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Magazine of the

Jefferson County Historical Society

Volume XC
December 2024

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Magazine of the
JEFFERSON COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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"History by apprising them [citizens] of the past will enable them to judge of the future; it will avail them of the experience of other times and other nations; it will qualify them as judges of the actions and designs of men; it will enable them to know ambition under every disguise it may assume; and knowing it, to defeat its views."

Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia, Query 14, 1781

"It is history that teaches us to hope."

Robert E. Lee, letter to Charles Marshall, 1870

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JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Organized May 21, 1927

To identify, present, preserve and promote the history of Jefferson County

www.jeffersonhistoricalwv.org

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PUBLICATIONS AND SALES ITEMS

MAGAZINES:

One copy of the *Magazine* is mailed to each person with a paid membership. Back issues, original or reprint, along with all other items listed, may be obtained by sending a check or money order to:

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Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society

For the years 1935-1964	$20 each
For the years 1965-1999	$15 each
For the years 2000-current	$10 each

NOTE: An index of articles which appear in the Magazine is available on the "Magazine and Guardian" tab of the Society's web page.

BOOKS:

A Bicentennial History of Jefferson County, West Virginia 1801-2001. 2001. $8 each.

Between the Shenandoah and Potomac: Historic Homes of Jefferson County, West Virginia. **(Book)** Jefferson County Historical Society. 1991. $40 each.

Burials in Jefferson County West Virginia. Compiled by Hugh E. Voress. 1998. $15 each.

Calendar and Index to Recorded Plats in the Jefferson County, West Virginia (Virginia), Courthouse, 1801-1901. By Michael D. Thompson. 1984. $20 each.

Charles Town Bicentennial 1786-1986. 1986. $10 each.

Prominent Men of Shepherdstown 1762-1962. By A. D. Kenamond. 1963. $10 each.

Tombstone Inscriptions, Jefferson County, W. Va. 1687-1980. Bee Line Chapter, NSDAR. $20 each.

The Washington Homes of Jefferson County, West Virginia. Jefferson County Historical Society. 1985. $10 each.

GUEST PUBLICATIONS:

And So I Did: Stories of Shepherdstown. By James C. Price. 2012. $25 each.

The Civil War Years in Jefferson County. By P. Douglas Perks. 2022. $25 each.

Military Operations in Jefferson County Virginia (now West Virginia) 1861-1865. Edited with an Introduction by James C. Holland. 2004. $15 each.

DVDS:

Between the Shenandoah and the Potomac: A Visual History of Jefferson County. Jefferson County Historical Society. 1991. $10 each.

The Civil War in Jefferson County. Jefferson County Historical Society. 2012. $10 each.

GEAR:

Hats. Black, Navy, & White. $10 each.

NOTECARDS:

Set of 10 notecards with envelopes. Photographs from *Between the Shenandoah and the Potomac: Historic Homes of Jefferson County*. $5 each.

EDITOR'S NOTE

For our first article this year we have another chapter in the adventures of Daniel Bedinger researched by M. S. Doug Bedinger. Daniel Bedinger has returned home after the Revolutionary War and heads to Norfolk, Virginia to navigate treacherous political waters of political appointments in the newly formed nation. Previous articles by this author may be found in issues 2019-2022 of the *Magazine*.

We regret to inform you that Doug Bedinger passed away March 21, 2023 at the age of 91. Doug pursued genealogical research his entire adult life, and we will miss his in-depth and entertaining submissions. We extend our condolences to his wife and children.

Our second article comes from Society member Carol Decker and also explores family history. Carol's husband's great-great grandfather worked as an armorer and served in the Civil War at Harpers Ferry. Pension papers and photos relate the family's activities during and after war time. For more information about the Pension Bureau visit https://clarabartonmuseum.org/pension.

Our third article introduces the members of the United States Colored Troops who served in the Civil War from our county. Jefferson County author Bob O'Connor has spent considerable amounts of time researching and writing on this subject.

A thank you to this year's authors and David Albin of Progressive Printing for making this issue possible. We hope you will enjoy the work of our authors. These articles will make for good reading on the wintry days ahead. Also, please take time to visit the Society's newly designed website.

This year has flown past and soon we will be commemorating the 250th birthday of our nation. If you are working on any related projects, please consider submitting an article for next year's *Magazine*. We accept submissions year around, with the deadline being September 1 of each year for the December publication. Please contact me with any questions you have or any ideas you wish to explore. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

Debbie Piscitelli
(dkpiscitelli@gmail.com)

DANIEL BEDINGER
THE NORFOLK YEARS

By M. S. Doug Bedinger

The penalty good men pay for not being interested
in politics is to be governed by men worse than themselves.
Plato

Daniel Bedinger felt every honest man should exercise his best judgment on all occasions and act accordingly. He wrote in a letter to Henry Bedinger, "This is not only the right, but the duty of every citizen, and therefore we may, both of us, enjoy our own opinions without giving just cause of offence to anyone, no matter how widely we may differ on political subjects."[1] We scarcely read a letter written by Daniel to one of his brothers that he doesn't express his thoughts and feelings regarding governmental policies or actions.

Although his brothers, Henry and George Michael, were active in politics and held public office, Daniel did not pursue public office but held strong views on political affairs, governmental policies and international relations. Daniel Bedinger composed "The Cossack Celebration," in which he cleverly caricatured the Federalists' in their jubilant revel in Shepherdstown over the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte and the ascendancy of the Bourbon *royalty in France. Several decades later the poem was remembered as one of the strongest examples of satirical writing in the United States.*[2]

Daniel Bedinger was born 27 March 1761, the youngest of three brothers of who left their birthplace in York County, Pennsylvania

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1 Quotation from a letter of Daniel Bedinger to George Michael Bedinger dated Feb. 25, 1813 in Levin, Alexandra Lee, 1995, *For A Brave America the Bedinger Brothers in War and Peace, 1775-1843*, Shamrock Hollow, John Day, Oregon, 215 p., p. 155

2 Alexandra Lee Levin, 1995, *For Brave America, The Bedinger Brothers in War and Peace, 1775-1843*, Shamrock Hollow, John Day, Oregon, 215 p., p. 157

and moved just south of the Potomac River in 1762 with their sisters and parents, Henry Bedinger and Mary Magdalene von Schlegel. Daniel was but fourteen years of age in 1775 when his older brothers, Henry and George Michael first volunteered for service in the Colonial army and joined General George Washington's troops in the siege of the British army at Boston. A year later his brothers returned and Daniel was no doubt enthralled by hearing of the exploits recounted by his brothers. His brother Henry set to work enlisting another troop of soldiers for the Colonial army. When time came for Henry to leave for battle, Daniel begged his mother to let him join them. But he was told he was still too young and must stay in Shepherdstown and help the family. The story of his running away to join Henry and his militia in New Jersey, the story of the three brothers and their service during the Revolutionary War is told in "Brothers of the Revolution."[3] The following narrative resumes with the story of Daniel Bedinger when he returns to Shepherdstown after the war.

Daniel Bedinger at the Custom House

Lieutenant Daniel Bedinger, having been mustered out of the army, went to Norfolk where he entered business as a merchant. The City of Norfolk had been devastated by the war. In December 1775 the Virginia militia had routed the British Governor Dunmore who fled to the safety of a British ship in the Elizabeth River. Governor Dunmore opened fire on the Virginia and North Carolina troops in the city with naval guns. The patriot militia set ablaze the homes, shops and warehouses of some of the local Tories. Residents fled the city. When Daniel arrived in 1784 the city was beginning to rebuild and some of Daniel's fellow officers had moved to the city for the favorable business opportunities. The large harbor was the chief base for overseas shipping and the terminus of navigation for large ships. Commodities were shipped upstream from Norfolk by barge or to overland destinations by wagons.

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3 M. S. Doug Bedinger, "Brothers of the Revolution," *Magazine by Jefferson County Historical Society, Volume LXXXVIII*, December 2022.

It is said that Daniel Bedinger was furnished a letter of recommendation by George Washington himself and in 1793 he found no difficulty in getting into the Custom House. In Norfolk Daniel found the opportunities to exercise his business acumen and leadership and keep abreast of the business and political news of the nation. Daniel established friends, business contacts and earned a reputation as a trusted friend and honest businessman.[4] Fitting in well in his duties in the Custom House, Daniel Bedinger's responsibilities rose to acting naval officer and deputy collector of the port serving under Josiah Parker the Collector of the Port. In February 1789, Josiah Parker, having been elected to the House of Representatives, submitted his letter of resignation to the state as collector at Norfolk. It was known that one of the first acts soon to be enacted by the first U. S. Congress under the first term of President George Washington would be the creation of a Custom Service which would create a Collector and other positions for ports to be cited in the law. The United States Custom Service would have the responsibility to regulate the collection of duties imposed by law on the tonnage of shipping vessels, and on goods, wares and merchandise imported into the United States. It became the responsibility of President George Washington to nominate and for the Senate to approve the Collector, Naval Officer and Surveyor for each of the 59 ports cited in the law.

Daniel Bedinger penned a letter of application for the position of Collector which was forwarded to President George Washington with the following endorsement from Josiah Parker. Captain Bedinger

> ...I know by experience (he having lived with me when in office upwards of three years) to be fully equal to any duty in that department which may be assigned to him. He is a Native of Berkeley County. Served in the Army from his early youth—was captured at Fort Washington—and was

4 Danske Dandridge, draft manuscript of "Daniel and Old Shepherdstown" in Bedinger and Dandridge Family Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

> noticed by General Green in the southern department as a valuable officer, when I was appointed naval officer, he was recommended to me as a deputy by Colonel Carrington and I found him fully equal to my expectation—he would not wish to supplant Major Lindsay but as there are to be a Naval officer & Collector of the District, he solicits the one which Major Lindsay may not obtain.[5]

In addition to Bedinger five others, including Major Lindsay, applied for the upcoming position of Collector. It would appear that Bedinger was the most qualified to be nominated to the post of Collector, he having been employed as second officer under Collector Josiah Parker. Bedinger had also held the position of Naval Officer. Many of the upper echelon positions at the Custom House under the Confederation had been filled by officers who had served in the American Revolution. President Washington seemed to have followed this precedent in nominating Major William Lindsay as Collector; Philemon Gatewood was appointed Naval Officer. Lieutenant Daniel Bedinger was appointed the third position as Surveyor.[6] It has been suggested that the Revolutionary hero's anti-Federalist leanings may have been a deciding factor in his nomination for the third slot at the Norfolk Navy Yard.[7] The nominations were approved by the Senate. Bedinger held the post until 1797; in addition, in March 1792 he was named inspector of the excise at Norfolk and Portsmouth.[8]

William Lindsay, the Collector, died September 1, 1797 following a long illness. During William Lindsay's illness and after his death, Daniel Bedinger performed the duties of Collector and carried on

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5 "To George Washington from Josiah Parker, 1 July 1789," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016, http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-03-02-0044.

6 Michael N Ingrisano, Jr., 1987, The First Officers of the United States Customs Service, Appointed by President George Washington in 1789, Department of the Treasury, U. S. Customs service, Customs Publication No. 578, July 1987,18p.

7 Carl E Prince,. 1977, *The Federalists and the Origins of the U. S. Civil Service*: New York University Press, 381 p., p. 107.

8 Executive Journal, 1797, 1:11, 14, 104, 111.

duties at the Custom House. Daniel Bedinger rightfully aspired to be nominated as Collector, under the forthcoming administration of President John Adams, being imminently qualified and having fulfilled the duties of Collector during Lindsay's long illness. However, in consequence of it having been suggested to Bedinger by a member of Congress, namely Mr. Parker, his political creed[9] was considered by the administration of President John Adams as an insuperable bar to promotion in the Custom House. Thus, believing it futile to apply for the position of Collector under President Adams, Daniel Bedinger resigned his positions as Surveyor and Inspector of Revenue for the Port of Norfolk with the U. S. Custom Service. Disappointed at his chance of advancement at Norfolk, Daniel saw no reason to stay there indefinitely. During the past several years he had added around $11,000 to his means, and so needed no more "for happiness." Why should he not spend the rest of his days quietly like a philosopher, especially as he had had a "stormy" life of it up to that point?"[10]

President Adams nominated Otway Bird Collector of the Port of Norfolk. The position of Collector soon became vacant again with the death of Otway Bird September 2, 1800. From Shepherdstown, hearing news of the vacancy, Daniel Bedinger placed his name in consideration for Collector before to President John Adams, stating "...from many circumstances which have lately transpired, I am inclined to think that my information [regarding his political creed being a bar to his being appointed Collector] was incorrect—and that the said suggestion conveys an improper reflexion upon those to whom it belongs to appoint to office. I therefore again beg leave to present myself as a candidate for the Office of Collector for the District of Norfolk & Portsmouth, which Office I understand is now vacant."[11]

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9 Here we see that Daniel Bedinger's penchant for freely expressing his political creed had struck discordant notes with that of the Federalist administration of President John Adams.

