to be, and that they have no interest in the prosecution of this claim. And they further swear that they
were well acquainted with her and her husband before he entered the service, and know that she has
remained a widow ever since the death of the said Wesley Johnson
and is now a widow.

That they are well acquainted with the children whose names and dates of birth are given in the
foregoing declaration, and know that she has not abandoned the support of any one of said children, but
supports and maintains them.

Signatures of Witnesses.

L. H. Francis
Mary Perry

The State of Indiana Draper Company
 By its commissioners that on this 23rd day of
 August 1857 before me William M. Mearns a
 Notary Public in and for said county of
 personally appeared together this daughter of
 my wife Ann Mearns who being by me well
 and duly sworn on her oath says
 that she being the wife of John Mearns do hereby
 certify in her name in the 81st Regt that
 both said and she do well agree and
 with Indiana Johnson his wife and
 William H Johnson and John Johnson
 and of his children. That said
 William H Johnson was born on the 9th
 day November 1857. That she acts
 as the mother of the birth of said
 William H Johnson. That she acts
 as the mother of the birth of John J
 Johnson and being that he was
 born on the 11th day of May 1861
 that said she acts as the mother
 of the birth of the same. That
 said children and that she has no
 interest in the claim or the proceeds
 thereon.

Attest: W. Mearns
 Notary Public
 Wm. Mearns
 Draper Company
 This 23rd

No 28. 8/18.
Susan

Emeline Johnson
2nd

Johnston 1/1/18

W. Johnston
2nd

2nd

Johnston 1/1/18

Indicated our name to before me this 5th
October 1867 don't deny that the above names
written with have indicated the foregoing of
said an article relation cover the 1/1/18
then, I believe we the preservation of the same
Johnston 1/1/18
Johnston 1/1/18

are the only legitimate children of said
16 years of age of said Mary Johnson &
Emeline Johnson his sister
Mary Douglass
Susan Douglass

"in the Indiana Army during per
the circumstances that in the 5th day, the
1861 letters are at the hands of Simpson a white
Public in and for said company & etc.
personally appeared Maria Dougherty &
Mary Dougherty & in said firm
who being by me duly sworn say the
they have been for many years acquainted
with Wesley Johnson a late a bond in
\$500⁰⁰ in the 8th day of Feb 1861 and
that we are personally well acquainted
with his sister Elizabeth Johnson
his children. That Martha Johnson
who was born in the 25th day of May 1838
James H Johnson who was born in the
15th day of June 1854. William H Johnson
who was born in the 9th day of Nov 1851
and John Johnson who was born
the 11th day of August 1861 are the only
legitimate children of said Wesley John
living at the time of his death and it
that said Elizabeth Johnson is the first
of said children who now resides
at their parents. That said Wesley
Johnson left after children but they
were all over 16 years of age on the 25th a
of Feb 1861. That we have no interest
in the claim or the possession
there. That said children also mention

I received your letter of the 12th inst. dated 1867. I certify that affidavit is a correct copy and that the contents of the foregoing affidavit you fully made known to official when she subscribed or swore to the same and that I have no interest in the election or the prosecution thereof.

Attest my hand and seal

William H. Morris
N. P. P. 1867

in State of Indiana
County of Adams

I am & Allegedly
claim of the circuit court in case for
said county do certify that within
sitting I was shown the foregoing
affidavit aforesaid, it has been sworn to
use of a date being in acting May
Public day appointed Commission

and certified and that the signature
then is purporting to be his genuine
and that I have no interest in the claim
certified to be so acknowledged by the
and there. Attest my hand and seal
The 13th day of Sept 1867
John F. Maguire