10 Alexandra Lee Levin, 1995, *For Brave America, The Bedinger Brothers in War and Peace, 1775-1843*, Shamrock Hollow, John Day, Oregon, 215 p., pp. 96-97.

11 "To John Adams from Daniel Bedinger, 18 September 1800, "Founders Online, National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016, http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/99-02-0204637.

Daniel Bedinger was not one to recant or dilute his publicly expressed beliefs and conclusions on political subjects. He added in his letter to President Adams,

> But that there may be no mistake with respect to my Politics, permit me Sir to observe that at all times when matters of general concern to the United States were pending, I thought for myself, but at the same time I endeavored to form honest opinions. Truth was ever the object of my researches, and if it has sometimes happened that I was bewildered in the pursuit or may not have gone with the Current of other mens opinions—such conduct I hope will not be imputed to me as a Crime. I thought I was right & acted accordingly. In short Sir, I certainly am a Democrat, and prize my rights as a free Citizen above all other considerations. I can however declare with the greatest truth that my political opinions never gave an improper bias to my official conduct, or caused me for a moment to forget my duty—or the real interests of that country, to the service of which the choicest days of my life have been most faithfully devoted.

President Adam's rejoinder to Bedinger's application is found in a letter of the President to Oliver Wolcott, Jr. dated October 4, 1800, in which he states, "I Suppose the Letter comes too late but that if it had arrived earlier, it would have made no Alteration in your Judgment or mine." The President continues, "…that no person has … ever had authority from me to say a Man's political Creed, would be an insuperable Bar to promotion." He concedes that President Washington was more liberal in appointments, "Washington appointed a multitude of Democrats and Jacobins of deepest die. I have been more cautious in this respect…"[12]

12 "From John Adams to Oliver Wolcott, Jr., 4 October 1800," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016, http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/99-02-02-4637.

It was natural that Daniel felt slighted. He had served nearly thirteen years in the Custom House and was the oldest officer in that line in Virginia. He had always tried to behave in such a manner as to retain the good opinion of his fellow citizens without forfeiting the esteem of men in superior official positions. Yet none of these considerations carried weight because Mr. Adams thought it expedient to select a person of his own political leanings.



Solomon Bedinger,

BEGS leave respectfully to inform his friends and the public, that he has purchased the whole stock in trade, and taken the store lately occupied by captain *Josiah Hodges*, dec'd. No. 3, *Campbell's Wharf*, where he is enabled by this and the assortment he formerly had united, to offer for sale almost every article in the *GROCERY*, and *SHIP CHANDLERY* line, of good quality on moderate terms; amongst whichar the following—

VIZ.

London Particular Madeira, Old Sherry, Dry Lisbon, & Particular Teneriffe	WINES	Horn Lanthorns Scrapers Grains Harpoons Fish Hooks Paint Brushes assorted
Old Antigua, W. Island, & New-England	RUM	Scrubbing ditto Hair Pencils Clamps
Cogniac, Old Peach, & Apple	*Brandy*	Glass, Horn, & Japann'd Tumblers Carpenter's & Ship

Partial list of sale items by:
Bedinger, Sol.
Ship Chandler and Grocer
4 Campbell's Wharf Dwelling,
40 Main Street, Norfolk

While working in Norfolk Daniel made regular trips to Shepherdstown. In 1790 he built a three-story brick building butted against what would become the Entler Hotel, now the Historic Shepherdstown Museum. Daniel then owned all of the Entler Hotel property. James Brown leased the buildings from the Bedinger family and opened a store in the corner of the first floor of the building. Then the Globe tavern started operations in the museum building, operating a dining room and offering overnight accommodation. Town elections and town council meetings were held at the tavern for years. Daniel Bedinger sold the hotel property to James Brown and Edward Lucas for $6,000 in 1815.

During his regular trips to Shepherdstown, Daniel Bedinger became acquainted with Sarah Rutherford the daughter of Robert "Robin" Rutherford, who led a militia group to defend Shepherdstown against Indian raids during the French and Indian War. Daniel and Sarah were married at the home of Robert Rutherford, "Flowing Springs," near Charles Town in April 1791. While making their home in Norfolk, the family customarily left Norfolk during the sultry days of summer to the better climate of Shepherdstown where they purchased a fine home on East German and Princess Streets. It was here they lived before they returned from Norfolk.

Soon after Daniel Bedinger became established in Norfolk, his younger brother, Solomon, joined Daniel. Solomon established a business in Norfolk as chandler and grocer for stocking ships sailing from Norfolk. Solomon's business flourished and he later acquired commercial vessels carrying commodities and goods between Norfolk and sea and river ports on the east coast.

Jacob Morgan was the son of Daniel Bedinger's youngest sister, Elizabeth Bedinger Morgan. Jacob's father, Abel Morgan, served as surgeon of a Pennsylvania regiment during American Revolution. His early demise, when Jacob was but three years of age, is attributed to his ill health from British imprisonment during the war. Jacob and his five brothers and sisters were raised by his mother at the "Old



"Falling Spring," Shepherdstown
Home of Jacob Morgan from a recent photograph

Stone House," built by Abel's grandfather in 1734. In August of 1796, Jacob was invited to go back to Norfolk with Daniel Bedinger and his family to spend the winter with them. Thus, at the age of 15, Jacob was introduced to life in the busy port of Norfolk. Jacob became an apprentice of Solomon in the chandlery and grocery business. With his studious intelligence, attention to detail and courteous and affable nature, Jacob readily took to the mercantile business. Jacob remained in Norfolk with Solomon and Daniel well beyond the first winter and became a useful member of the business and close member of the family in Norfolk. Family and business news of Norfolk was exchanged frequently by letters from Solomon and Daniel to their brother Henry in Jefferson County. The letters include frequent reference to the health and condition of Jacob Morgan. A letter from Daniel Bedinger in 1800 states, "Jacob Morgan has lately returned from the West Indies & is now at Norfolk in good health."[13]

13 Letter from Daniel Bedinger to G. M. Bedinger June 23, 1800, in Dandridge, Danske, *George Michael Bedinger: A Kentucky Pioneer*: The Michie Company, Charlottesville, Virginia, 1909, pp. 179,180.

By 1830, Jacob Morgan had become wealthy in the mercantile business and began building a new home in Shepherdstown, to become known as "Falling Spring", on the land he had inherited on which the "Old Stone House" was situated.

Daniel found during his tenure in the Custom House that the growing economy in Norfolk and government politics offered many opportunities in addition to performance of his official duties. He availed himself of opportunities to exercise his business acumen and leadership and to keep abreast of the news and political controversies of the new nation. He became a director of the Great Dismal Swamp Canal Company. He was a co-founder and stockholder of a bank in Norfolk. His great interest in literature and books was undoubtedly the impetus for him to establish a bookstore in Norfolk.

The Great Dismal Swamp

The Great Dismal Swamp in the Coastal Plain of North Carolina and Virginia had long been a subject of interest to colonists some of whom saw nothing of value in the thousands of acres of impenetrable swamp. In contrast, those such as George Washington envisaged immense wealth to be gained from draining the swamp, reclaiming valuable farmland, and harvesting trees for lumber, shingles and ship masts. George Washington and eleven other men each received grants of thousands of acres, pooled their resources and organized the Dismal Swamp Company in 1763.[14] Washington was appointed one of three managers responsible for securing title, surveying, assembling a labor force of sixty slaves, and making the operation self-sustaining and profitable. He visited the swamp at least six times during the next decade. During the 1760s and 70s, drainage ditches were dug and shingles produced from the swamp's cedar trees, but the Company failed to grow hemp for export. The War for Independence diverted much of the partners' attention, and by 1784 it had been nine years since Washington had "heard a tittle from the company."

14 Charles Royster, 1999, *The Fabulous History of the Dismal Swamp Company*: Vintage Books, New York, 622 p.

In the 1790s the plan to drain the swamp was abandoned; a new company, The Dismal Swamp Canal Company, was created to link the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound. In 1792 Daniel Bedinger invested in the company and became one of the original Directors of the company.[15,16] Canal construction began in 1793. The canal was dug completely by hand. It took approximately 12 years of back-breaking construction under highly unfavorable conditions to complete the 22-mile-long waterway, which opened in 1805. It is the oldest continually operating man-made canal in the United States. It is today a part of the Intracoastal Waterway, an inland route, which parallels the east coast and offers boaters shelter from New Jersey to Brownsville, Texas. The company turned a profit in 1814 from lumbering and was reincorporated as the Dismal Swamp Land Company.[17]

And Then There Was Politics

In Norfolk, a center of trading with France and England, Bedinger was intensely interested in the developing conflict between these nations and the political maneuvering of trading interests in the states. France and England came to war in 1793 and most Americans sided with either Britain or France. The country became politically divided between two camps, the Federalists and the Republicans. Daniel was an ardent Francophile as were many Republicans of his day. The Federalists led by Alexander Hamilton wanted a strong centralized government. Many merchants and ship owners of the northeast were fearful of losing trade with England and sided with the Federalists. The Republicans, also called Jeffersonian Republicans and Democrat-Republicans, were fervent believers in many of the policies of today's Democratic Party. Republicans, led by Thomas Jefferson, a man distrustful of oppressive central power and

15 Original Stockholders Dismal Swamp Canal, Tennessee Archives Library in Nashville, Tennessee.

16 Alexandra Lee Levin, 1995, *For Brave America the Bedinger Brothers in War and Peace, 1775-1843*, Shamrock Hollow, John Day, Oregon, 215 p., p. 88.

17 Dismal Swamp Canal from: Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dismal_Swamp_Canal

skeptical of high finance, were resolved to defend individual liberty. Daniel Bedinger, an ardent Jeffersonian Republican, sent letters to his brother, Henry, filled with his partisan political comment. Henry Bedinger, in writing to George Michael, expressed the view that Daniel had a keen and discerning mind but was prone to express himself in radical terms. Henry Bedinger nevertheless recognized the power of Daniel's pen. When Daniel Morgan, the retired general of the Revolution, was contesting Robert Rutherford for a seat in the U. S. House of Representatives, Henry Bedinger was incensed at the actions of Morgan and considered him a "vindictive scoundrel." Henry begged his brother Daniel to compose a stinging letter in opposition to Daniel Morgan.[18] Daniel Bedinger wrote numerous political articles published in periodicals and newspapers. As was the custom of the day, most of his articles were published without authorship or over pen names such as "Virginian" or "Censor".

Daniel was particularly troubled by the terms of the Jay Treaty negotiated by Chief Justice John Jay with Britain and favored by President George Washington. Daniel feared the treaty in effect made the U. S. a party to war against the French. Daniel, in a letter of 15 November 1795 to his brother Henry, was particularly venomous and caustic in his verbal treatment of George Washington, referring sarcastically to America's prospects of embroilment in the English–French war "...thanks to the unparalleled wisdom and virtue of George Washington, God bless him! And that he may long govern us without control [and] ride like any other monarch in his coach drawn by six horses."[19]

18 Higginbotham, Don, 1979, *Daniel Morgan: Revolutionary Rifleman*, University of North Carolina Press, 241 p., p. 204. Daniel Morgan, now retired, had been a general in the revolutionary army.

19 Letter of Daniel Bedinger to Henry Bedinger Nov 15, 1795 in Bedinger and Dandridge Family Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

Veritas

France declared war on Great Britain and Holland on February 1, 1793. President Washington and his close adviser Alexander Hamilton feared that the new nation was too young and its military too small to risk any sort of a military engagement with either France or England. Without consulting or providing an opportunity for Congress to take part, President Washington issued a proclamation of neutrality.[20] The proclamation threatened legal proceedings against any American aiding any country at war. While some Americans opposed the neutrality policies of the administration, others did not, and President Washington received numerous letters of support from municipal and civic organizations in the maritime states. At the same time, an anonymous writer using the pseudonym "Veritas" strongly criticized the president and the neutrality proclamation in three letters published in the *National Gazette*, a Philadelphia newspaper between 1 and 12 of June, 1793.[21,22,23] There was much speculation on the authorship of the anonymously published letters. Jefferson, a Francophile and hater of Britain, was supposed by Genet, the French minister to the U. S., to have written the letters. Jefferson firmly denied that he had written them. Jefferson himself suspected the letters were a Federalist conspiracy to turn the public opinion against supporters of France. He privately accused a clerk at Hamilton's Treasury Department.

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20 "Neutrality Proclamation, 22 April 1793, "Founders Online, national Archives, last modified July 12, 2016, Http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-12-02-0371.

21 "To George Washington from Veritas, 30 May 1793," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016, http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-12-02-0516. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Presidential Series, vol. 12,16 January 1793–31 May 1793, ed. Christine Sternberg Patrick and John C. Pinheiro. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005, pp. 647–649.]

22 "To George Washington from Veritas, 3 June 1793," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016, http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-13-02-0011. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Presidential Series, vol. 13,1 June–31 August 1793, ed. Christine Sternberg Patrick. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007, pp. 17–19.]

23 "To George Washington from Veritas, 6 June 1793," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016, http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-13-02-0025. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Presidential Series, vol. 13,1 June–31 August 1793, ed. Christine Sternberg Patrick. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007, pp. 34–37.

As speculation swirled as to the identity of "Veritas", Mr. Fitzsimmons, a member of the House of Representatives, had declared that Mr. Daniel Bedinger of Norfolk was the author of the letters under the signature of "Veritas". Daniel Bedinger, holding the government appointive post of Surveyor at the Custom House, Port of Norfolk, had reason to believe that the story was invented to "injure" him politically. Learning of this accusation, Robert Rutherford, then a member of the House of Representatives and father-in-law of Daniel Bedinger, penned a letter to the President, George Washington. Although Rutherford, himself a Jeffersonian Republican, was not of the same political leaning as the President, Rutherford had long been a personal friend of Washington and was not reticent about addressing him directly. Rutherford related to Washington that he went directly to the Representative, Mr. Fitzsimmons, confronting him directly with the accusation, whereupon Mr. Fitzsimmons denied he had made such a statement and provided a signed statement to that effect to Representative Rutherford. Mr. Fitzsimmons statement was duly forwarded to President Washington.[24,25]

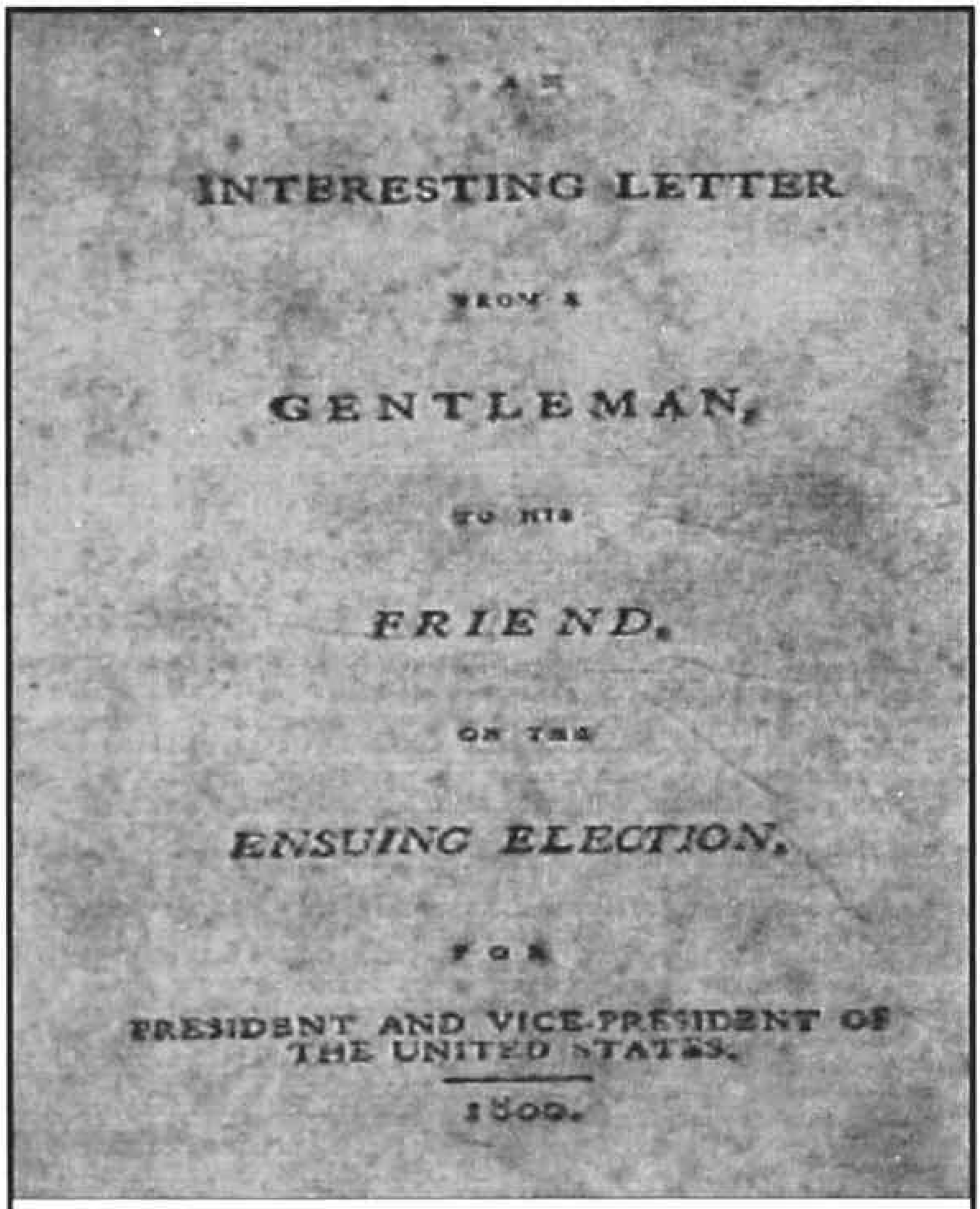
Return to Shepherdstown

When George Washington decided not to run for a third term as president and retired to his country plantation at Mount Vernon, Daniel Bedinger hoped that a Jeffersonian Republican would be elected president but was sorely disappointed when John Adams, a Federalist, was elected. During Adams' administration, Daniel frequently referred to "King John" in letters when speaking of positions and acts of President Adams with which he disagreed. When the position of Collector of the Port of Norfolk became open, Daniel felt he, with thirteen years' experience and as the senior

24 "To George Washington from Robert Rutherford, 7 April 1794," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016, http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-15-02-0422. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Presidential Series, vol. 15,1 January–30 April 1794, ed. Christine Sternberg Patrick. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009, pp. 536–538.]

25 No one has yet discovered who "Veritas" really was. For a discussion of the search for the identity of "Veritas" see: Elkins, Stanley and McKittrick, Eric, 1993, The Age of Federalism, Oxford University Press, Hew York, 925 p., p. 821

officer of the port, should be entitled to gain the position. Daniel felt slighted when Colonel Otway Byrd was commissioned as Collector by President Adams "to prop up a great family much on the decay and by that method keep up distinctions as much as possible".


A
INTERESTING LETTER
FROM A
GENTLEMAN,
TO HIS
FRIEND,
ON THE
ENSUING ELECTION,
FOR
PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES.
1800.

Daniel Bedinger's written endorsement of Thomas Jefferson, a 30-page booklet entitled "Interesting Letter from a Gentleman to his Friend Concerning the Ensuing Election for President and Vice President of the United States, 1800", was published and widely circulated.



"Bedford", the home of Daniel Bedinger and Sarah Rutherford

Daniel felt it best to return to Shepherdstown. July 24, 1798, Daniel's younger brother Solomon Bedinger wrote to Henry from Norfolk: "Brother Daniel and family sailed from here with a fair wind on Saturday last. I hope by this time they are near Alexandria…and will be safe with you by the time this comes to hand". Daniel, with his wife Sarah and family, settled in Shepherdstown in his fine old house on East German and South Princess streets. By the summer of 1799 he acquired the property where his father had built the first Bedinger home near Shepherdstown. There, Daniel began to build a fine mansion: it was to be called "Bedford", from the first three letters of his name and the last four letters of his wife's name.

The election of 1800 afforded the opportunity for Daniel to support Thomas Jefferson, for president, and his running mate, Aaron Burr, for vice-president, were running against the Federalist ticket of John Adams, for president, and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, for vice president of the United States." Ironically, during the election summer of 1800, General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney and his wife were tenants of Daniel Bedinger in his house in Shepherdstown, while Daniel Bedinger and his family were comfortably ensconced in their new home, Bedford.

Daniel wrote his brother Michael that in his opinion the prospects for having a Republican elected President were brighter than at any time since the adoption of the Constitution. The Federalists were fighting among themselves and people resented having the taxes they had imposed to support the building of a strong army and navy. Daniel predicted the highest office would soon be filled by Jefferson, a man he felt would aim to preserve the Constitution. Daniel also devoted his energy and his great writing talent, to achieve that goal by writing and distributing literature to persuade his fellow citizens of the virtues of Jefferson and to counter the falsehoods propagated by the Federalists.[26] Daniel Bedinger's written endorsement of Jefferson was published in a 30-page book entitled, "Interesting Letter from a Gentleman to his Friend Concerning the Ensuing Election for President and Vice President of the United States, 1800", was widely circulated.

The election of 1800 exposed one of the flaws in the original Constitution of the United States. Members of the Electoral College were authorized by the original Constitution to vote for two names for President. The candidate with the most electoral votes would become president and the candidate with the second most would become vice president. The Democratic-Republicans had planned for one of the electors to abstain from casting his second vote for Aaron Burr, which would have led to Jefferson receiving one electoral vote more than Burr, making Jefferson president and Burr vice president. The plan, however, was mishandled.

Each elector who voted for Jefferson also voted for Burr, resulting in a tied electoral vote. John Adams received 65 votes while Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr, tied with 73 votes apiece. The election was then put into the hands of the outgoing House of Representatives where a stubborn and turbulent contest ensued. A delegation of twelve supporters of Jefferson from Shepherdstown,

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26 Daniel Bedinger, from "My House Near Shepherd's Town," to Michael Bedinger, June 23, 1800 *in* Levin, Alexandra Lee, 1995, *For Brave America the Bedinger Brothers in War and Peace, 1775-1843*, Shamrock Hollow, John Day, Oregon, 215 p., p. 102-103

including the brothers Daniel and Henry Bedinger, travelled to the Capitol to encourage the tie to be broken and Jefferson to be elected. On February 17, Burr's supporters gave up and Jefferson was duly elected president. Henry Bedinger was convinced that between the 11th and the 17th of February the nation had trembled on the brink of an anarchic abyss. "I am more confirmed than ever," he wrote George Michael, "that it was seriously intended by a desperate party in Congress to place a usurper in the Presidential Chair, to seize all power of the government, and to erect a monarchy on the ruins of a Republican government!"

Navy Agent at Norfolk

Construction of Daniel Bedinger's new home, "Bedford," was progressing well. The family had moved in and it was a beginning to have a settled look when Daniel received an important message from U. S. Congressman William B. Giles of Virginia, stating that the office of the U. S. Navy Agent at Norfolk was vacant and that there was every reason to believe that the acceptance of the position would be at Daniel's "option". Daniel immediately journeyed to the Capitol where he and Mr. Giles went to see Navy Secretary Robert Smith. The decision to accept the position of Navy Agent at Norfolk was difficult for Daniel. He was happily settled at "Bedford" and Shepherdstown was a pleasant part of the country in which to raise a family. He was well off financially and occupied a respected position in society. Yet, he accepted Secretary Smith's offer of appointment as Navy Agent and assumed command of the Norfolk Naval Shipyard at Gosport, Virginia under President Thomas Jefferson. Daniel served in that capacity from 20 April 1802 until 10 February 1808.[27,28]

There was much activity at the Gosport Navy Yard. Across the

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27 Alexandra Lee Levin, 1995, *For Brave America the Bedinger Brothers in War and Peace, 1775-1843*, Shamrock Hollow, John Day, Oregon, 215 p., pp. 103-105.

28 Gosport Navy Yard, variously called the Marine Yard at Gosport, Gosport Shipyard and Norfolk Naval Shipyard, is on a deep channel of the Elizabeth River with multiple harbors that were sheltered from storms. The Gosport Naval Yard is in the city of Portsmouth on the west side of the Elizabeth River. The city of Gosport was annexed by Portsmouth in 1784. Although the shipyard has never been in Norfolk, the current name of the entity is the Norfolk Naval Shipyard.

Elizabeth River, Norfolk was bustling and growing at a prodigious rate. Daniel found the wharves at Gosport Navy Yard crowded with ships being built, repaired and being supplied for embarkation. The Navy at Gosport had stores of timber and supplies for repair and building of ships which Daniel was obliged to purchase and keep in inventory. U. S. ships were built and outfitted for action in the Barbary War where North African states were attacking and hindering U.S. commercial ships.

In Norfolk, Virginia, the home of some of the most cultured gentlemen of the day, Daniel lived in prosperity. As commander of the shipyard, he oversaw construction and rehabilitation of buildings and facilities at the shipyard many of which are still in use.[29,30] Mr. Bedinger, in addition to repairing wharves and building a warehouse and timber shed, built a brick wall, beginning a short distance from the water-side, running along the north front of the yard, and down the west side to the creek which formed the southern boundary, and part of which forms the present timber-basin and a brick dwelling-house for himself within the yard. Afterward, for many years, it was used as the commandant's house.

During Daniel's tenure at Gosport the U. S. Navy was heavily engaged in protecting American shipping from predations of ships of the Barbary Coast in the Mediterranean. In July, 1807, Mr. Bedinger was ordered to contract for materials for ten additional gunboats, and to contract for building the gunboats to protect the American coast. The shipyard was busy with repair of vessels. Bedinger was in charge of contracting for vessels to carry supplies of food, arms and medicines to the U. S. ships defending American shipping on the Barbary Coast.

In the spring of 1803 across the Atlantic, Britain and France were in open and active hostilities again. In their fight with each other,

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29 Edward P Lull, 1974, *History of the United States Navy-Yard at Gosport, Virginia* (near Norfolk), Bureau of Yards and Docks, Navy Department.

30 Robbins, Marcus W., no date, Birth of the Gosport yard & into the 19th Century

both nations ceased respecting the laws, human rights and property of neutral nations. Many American ships were seized by the British and French. American commerce dwindled to the domestic coast. President Jefferson had a fleet of small gunboats built to defend the American coast. The U. S. Frigate *Chesapeake* heading for North Africa out of Gosport was attacked and captured off Hampton Roads by the British sloop-of-war *Halifax*. The *Chesapeake* was searched for British deserters. The *Chesapeake* limped ignominiously back into Gosport for repairs, estimated at $4,000. War with Britain was gravely anticipated.

Planned Excursion to Florida

In 1806, while commander of the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Daniel Bedinger laid plans to embark on an expedition to explore the interior of the Florida peninsula. In a letter to Thomas Newton of the Department of the Navy, Bedinger pointed out that the interior of the peninsula is virtually unknown with regard to its natural resources and suitability for agricultural development. He proposed that, if he were granted a leave of absence from his post at Norfolk, he would in the company of a selected group of individuals and at his own expense undertake the expedition.[31,32,33,34] Later in December of 1807 Daniel Bedinger's plan for his Florida excursion was outlined in some detail in a letter to President Thomas Jefferson.[35] We find reference to Daniel's plan to explore Florida in a letter by his brother Henry to George Michael Bedinger, June 2, 1812. "D. B. is not fond of Florida tho he was unable to explore it. He has advertised all his property for sale here, but expect nobody will purchase it unless he makes great sacrifices."[36]

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31 Daniel Bedinger to Thomas Newton, 1806, Letters in The Thomas Jefferson Papers Series 1. General Correspondence. 1651-1827

32 Daniel Bedinger, l from Robert Smith, December 15, 1806, Letters in The Thomas Jefferson Papers Series 1. General Correspondence. 1651-1827, Letters in The Thomas Jefferson Papers Series 1. General Correspondence. 1651-1827

33 Daniel Bedinger to Robert Smith, December 22, 1806, Letters in The Thomas Jefferson Papers Series 1. General Correspondence. 1651-1827

34 Daniel Bedinger to Robert Smith, January 16, 1807, Letters in The Thomas Jefferson Papers Series 1. General Correspondence. 1651-1827

35 Daniel Bedinger to Thomas Jefferson, December 19, 1807, in The Thomas Jefferson Papers Series 1. General Correspondence. 1651-1827.space lines

36 Letter from Henry Bedinger to George Michael Bedinger, June2, 1812, Bedinger and

Daniel Bedinger's plan to explore the interior of Florida never took place. Two circumstances, both of which, if developments had been adverse, could have had national security implications and required critical action at the Gosport Naval Yard. One circumstance was the threat of war with Britain and the uneasiness of the international situation with the warring nations continuing to insult and rob Americans on the high seas, conditions that would make a coast-wise voyage hazardous. Another was the unexpected movements of Aaron Burr. President Jefferson had received exaggerated reports from General Wilkinson and governor of Louisiana Territory about how Burr, was readying a large military force for an invasion of Mexico.

Relations between Secretary of the Navy Robert Smith and Navy Agent Daniel Bedinger had become strained. Bedinger had sent Navy Secretary Smith a private letter in which he criticized the policies of the Navy Department. International pressures and funding difficulties of the Navy Department caused conflicts and imperious demands by Secretary Smith exacerbated the tensions between the two men.

Daniel Bedinger was abruptly and unceremoniously informed by Navy Secretary Robert Smith by letter dated February 10, 1808 that his appointment as Navy Agent of the Gosport Navy Yard was terminated. Theodore Armistead was appointed in his place as Navy Agent and Superintendent of the Navy Yard. Complaints were lodged against Bedinger for having used the public wharves and property in repairing his own vessels, though whether these charges were substantiated does not appear. Two weeks after his appointment was revoked, he was elected a director of the Bank of Norfolk. Daniel Bedinger was on the board of Alderman of the City of Norfolk. He was greatly respected gentleman in the community, and he and Sarah had made many good friends.[37]

Dandridge Family Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

37 Alexandra Lee Levin, 1995, *For Brave America the Bedinger Brothers in War and*

In 1808, significant changes occurred in the Bedinger family of Norfolk. Daniel Bedinger left his post as Navy Agent and returned to Shepherdstown. Solomon Bedinger died a bachelor in 1808 at Norfolk, presumably of a fever, at the early age of thirty-seven. Jacob Morgan having been well trained by his uncles, Solomon and Daniel, continued in the mercantile business in Norfolk. He soon saw commercial opportunities in Alexandria, Virginia where he removed to practice his mercantile and shipping business.[38]

The Gentleman's "Unleisurely" Retirement

Daniel Bedinger and family once again removed to their home estate, "Bedford" near Shepherdstown, Virginia. Being well off financially, he could well have assumed the leisurely life of a country gentleman. However, "leisure" was farthest from Daniel Bedinger's priorities.

In September 1809, Daniel journeyed to Ohio and Kentucky to settle the estate of his late father-in-law, Robert Rutherford, whose western lands had to be sold for taxes. While in Kentucky Daniel visited his brother George Michael at Lower Blue Licks. Years later George Michael's son, Benjamin Franklin, recalled how his uncle Daniel had been then: "He was joyous and witty, and the delight of every company."[39,40]

Down the Mississippi to the Gulph of Mexico

His trip to Ohio and Kentucky may have spurred his interest in further exploring the new and growing frontiers of the country. In the winter of 1811, Daniel set forth on an adventure with his physician son-in-law to visit the Ohio and Mississippi River Valleys, New Orleans and the southern Indian Territories of Alabama and

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Peace, 1775-1843, Shamrock Hollow, John Day, Oregon, 215 p., p. 126.

38 Letter from Daniel Bedinger to G. M. Bedinger June 23, 1800, in Dandridge, Danske, *George Michael Bedinger: A Kentucky Pioneer*, The Michie Company, Charlottesville, Virginia, 1909, pp. 179,180

39 Alexandra Lee Levin, 1995, *For Brave America the Bedinger Brothers in War and Peace, 1775-1843*, Shamrock Hollow, John Day, Oregon, 215 p., p. 127.

40 Alexandra Lee Levin, 1995, *For Brave America the Bedinger Brothers in War and Peace, 1775-1843*, Shamrock Hollow, John Day, Oregon, 215 p., p. 127.

Georgia. While on this journey he and Dr. Foster encountered the first steam-powered river boat; they were near the epicenter of the largest historic earthquake in North America; they visited friends in New Orleans in the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase. They returned to Shepherdstown by the newly constructed Federal Road which would soon convey U. S. soldiers through Indian country to the fight the British at the Battle of New Orleans. Daniel Bedinger kept a daily journal of his trip by boat to New Orleans and return by horseback. A transcription of Bedinger's journal, with annotations, has been published by the Jefferson County Historical Society.[41]

Cossack Celebration

Daniel was a poet and a writer. He accumulated and absorbed many great books and wrote much for the periodicals of the day. He had a large library which contained all the English poets, histories, and standard works of the best and most noted authors. He was a great reader and student, with intellect far above the ordinary type. "In every sense of the word, he was a cultivated, refined Virginia gentleman, genial, kind, and witty, with a high and delicate sense of honor. As to the relation of husband, son, father, and friend he was surpassed by none."[42]

Daniel's best-known poetic work, "The Cossack Celebration" is an acclaimed political satire expressing his outrage at the Federalists' unpatriotic actions during the War of 1812. The war was called "President Madison's war" by the Federalists whose commercial interests were suffering because of the war with Britain. Britain, allied with Russia, was also in a war with France led by Napoleon Bonaparte. In 1812 at the height of his power, Napoleon invaded deeply into Russia winning many battles, but suffered losses from unconventional attacks from the light Cossack cavalry of the

41 M. S Bedinger, 2019, The Journal of Daniel Bedinger 1811-1812, *Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society*, vol. LXXXV, pp. 38-67.

42 Thornton Augustine Washington, 1891, *A Genealogical History of the Washington Family in America*, Press of McGill & Wallace, Washington, D. C., 71 p., p. 27.

Ukraine and were unable to sufficiently replenish troops or supplies. Napoleon's army continued to advance reaching Moscow to find the city deserted. The Russians failed to capitulate; peace talks attempted by Napoleon failed. Napoleon finding his army greatly depleted and poorly supplied, began a disastrous retreat from Moscow. Upon Napoleon's defeat in Russia, several European nations joined as allies with Britain and re-entered the war. Napoleon re-created his army and fought on, until the invasion of Paris by the allies on 30 March 1814. Ostensibly in jubilation over the defeat of Napoleon and the return of the Bourbon monarchy, the Federalists held a celebration in Shepherdstown. Daniel Bedinger recognized the celebration as a pretext to "embarrass the government"' and "drive James Madison from the helm of state". To express his repudiation of the Federalists celebration and expose the true purpose of the celebration Daniel Bedinger composed a series of articles and a lengthy poem, "The Cossack Celebration."[43] The poem, written in biting satire of Hudibrastic prose, parodied the "moral and political depravity, and held up to public scorn and impotency the advocates of Royalty among us". Years later, the poem was widely remembered. Daniel's grandson, John Thornton Washington, wrote that the poem attracted a wide notoriety. Among the Federalists, who were personally satirized as not having been truly loyal to the nation's War of 1812 with Britain, there was an unsuccessful disposition to suppress its publication.[44]

Daniel Bedinger was not only a cultured and well-read man of many talents, but also held an innate curiosity and adventurous spirit and a proclivity for commercial ventures. He was an inveterate traveler and explorer, though he suffered all his life from the effects of his imprisonment in the dreaded English prison ships and abandoned

43 Daniel's writings were published in *The Farmer's Repository* of Charles Town, Virginia (now West Virginia). In 1814 Daniel Bedinger published "The Cossack Celebration" as a book.

44 Thornton Augustine Washington, 1891, *A Genealogical History of the Washington Family in America*, Press of McGill & Wallace, Washington, D. C., 71 p., p. 27.

factories in New York during the Revolution. When he traveled to inspect his military land grant properties in Ohio and Kentucky he frequently was accompanied by his personal physician, Dr. Seth Bellfield Foster, who was also his son-in-law, having married his oldest daughter, Margaret. Dr. Foster was born in Dinwiddie Co., Virginia 5th December 1786. His parents moved to Norfolk where his father was at one time mayor of that city. Dr. Foster practiced medicine many years in Shepherdstown and was well-liked and respected.

After removing from Norfolk, he lived on his estate, "Bedford", near Shepherdstown, the home of hospitality. Daniel Bedinger died many years before his older brothers Henry and George Michael Bedinger. No man in the neighborhood was more loved and respected. His earnest patriotism made him some enemies, and his poem, "The Cossack Celebration", is still remembered by many as one of the strongest examples of a satirical writing ever produced in America. His health suffered during the war as a prisoner of the British on board a prison ship and in the old Sugar House Prison in New York. Although exchanged after about two months, he never fully regained his health. He died in 1818 it is said from a persistent "disease of the lungs", presumably tuberculosis. He left a widow and a large family.

The following tribute to Daniel Bedinger was published at his death in *The Farmers' Repository*, Charlestown, Virginia (now West Virginia), Wednesday, April 1, 1818.

> "Died at his residence, near Shepherdstown, on the 17th ultimo, in the 58th year of his age, Daniel Bedinger, Esq. When those who have been distinguished by private or public virtues, descend to the tomb, something more seems to be required, not only as a tribute to departed worth, but as an incitement to emulation, than a simple record of the mournful event. In these respects, few characters afford a better subject for an obituary notice than that of Mr. Bedinger. Impelled by the patriotic enthusiasm

which animated the American bosom, he enlisted. in the service of his Country about the commencement of the Revolutionary War, and continued in it until her independence was established. His fidelity &, diligence in the discharge of the duties of his humbler stations raised him to distinction very honorable to him, considering the early age at which he commenced his career, and his entire destitution of patronage or other extrinsic aid. Having now performed the duty to his country which he had proposed to himself his active mind was next turned towards obtaining some suitable employment which would enable him to live independently, and to make some provision for the succeeding stages of life; To his industry and economy in the pursuit of these objects, and the recompense of his military services, is chiefly owing, under Providence, that competence which he has secured to a numerous family, and which be enjoyed with them for many years. Nor did he under the pressure of these necessary concerns, forget that those years of life which are usually devoted to academical attainments, had been spent amidst the din of arms. He accordingly did not neglect to cultivate the talents with which his Creator had endowed him; With that success, those who were acquainted with the accuracy of his thinking, the strength, perspicuity and correctness of his style of speaking and writing, will readily determine. He acquired, too, a fund of historical, geographical and general knowledge seldom possessed by those who have the advantages of an early and liberal education. This combined with the embellishments derived from polite reading, rendered his conversation always entertaining and frequently instructive.

"Mr. Bedinger was a firm and zealous supporter of the republican cause. And on many occasions intrepidly opposed what he believed to be inimical to the free principles of our political creed and institutions. This may

have created him some enemies. Yet, by his irreproachable integrity, his punctuality in the fulfillment of his engagements, his candor, consistency, and the plain and easy dignity of his deportment, he gained the confidence and respect of all who knew him; by his hospitable and pleasing sociability, and the sincerity, warmth and generosity of his friendship, the esteem and gratitude of many.-- As a husband and father he was kind and affectionate; as a master, provident and humane.—His just views of the wisdom and goodness of the Supreme Being in the dispensation of his Providence, enabled him to bear a long and afflicting illness with becoming patience, and to bring his feelings under control of a perfect resignation to the Divine Will.

"Taking into view, then, the usefulness and propriety of the general course' of his life (but partially and imperfectly drawn in this brief sketch) his moderation under affliction; his tranquility in the hour of dissolution, and, above all, the goodness and mercy of God, we have abundant reason to trust that he left this vale of pain and sorrow for "another and a better world."

M. S. Doug Bedinger with a B. S. degree in Geology from Texas Tech University followed a career with the U. S. Geological Survey in the field of hydrogeology in Washington, D. C.; Little Rock, Arkansas; and Denver, Colorado. Upon retirement, he and his wife, Mary, embarked upon a venture raising llamas in the Pacific Northwest. He resumed his decades-long interest in genealogy, researched the genealogy and history of the Bedinger family and wrote articles on the family and communicated with his many relatives. Mr. Bedinger passed away March 21, 2023 at the age of 91.

THE PENSION RECORDS OF GEORGE WILLIAM TACEY

By Carol A. Decker

Some years ago I sent for and received copies of the pension claim files for George William Tacey and his widow Elizabeth of Harpers Ferry. George William Tacey is the great great grandfather of my late husband, George William Tacey Decker III.

George William Tacey

George William Tacey was born in Hull, County of Yorkshire, England, on July 6, 1803, to William and Rebecca Dalton Tacey.[1] He was christened on October 11, 1808, in Sculcoates, County of Yorkshire, England.[2] On August 13, 1827, in Skidby, East Riding of Yorkshire, England, George married Jane Jefferson of Hotham, Yorkshire.[3] George and Jane had two sons, George William and Jefferson.[4,5] In 1930, George William Tacey was a widower with one son, as both wife Jane and first son, George William, had died.[6,7]

By early 1840 George was residing in Gloucester County, Virginia.[8] By the fall of 1840 George resided in Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, where he married Eliza Hughes, age 20, of Loudoun County, Virginia, in November.[9] In 1850, the couple was residing in Harpers Ferry with five of their children: James W., Robert G., Hillary, Eliza, and Rebecca.[10] In addition, daughter Anne (1857-

1 U. S. Civil War Pension Claims Files, 1861-1934; App. Nos. 437,384 and 338,169
2 England, Yorkshire, Parish Registers, 1538-2016 (Family Search)
3 Ibid.
4 England Births and Christenings, 1538-1975 (Family Search)
5 England and Wales Non-Conformist Record Indexes (RG4-8), 1588-1977 (Family Search)
6 England, Yorkshire, Parish Registers, 1538-2016 (Family Search)
7 England, Wiltshire, Church Records, 1518-1990 (Family Search)
8 1840 United States federal census record for Gloucester County, Virginia
9 Newspaper clipping from unknown newspaper announcing the marriage
10 1850 United States federal census record for Jefferson County, Virginia

1859) is listed on her mother's tombstone.[11] Two more children, George William and Edward G., were added to the household by 1860.[12] Eliza Hughes Tacey died June 11, 1858, and is buried in Fairview Lutheran Cemetery, Bolivar, West Virginia.[13,14]

On November 5, 1858, George married Sarah C. Dillow, age 25.[15] They had one child, Maybelle, born in 1859.[16] Sarah died between 1860 and 1865.[17]

According to his pension records, George enlisted in the Union army on April 1, 1862, and was honorably discharged at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, on April 7, 1865. He remained in or near Harpers Ferry for the duration of the war, serving as an armorer.[18]

George married his fourth wife, Cornelia Elizabeth Kincheloe Hickey, age 36, widow of Austin McCann, a Confederate soldier,[19] on June 28, 1865 in Baltimore City, Maryland.[20] They had four children, Adalaide, Blanche, Laura, and John Franklin.[21 22]

On November 1, 1881, at age 79, George signed an affidavit for an invalid pension, which describes him as 5 feet, 4 ½ inches with a fair complexion, brown hair and hazel eyes. He stated his occupation

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11 Tombstone Inscriptions, Jefferson County, West Virginia, Bee Line Chapter, NSDAR (pg. 16)

12 1860 United States federal census record for Jefferson County, Virginia

13 West Virginia, U. S., Deaths Index, 1853-1973 (Ancestry.com) hereafter "Anc.)

14 Tombstone Inscriptions, Jefferson County, West Virginia, Bee Line Chapter, NSDAR (pg. 16)

15 West Virginia Dept. of Arts, Culture & History; Vital Records, Marriage Records for Jefferson County

16 1860 United States federal census record for Jefferson County, Virginia

17 Maryland State Archives, Marriage Licenses for Baltimore City, Court of Common Pleas, 1851-1885, film reel CR 1682

18 U. S. Civil War Pension Claims Files, 1861-1934; App. Nos. 437,384 and 338,169

19 U. S. Civil War Prisoner of War Records, 1861-1865 (Anc.)

20 Maryland State Archives, Marriage Licenses for Baltimore City, Court of Common Pleas, 1851-1885, film reel CR 1682

21 1880 United States federal census record for Jefferson County West Virginia (Anc.)

22 Tombstone Inscriptions, Jefferson County, West Virginia, Bee Line Chapter, NSDAR (pg. 16)

since being discharged was slater. About the latter part of July, 1863, he "contracted Rheumatisus by Exposure in Camp, and in the line of his duty." Apparently, since George's camp was in the vicinity of his home, he went there rather than a hospital when he was sick. To prove his disability was service-related, George, and later his widow, Elizabeth, were required to provide affidavits from officers, fellow soldiers, neighbors, etc. Some of these affiants described George as a good-natured, jolly old chap who played a fife. He was sober, honest, an intelligent talker and best of citizens according to them.[23]

George died in Harpers Ferry on March 27, 1886, and is buried in Fairview Lutheran Cemetery, Bolivar, West Virginia.[24] On April 16, 1886, Elizabeth applied for and received a widow's pension.[25] She died on October 18, 1910, and is also buried in Fairview Lutheran Cemetery.[26] Elizabeth was receiving a pension of $12 per month at the time of her death.[27]

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23 U. S. Civil War Pension Claims Files, 1861-1934; App. Nos. 437,384 and 338,169

24 Tombstone Inscriptions, Jefferson County, West Virginia, Bee Line Chapter, NSDAR (pg. 16)

25 U. S. Civil War Pension Claims Files, 1861-1934; App. Nos. 437,384 and 338,169

26 Tombstone Inscriptions, Jefferson County, West Virginia, Bee Line Chapter, NSDAR (pg. 16)

27 U. S. Civil War Pension Claims Files, 1861-1934; App. Nos. 437,384 and 338,169

DECLARATION FOR ORIGINAL INVALID PENSION

TO BE EXECUTED BEFORE A COURT OF RECORD OR SOME OFFICER THEREOF HAVING CUSTODY OF ITS SEAL.

State of West Virginia
Jefferson County, } ss.

On this First day of ~~September~~ A. D. one thousand eight hundred and ~~seventy~~ Eighty One personally appeared before me, Clerk of the County Court, a court of record within and for the County and State aforesaid, George W. Lacey aged 39 years, a resident of the Town of Harpers Ferry, county of Jefferson, State of West Virginia, who, being duly sworn according to law, declares that he is the identical George W. Lacey who was ENROLLED on the First day of April, 1863, in Company "C" of the 1st W. Va. Regiment of P. H. B. Md Inft commanded by Captain W. H. Seidenstricker and was honorably DISCHARGED at Harpers Ferry W. Va on the Seventh day of April, 1865; that his personal description is as follows: Age, 39 years; height Five feet 4 1/2 inches; complexion, Fair; hair, Brown; eyes, Hazel. That while a member of the organization aforesaid, in the service and in the line of his duty at Maryland Heights near Pleasant Valley in the State of Maryland on or about the Latter part of May, 1863, he Contracted Rheumatism by

Here state name or nature of disease, or the location of wound or injury. If disabled by disease, state fully its causes; if by wound or injury, the precise manner in which received.

Exposure in Camp, and in the line of his duty

That he ~~was treated in hospitals as follows:~~ Was not treated in Hospitals during this term of Service for Rheumatism

Here state the names or numbers, and the localities of all hospitals in which treated, and the dates of treatment.

That he has Never been employed in the military or naval service otherwise than as stated above

Here state what the service was, whether prior or subsequent to that stated above, and the dates at which it began and ended.

That since leaving the service this applicant has resided in the Town of Harpers Ferry & Bolivar in the State of West Virginia, and his occupation has been that of a Slater. That prior to his entry into the service above named he was a man of good, sound, physical health, being when enrolled a Slater. That he is now Feebly disabled from obtaining his subsistence by manual labor by reason of his injuries, above described, received in the service of the United States; and he therefore makes this declaration for the purpose of being placed on the invalid pension roll of the United States.

He hereby appoints, with full power of substitution and revocation, William Wilson of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County West Va, his true and lawful attorney to prosecute his claim. That he has Not received or applied for a Pension. That his POST OFFICE ADDRESS is George W. Lacey, Harpers Ferry, county of Jefferson State of West Virginia.

Claimant's signature, Geo. W. Lacey

ATTEST: John H. Bishop
Elias Moore

The Pension Records of George William Tacey

DECLARATION FOR ORIGINAL INVALID PENSION

TO BE EXECUTED BEFORE A COURT OF RECORD OR SOME OFFICER THEREOF HAVING CUSTODY OF ITS SEAL

State of West Virginia:

SS.

Jefferson County :

On this first day of November A.D. one thousand eight hundred and Eighty One personally appeared before me, Clerk of the County Court, a court of record within and for the County and State aforesaid, George W. Tacey aged 79 years, a resident of the Town of Harpers Ferry, county of Jefferson, State of West Virginia, who, being duly sworn according to law, declares that he is the identical George W. Tacey who was ENROLLED on the First day of April, 1862, in Company "E" of the 1st Regiment of P. H. B. Md Infty commanded by Captain W. H. Seidenstricker and was honorably DISCHARGED at Harpers Ferry WVa on the Seventh day of April, 1865; that his personal description is as follows: Age, 79 years; height Five feet 4 ½ inches; complexion, Fair; hair, brown; eyes, Hazel

That while a member of the organization aforesaid, in the service and in the line of his duty at Maryland Heights near Harpers Ferry in the State of Maryland on or about the latter part of July, 1863, he contracted Rheumatisus by Exposure in Camp, and in the line of his duty That he was not treated in hospital during his term of Service for Rheumatism.

That he has never been employed in the military or naval service otherwise than as stated above.
That since leaving the service this applicant has resided in the Towns of Harpers Ferry & Bolivar in the State of West Virginia, and his occupation has been that of a Slater.
That prior to his entry into the service above named he was a man of good, sound, physical health, being when enrolled a Slater.
That he is now fully disabled from obtaining his subsistence by manual labor by reason of his injuries, above described, received in the service of the United States; and he therefore makes this declaration for the purpose of being placed on the invalid pension roll of the United States.

He hereby appoints, with full power of substitution and revocation, William Bilson of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County West Va, his true and lawful attorney to prosecute his claim. That he has not received or applied for a Pension. That his Post Office address is George W. Tacey Harpers Ferry county of Jefferson State of West Virginia

Claimant's signature, Geo. W. Tacey

Attest: John H. Bishop

Cleon Moore

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War Department,

437384

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, Nov. 10, 1883.

Respectfully returned to the Commissioner of Pensions.

George W. Tacey, a Private *of Company* E, 1 *Regiment* Md. (P.H.B.) *Volunteers, was enrolled on the* 1 *day of* Apr., 1862, *at*
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Harpers Ferry. 3 years *and is reported:* on roll for Mar & Apr 62, present same to Aug. 31. 62. Sept & Oct. 62 absent with leave & Nov. & Dec. 62. absent
Paroled Jan & Feb. 63. Present same to Aug. 31, 64 Rolls from Aug. 31, 64 to Feb. 28, 65 not on file Mustered out on Individual muster out roll Apr. 7, 1865 at Harpers Ferry, Va Name not borne on Return for July, 63 as absent Regt was on reconnousance (sic) Nov. 9, 62. from Bolivar Hights to Rippan Va and skirmishing en rout
Prisoner of War Records, show him captured and paroled at Harpers Ferry, Va. September 15. 62; reported at Camp Parole, Md., date not given, reported absent without leave Nov 11. 62. Ret'd date date not given, sent to Alex Va. Nov—1862.

No evidence of alleged disability

Regimental Hospital records not on file

(Written initials in left margin: E, OD, JO?, BGE, BMP?, WTL?, JAT?, PB?)

M Baclyn(?)

Assistant Adjutant General.
GMulge(illegible)

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Harpers Ferry W.Va.

Sept. 9th 1884

To All whom it may concern

This is to certify that I have been the family physician of Geo. W. Tacey for five years and have during that time on several occasions prescribed for him for Rheumatism and for its sequellac(?) heart trouble—vertigo &c The heart trouble
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exhibited itself in the form of palpitation—pain in the cardiac region &c. It is my opinion that the Vertigo from which he now suffers is the result of rheumatism which he contacted during the war.

B B Ranson MD

(Official Affirmation unreadable)

September Ten 1884

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BUREAU
U OCT 2, 1888 S
OF PENSIONS

State of West Virginia }
County of Jefferson }

On this 1st day of October 1888 personally came Mary O. Sullivan who being duly sworn according to law deposes and says that she recollects George W. Tacey of Company "E" 1st Regiment PHB. Md. Vols well he often came to the tent occupied by her husband John MCO (?). Sullivan and herself She being laundress for Company "F" in said Regt and her husband a Private in said Company. Said Geo W. Tacey had a son Robert in the army who died from injuries received in the Army. Geo W. Tacey who served with Co "E" and acted as armorer of the Regiment she thinks to repair guns. Said Tacey was sick with Rheumatism at times in the service, and not fit for duty thinks about Sept or October 1863. She has no interest in this claim.

her
Mary O. X Sullivan
mark

Witness Signature
Wilson Ames
E M Graham
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Table of Contents

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K.

DECLARATION FOR WIDOW'S PENSION AND INCREASE.

(Under the Act of July 14, 1862, and supplementary act of July 25, 1866.)

State of West Virginia:

: SS.

COUNTY OF Jefferson :

On this sixteenth day of April, A.D. 1886, personally appeared before me, Clerk of the County Court, a Court of record in and for the county and State aforesaid, Elizabeth Tacey, a resident of Harpers Ferry, in the county of Jefferson, and State of West Virginia, aged 50 years, who, being duly sworn, makes the following declaration, in order to obtain the Pension provided by the act of Congress approved July 14, 1862; that she is the widow of George W. Tacey, who was a Private in company E, commanded by Captain W. H. Seidenstricker, in the 1st regiment of PHB Maryland Infantry in the war of 1861; that her maiden name was Elizabeth Hickey, and that she was married to said George W. Tacey on or about the 28th day of June, A.D. 1865, at Baltimore City, in the county of Baltimore, and State of Maryland, by Rev. Benjamin Henest(?), and that there is record evidence of marriage in the Certificate.

She further declares that said George W. Tacey, her husband, died (in the service of the United States, as aforesaid, *crossed out)* at Harpers Ferry, in the state of West Virginia, on or about the 27th day of March, A.D. 1886 of Rheumatism of the Heart.

She also declares that she has remained a widow ever since the death of said George W Tacey, and that she has the following-named children of her deceased husband, under sixteen years of
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age, who are now living, the dates of whose births are, as given below, to wit:
(Blanche Augusta Tacey born September 13, 1869 living at Harpers Ferry, West Va. *crossed out*)
Laura W. Tacey, born September 4, 1872, living at Harpers Ferry West Va

She further declares that she has not abandoned the support of any one of the children above named, nor permitted any one of the same to be adopted by any person or persons; that they are the only legitimate children of herself and the deceased; and that she has not in any manner been engaged in or aided or abetted the rebellion in the United States.

My Post Office address is Harpers Ferry West Virginia

And she hereby constitutes and appoints William Bilson of Harpers Ferry West Virginia, her Attorney, to present and prosecute this claim, and authorize him to receive and receipt for any certificate, draft, check or vouchers that may be issued for the same.

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State of West Virginia }

} SS

County of Jefferson }

In the matter of Pensions of Elizabeth Tacey Personally came Mrs. C F. Ott who says her age is 58 years, that her Post Office address is Tunnelton Preston County, West Virginia. That she was present when Elizabeth Tacey gave birth to Laura W. Tacey and recollects the circumstance well. That she had been very intimate with the late George W. Tacey (deceased) and the said Elizabeth Tacey his wife for many years, and that she saw them often before the birth of said Laura W. and very often after, up to within the past two years. That she was present at the birth of said Laura W. & while she has no data to fix the ex-
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act date, believes it was in September 1872. She was present as nurse, so cannot be mistaken in the identity of the child. The date September 4th 1872 is so far as she knows the true date. He is no relation has no interest whatever in the claim.

Mrs. Catherine F. Ott.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 17th day of June 1886.
I have no interest and my certificate is B.

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Widows Claim
No. 338169
Of
Elizabeth Tacey
Harpers Ferry
West Va

PENSION
JUN 22 1886
OFFICE
Widow of
Geo W. Tacey
Co "E" 1st Regt PHB
Md Infty & Co "E" 13th
Md Infty Wavd (?)
1861, 1863
Affidavit of
James W. Grubb
Harpers Ferry
West Va
~~~~~~~~~

Filed by
Wm Bilson
Harpers Ferry
West Virginia

State of West Virginia) Widows Pension
) SS
County of Jefferson) No

On this 21st day of June 1886 personally came James W. Grubb before me and being duly sworn according to law deposes and says that his age is 48 years that his Post Office address is Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. That he was Captain of Company "B" Loudon Va Rangers Cavlry U S Vols War 1861, 65. That he was intimately acquainted with Geo W. Tacey of Co "E" 1st PHB Md Vols & Co "E" 13th Regt Md Infty from about June 1867 until his death.

That the said Tacey was a very intelligent man a great teacher and a very honest good citizen, that affiant was frequently at the said Taceys house two or three times a week, and saw him probably as an average of once a week for the greater part of the time he knew said Tacey. Tacey was suffering with Rheumatism at times for the entire time named that affiant knew him and was often confined to his house by reason of acute attacks of said disease It seemed to grow worse on him and he finally died of Rheumatism of the Heart as affiant believes about the 27th day of March 1886 Affiant lived within two squares of Tacey for about 18 years. Believes Tacey was entirely disabled from performing manual labor for a likelihood each and every year from June 1867 to c. He had a little Lock Smith shop, repaired locks parasols, &c when able to work. But had it not been for the assistance of his sons, would have suffered for the actual necessaries of life at times. Tacey always claimed he contracted Rheumatism

in the Army. Affiant was not situated so as to know that but believes the said Tacey would not have so stated if it was not true. Certain it is he had the Rheumatism as affiant believes for the entire time affiant knew him and that he died with it as affiant believes very suddenly during an acute attack. Affiant is not related & has no interest in the claim. Elizabeth Tacey is the widow of Geo W. Tacey, their minor child Laura W. Tacey lives with her mother. Affiant believes Tacey had Rheumatism & died with it as stated.

James W. Grubb

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 21st day of June 1886. I have no interest. Affiant JW. Grubb carefully read over the aforegoing affidavit before signing it. He is a Civil Engineer, a man of high standing and entirely credible. My Official Certificate is on file." As affiant believes were inteslined (?) before signing.

Geo W Graham
Notary Public

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State of West Virginia } No 338169 widow

}SS

County of Jefferson } Elizabeth Tacey

On this 9th day of July 1886 personally came Edward T. Kirby who being duly sworn according to law deposes and says his age is 53 years, his Post Office Address Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. That he was personally acquainted with the late George W Tacey husband of Elizabeth Tacey from the 19th of July 1872—he recalls the date from having sold a sewing machine to a near neighbor in the same part of the village as
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Tacey lived—until the said Tacey death on the 27 day of March 1886. Affiant was personally and intimately acquainted with Tacey during those months & years from July 72 to March 1886 was often at Taceys House, and when in Bolivar lived only about two squares from the said Tacey. Mr Tacey had the Rheumatism from the time affiant first knew him as aforesaid, each and every month and year until his death, he was in affiants opinion entirely disabled from performing manual labor for a livelihood by reason of Rheumatism, each and every month and year from July 1872 to March 1886. And died very suddenly with Rheumatism of the Heart as affiant was informed, & believes from his previous state of health. Geo W. Tacey was an exceedingly sober, honest and temperate man, and a very intelligent talker and great teacher, was one of the best of citizens, and neighbors. Affiant has no interest in the claim. c.

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GENERAL AFFIDAVIT

State of West Virginia } SS.
County of Jefferson }

In the matter of Widows Pension of Elizabeth Tacey widow of Geo W. Tacey Co. "E" 13th Md No. 338164

Personally came before me, a Notary Public in and for aforesaid County and State,

, aged years and , aged years citizen of the Town of Harpers Ferry, County of Jefferson, State of West Virginia, well known to me
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Post Office Address.

to be reputable and entitled to credit, and who, being duly sworn, declare in relation to aforesaid case, as follows:

That they have known the said Elizabeth Tacey for the past 20 years, and know the fact that she has not married since the death of her late husband George W. Tacey. They also know that Laura W. Tacey her daughter has lived with her Elizabeth Tacey since the death of Geo W Tacey & is now living with her, the said Elizabeth Tacey

They further declare that they have no interes(sic) in said case, and are not concerned in its prosecution.

1_____} *Signature* {_____James W. Steadman_____

} *Of* {

} *Affiants* {.

2_____} {_____ Chas H. Reiggs(?)_____

NOTE.—In the execution of papers and evidence, whenever a person or witness signs by mark (+), two persons *who can write* must attest the signature by signing their names opposite.

The official before whom papers are executed is *not a competent witness to a mark.*

GENERAL AFFIDAVIT.

State of Maryland } SS.
County of Washington}

In the matter of Elizabeth Tacey Widow of G.W. Tacey No. 338169 – said Tacey private Co. E.1st Reg. P.H.B. Md. Vols.

Personally came before me, a Justice of the Peace in and for aforesaid County and State, Peter Robbinson, aged 48 years and , aged years citizen of the Town of Smithtown, County of Washington, State of Maryland, well known to me to be reputable and entitled to credit, and who, being duly sworn, declare in relation to aforesaid case, as follows:

That he served in said Co. E. with said Tacey and distinctly recollects that Tacey was an armorer and often played on the fife, was a jolly old soldier, But after returning from the battle of Gettysburg Pa. in July 1863 and while encamped on Maryland Heights. The old man put specks on and was some what drawn up with rheumatism. But kept up his fun so that it is hard from memory to tell just how bad he was. I presume he was allowed to go from his camp home it being only about one mile by airline. This was the usual course taken by our officers with those who would not abuse the privilege. And were so near their homes. Said Tacey was quite a favorite with every body who knew him because he was always pleasant and full of fun. It would be hard to tell just how sick he was (crossed out: even had he been about to {unreadable}).

He further declare that He has no interes(sic) in said case, and is not concerned in its prosecution.

1_____} *Signature* {_____Peter Robinson_____
} *Of* {
} *Affiants* {.
2_____} {_____

NOTE.—In the execution of papers and evidence, whenever a person or witness signs by mark (+), two persons *who can write* must attest the signature by signing their names opposite.

The official before whom papers are executed is *not a competent witness to a mark.*

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GENERAL AFFIDAVIT

State of West Virginia)
) SS.
County of Berkley)

In the matter of Elizabeth Tacey widow of G W Tacey No. 338169 – Said Tacey private Co. E. 1st Reg. P.H.B. Md. Vols.

Personally came before me, Clerk of the County Court in and for aforesaid County and State, Martin Green, aged 46 years and , aged years citizen of the Town of Martinsburg, County of Berkley, State of West Virginia, well known to me to be reputable and entitled to credit, and who, being duly sworn, declare in relation to aforesaid case, as follows:

That he was a member of Co. E. 1st Reg. P.H.B. Md. Vols. and knew George W. Tacey well. The said Tacey was a sort of an armorer for the Reg—a good natured jolly old chap played on of the fife did not complain unless very sick. But did get right sick with the rheumatism – and had bad eye sight so that he wore specks. After the battle of Gettysburg in July 1863 while our Co. was camped on Maryland Heights just a little way from Harpers Ferry. Tacey was not fit for duty for some time, do not know whether he went to the hospital or not. He was quite a favorite with the Officers and all of our boys, and presumed he was allowed to go home for inas-
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much as he lived only about a mile from Camp. This was the usual course taken by officers with our men when near their homes. He certainly had rheumatism and sore eyes on Maryland Heights as stated, but not having seen much of him since his discharge can-

not tell the results. It was reported to one a few days since that he died of rheumatism of the heart which I presume was the results of the decease commenced (?) on the Md Heights as stated. He would be jolly even when very sick so that it is hard for me to tell his exact condition.

He further declare that He has no interes (sic) in said case, and is not concerned in its prosecution.

1. P. H. Smith) Signature (
2. J. T. Picking) of (Martin V B Green
Affiants. (_____

Note.—In the execution of papers and evidence, whenever a person or witness signs by mark (+), two persons *who can write* must attest the signature by signing their names opposite.

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GENERAL AFFIDAVIT

State of Indiana}
} SS.
County of Henry }

In the matter of Widow's Case of Elizabeth Tacey #338169 she being the widow of Geo. W. Tacey Co. E. 1st Reg. P.H.B. Md. Vols.
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Personally came before me, a Notary Public in and for aforesaid County and State, W. H. Rohrback, aged 48 years and , aged years, citizen of the Town of Sulphur Springs, County of Henry, State of Indiana, well known to me to be reputable and

Post Office Address

entitled to credit, and who being duly sworn, declare in relation to aforesaid case, as follows:

That he remembers when Geo. Tacey of Co. E. was sick with "Rheumatism" about July 1863. He had some eye trouble so that he wore specks. This was about the middle or last of July, 1863. We were then camped on Maryland Heights near Harper's Ferry W. Va I was a Sargeant in said Co. and had a chance to know him well. He was badly crippled by the "Rheumatism" while in the service. I have not seen him since he was mustard out at Harpers Ferry and I considered him in bad condition at that time.

I further declare that that I have no interes (sic) in said case and I am not concerned in its prosecution.

1_____} Signature { William H. Rohrback
of {
2_____} Affiants {_____

NOTE:-- In the execution of papers and evidence, whenever a person or witness signs by mark (+), two persons *who can write* must attest the signature by signing their names opposite.

The official before whom papers are executed is *not a competent witness to a mark.*

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GENERAL AFFIDAVIT

State of West Virginia } SS.
County of Jefferson }

In the matter of widows Pension No 338169 of Elizabeth Tacey widow of Geo W Tacey Co "E" 1st Regt PHB Md Vols

Personally came before me, a Notary Public in and for aforesaid County and State, Elizabeth Tacey, aged 51 years an d , aged years citizen of the Town of Harpers Ferry, County of Jefferson, State of West Virginia, well known to me to be

Post Office Address

reputable and entitled to credit, and who, being duly sworn, declare in relation to aforesaid case, as follows:

That she cannot furnish any evidence of the date of Birth of Laura W. Tacey (her daughter by the said late Geo W. Tacey) except the evidence of the nurse (Anna Gselberger?) who was present at the birth of the said daughter, and of other who were present. That she did not have a Physician attending her at the time of said birth. That the said Laura W. Tacey was born September 4th 1872, and was the only child of the said George W. Tacey living at his death in March 1886 under the age of 16 years. And said Laura W. Tacey is now living with her (affiant) & has been since her (Lauras) father's death.

That affiant has not again married since the death of her late husband Geo W. Tacey in March 1886 but continues his widow. That her late husband George W. Tacey was not treated in Hospital during his term of service, as he served nearby his entire enlistment---near his house, and was principally attending to armorers duty, repair arms &c in his Regiment & was allowed to go home when sick. So that she cannot furnish the evidence of a surgeon or assistant who actually attended him while in the service.

1_____}	*Signature*	{_____Elizabeth Tacey___
}	*Of*	{
}	*Affiants*	{.
2_ _____}		{_____

NOTE.—In the execution of papers and evidence, whenever a person or witness signs by mark (+), two persons *who can write* must attest the signature by signing their names opposite.

The official before whom papers are executed is *not a competent witness to a mark.*

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No. 262,096 Original

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

WIDOWS WITH MINORS PENSION
BUREAU OF PENSIONS

It is hereby certified That in conformity with the laws of the United States Elizabeth Tacey

Widow of George W. Tacey who was a Pvt. Co. E . 1" Regt. P. H. B. Md. Vol. Infty is entitled to a pension at the rate of Twelve dollars per month, to commence on the twenty-eighth day of March__1886, and to continue during her widowhood, unless she shall forfeit her right thereto. And she is also entitled to two dollars per month additional for each of the following named children while living and under the age of sixteen years, to wit:

	Commencing	Sixteen
Laura W.	March 28, 1886	September 3, 1888.
~~~~~~~~~~

Given at the Department of the Interior this
Third day of December
one thousand eight hundred and eighty nine
and of the Independence of the United States
of America the one hundred and fourteenth

John W. Noble
Secretary of the Interior

Countersigned
Green B Rahm
Commissioner of Pensions

Harpers Ferry
WVa
3-798.

DROP ORDER AND REPORT.

Department of the Interior,
Bureau of Pensions,
Finance Division.

Washington, D. C., FEB 20, 1911

Elizabeth Tacey
(Pensioner.)

262,096
(Certificate number.)

WIDOW
(Class.)

Geo W.
(Soldier.)

E 1 Md.
(Service.)

U. S. Pension Agent,
Washington

SIR: You are hereby directed to drop from the roll the name of the above-described pensioner who died Oct. 18, 1910

J. L. Davenport
Commissioner.

REPORT

Commissioner of Pensions.
SIR: The name of the above-described pensioner, who was last paid at $12. per month to Sept. 4, 1910, has this day been dropped from the roll of this agency.

JNO. R. KING
U. S. Pension Agent

FEB 21 1911, 19

6—833

Descendants of George William Tacey

Carol has provided photos from the family collection for this publication. She has generously donated these photos, as well as others, to the Jefferson County Historical Society Collection.



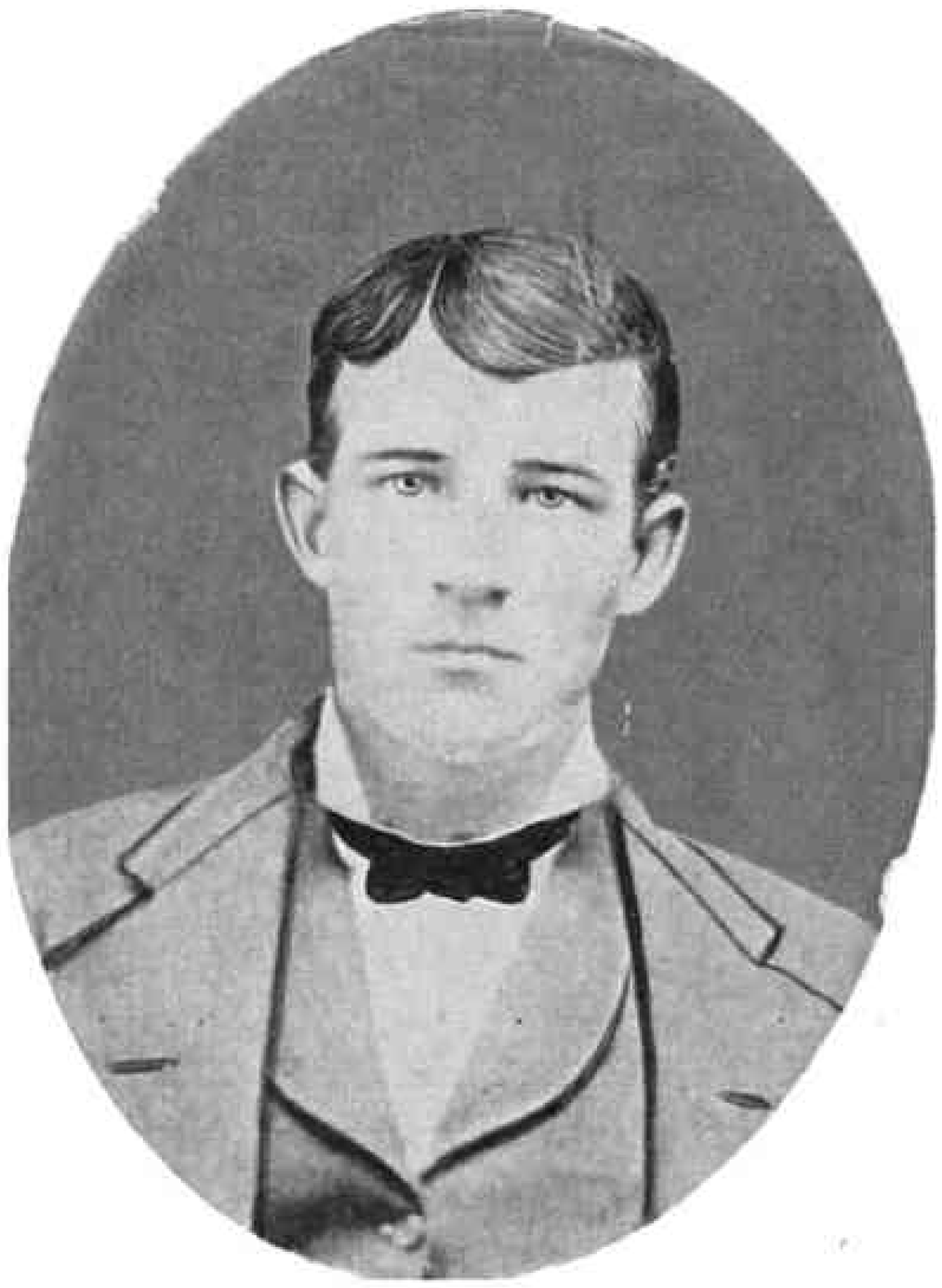
George William Tacey (1853-1939), George William Tacey Decker, Sr. (1889-1964), and Edward Gracen Decker (1868-1935). Taken about 1934 in Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, West Virginia

George William Tacey was born in Harpers Ferry on May 5, 1853 to George William Tacey (1803-1886) and Eliza Hughes (1820-1858). He purchased a home at the corner of Washington and Union Streets sometime before 1900. He listed his occupation as slater in both the 1900 and 1910 censuses. He never married. At various times the censuses from 1900 through 1930 list the occupants of his home as his stepmother Elizabeth Tacey (1829-1910), half-sisters Laura, Blanche and Addie and spouses Edward Gracen Decker and Walter Wheatley as well as nephews George and Frank Decker and Walter Wheatley. George's will, dated July 4, 1907, left his house in Bolivar to his stepmother Elizabeth for and during her life and at her death to

his half-sisters C. Adelaide Decker, Blanche A. Wheatley and Laura W. Hott. The rest of his estate was given to his nephews George and Frank Decker and Walter Wheatley. Family lore says that George participated in the disassembly of and/or reassembly of the firehouse (John Brown's Fort) for the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.

George William Tacey Decker, Sr. (Tacey) was born in Bolivar on August 23, 1889, to Edward Gracen Decker and Cornelia Adelaide (Addie) Tacey (1866-1929). He married Mary Ellen Potts in Charles Town on March 27, 1910. They moved to Washington, DC where they had two daughters and son, George William Tacey Decker, Jr. (1913-1976). George Sr. died July 19, 1964, in New Castle County, Delaware, and is buried in Fairview Cemetery, Bolivar, West Virginia.

Edward Gracen Decker was born on April 24, 1868, in Jefferson County, West Virginia. He was the first child of Levi W. Decker (1843-1917) and Sarah Catherine Dutrow (1846-1872). He married Cornelia Adelaide (Addie) Tacey in Hagerstown, Maryland on October 15, 1888. Edward and Addie lived in the house at Washington and Union Streets in Bolivar where they raised their two sons, George William Tacey Decker, Sr. and Edward Franklin Decker (1895-1983). After Addie's death in 1929, Edward continued to live with his brother-in-law in Bolivar. Edward died August 8, 1935 at his summer cottage in North Beach, Calvert County, Maryland. Both he and Addie are buried in Fairview Cemetery, Bolivar.



Levi Decker, father of Edward Gracen Decker

Levi Winbert Decker was born on September 19, 1843, in Harpers Ferry, Virginia, the youngest child of William Decker (c1810-1848) and Margaret A. Hall (1812-1889). On March 6, 1862, at the age of 18, Levi enlisted in the Confederate Army at Richmond, Virginia. He was captured at Capon Springs, Virginia (now West Virginia), on May 4, 1863, by the 13th Pennsylvania Cavalry and sent to Atheneum Prison, Wheeling, Virginia (now West Virginia), on May 11, where he is described in the Union Roll of Prisoners of War record as 5 foot, 6 ¾ inches, light complexion, slender build, blue eyes, and brown hair. His occupation is given as gunsmith. It also shows he was "supposed to be a bushwacker as he was arrested absent from his Regt. And company. Not on duty and had arms in his hands."

From Atheneum Prison he was sent to Camp Chase, Ohio to Johnson Island in Sandusky, Ohio, and finally to Point Lookout, Maryland, on November 30, 1863. On February 20, 1865, he was paroled at Point Lookout and transferred for exchange.

Levi returned to Harpers Ferry. On January 23, 1867, he married Sarah Catherine Dutrow at Grace Protestant Episcopal Church in Georgetown, DC. She was the daughter of Marcus Dutrow and May Ann Hann. Their first child, Edward Gracen, was born on April 24, 1868. Their second child, William, was born in May, 1870. William's name was later changed to Elmer Guy. Sarah Catherine died in childbirth in November of 1872 in a hospital in Georgetown, DC.

On August 2, 1873, Levi married Frances Adelia Gladman (1846-1918), daughter of Asa Gladman and Ann Parker. They had four children: Ollie Winbert, Fannie Edna, Beulah I., and Fitzhugh Lee.

Levi died in Harpers Ferry on June 19,1917, and is buried in Harpers Cemetery in Harper Ferry.



Aunt Addie and Tacey

Cornelia Adelaide (Addie) Tacey (1886-1929), wife of Edward G. Decker (1868-1935) holding son George William Tacey Decker (1889-1964) Both were born in Bolivar, Jefferson County, West Virginia. Photo was taken in Martinsburg, West Virginia about 1890.



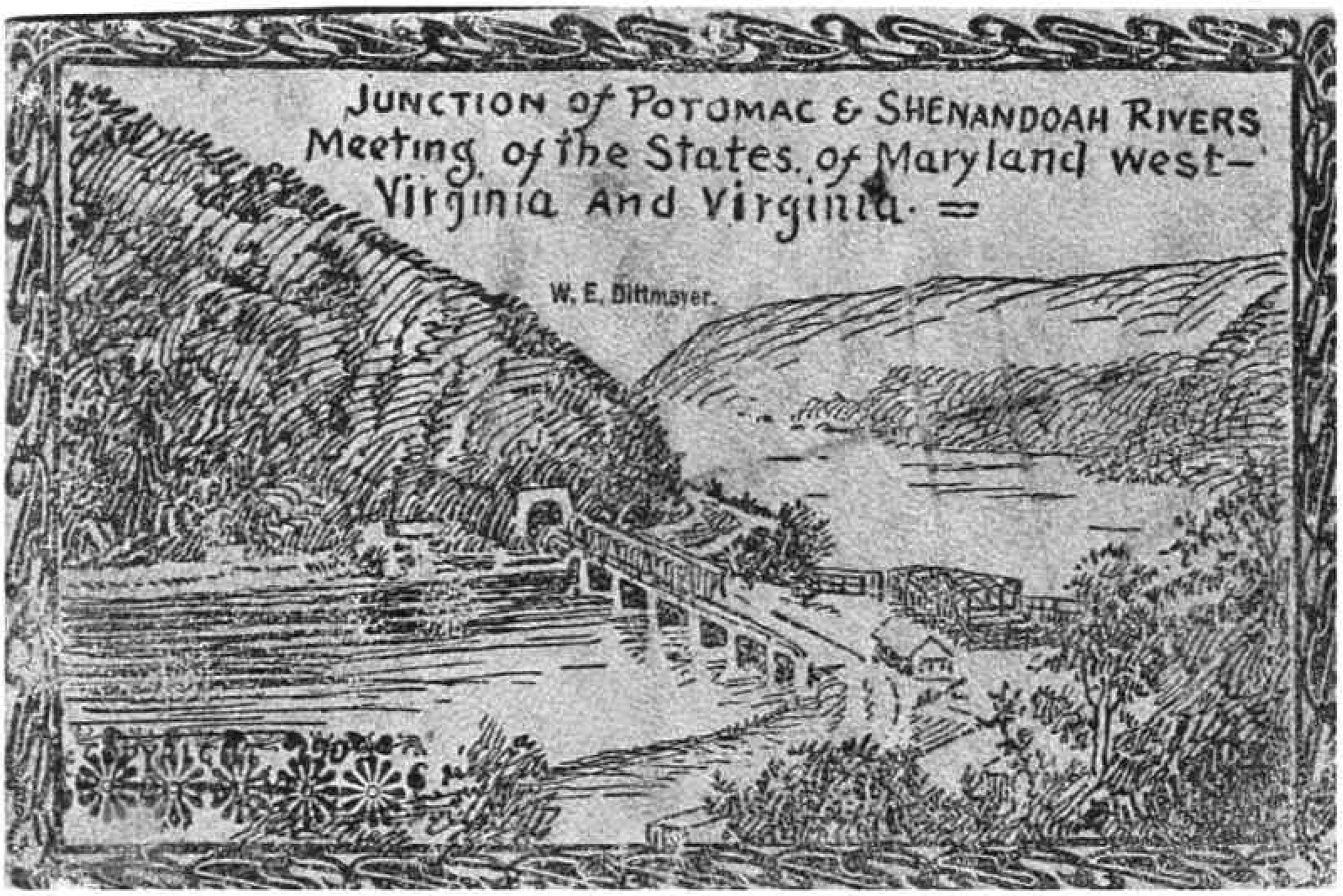
Picture of Pap, George William Tacey Decker, Sr. with inscription "Will you be my _?__ with love and a kiss"

George William Tacey Decker (1889-1964), son of Edward Gracen Decker (1868-1935) and Cornelia Adelaide (Addie) Tacey Decker (1866-1929). He was born in Bolivar, Jefferson County, West Virginia, and married Mary Ellen Potts in Charles Town in 1910. They are buried in Fairview Cemetery Boliver. Picture is dated 1906, so he would be about 17.



George William Tacey Decker Junior and Senior

George William Tacey Decker, Sr. (1889-1964) holding son George William Tacey Decker, Jr. (1913-1976), father of George Tacey Decker, III, (1939-2022) Carol Decker's husband (not shown). Picture was taken about 1917 in Washington, DC.



Leather postcard depicting the view of the Harpers Ferry Gap sent to Buddy from Aunt Blanche

This leather postcard of "Junction of Potomac & Shenandoah Rivers." It is to "Buddy" who is George William Tacey Decker, Jr. ((1913-1976) from "Aunt Blanche" who is Blanche Augusta Tacey (1869-1965) daughter of George William Tacey (1803-1886) and Cornelia Elizabth Kincheloe Tacey (1829-1910).

Born and raised in a small New Jersey town, Carol Decker spent her adult life in Delaware. Upon retirement in 2000, she and her husband, George, moved to Micco, Florida. In addition to some college, Carol earned a paralegal certificate from George Washington University Law School. Most of her career was spent working in law offices until she became employed by the state of Delaware where she was the legal services developer and then a quality control supervisor for the public benefits programs. Carol has done genealogical research since the early 1980's, serving several terms as registrar for the DAR in Delaware and Florida. She co-authored a book, Micco and Grant, *on the early history of two small Florida communities.*

United States Colored Troops from Jefferson County

By Bob O'Connor

Conventional wisdom tells us that most of the men and boys who were from Jefferson County, Virginia (now West Virginia) fought for the Confederacy in the American Civil War. Members of the 2nd Virginia Infantry, for instance, a Confederate Regiment of nearly 1,000 soldiers, were predominantly from Jefferson County and its environs. The regiment, assembled at Charlestown (now Charles Town) in 1861, listed their companies as follows: Company A, Jefferson Guards, from Charlestown, Jefferson County; Company B, Hamtramck Guards, from Shepherdstown, Jefferson County; Company C, Nelson Rifles, from Clarke County; Company D, Berkeley Border Guards, from Berkeley County; Company E, Hedgesville Blues, Berkeley County. Company F, Winchester Riflemen, Frederick County; Company G, Botts Greys, Charlestown, Jefferson County; Company H, Letcher Riflemen, Jefferson County; Company I, Clarke Rifles, Clarke County; and Company K, Floyd's Guards, Jefferson County.[1]

What is much less known is that at least 176 African American men from Jefferson County fought for the Union, as members of the United States Colored Troops.[2] I have compiled the service records of these Jefferson County men including their names, regiments, ranks, enlistment dates, ages, places of birth, and what happened to them.

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1 Dennis Frye, *2nd Virginia Infantry, Virginia Regimental History Series*, H. E. Howard Publishing, 1984.

2 Bob O'Connor, *The United States Colored Troops from Jefferson County, Virginia*, 2017

While we have their records, what is not known about them is just as curious as what we do know. We do know that these 176 men enlisted in 60 different regiments including 48 United States Colored Troops (USCT) infantry regiments, four cavalry regiments, four heavy artillery regiments, one light artillery regiment, plus the 29th Connecticut Colored Troops, the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, and the 55th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry.

It wouldn't be a stretch to speculate that these men ran off together or joined a USCT regiment when their troops neared Jefferson County. In joining 60 different regiments, it does not appear that either of those instances occurred. We can only generally say most of their decisions must have been made individually as very few enlisted in the same regiments.

Those 176 men fought in major battles throughout the war, including at the Battle of Fort Wagner, South Caroliina; at the Battle of Olustee, Florida; at the Siege of Petersburg, Virginia; at the Battle of New Market, Virginia; at the Battle of Deep Bottom, Virginia; at the Battle of Fair Oaks, Virginia; at the Battle of Vicksburg, Mississippi; at the Battle of the Crater, Virginia; and at the Battle of Goodrich Landing, Louisiana.

Twenty-six of those men died during the war, but only two died in battle. Charles Bentley of the 29th United States Colored Troops was killed in action at the battle of Kell House (also known as the battle of Fair Oaks), Virginia on October 27, 1864.[3] Charles W. Washington was killed in an explosion at Fort Fisher in Wilmington, North Carolina on January 16, 1865. The other twenty-four died of non-battle causes including disease. (It should be noted here that far more Civil War deaths can be attributed to disease than from the results of a battle.)

3 Ancestry.com

George W. Pennington, George Robinson, and Richard Burke, all members of the 8th USCT, were wounded in the battle of Olustee, Florida on February 20, 1864. John "Tooney" Harris (28th USCT and 2nd USCT Cavalry) was wounded at the battle of Deep Bottom, Virginia on or about July 27, 1864.

George Harris of the 4th USCT was wounded at the siege of Petersburg on June 15, 1864. Ambrose C. Jackson (43rd USCT) and Harrison Smith (31st USCT) were both wounded at the Crater at Petersburg on July 30, 1864. Frank Walker, 1st USCT, was wounded in the battle of Fair Oaks, VA on October 27, 1864. Albert Washington (5th Massachusetts Colored Cavalry) was wounded in battle in the spring of 1864. All the local men listed as wounded survived except for Ambrose Jackson who died of his wounds the day after he was wounded.

George W. Pennington of the 8th USCT had the distinction of being the only Jefferson County USCT soldier present at the surrender at Appomattox Courthouse on April 9, 1865.[4]

The most notable Jefferson County member of the United States Colored Troops was Martin Robison Delany. Delany was born in Charlestown on May 6, 1812. He was the highest-ranking black officer in the United States Army. He was a Major in the United States Colored Troops.

4 Bob O'Connor, *The U. S. Colored Troops from Jefferson County, VA*, 2017.



Major Martin R. Delany, United States Colored Troops
(Alchetron.com)

Several of those Jefferson County USCT soldiers are buried in the area. Albert Washington of the 5th USCT Cavalry and Jasper Thompson of the 23rd USCT are both buried in the Fairview-Gibsontown Cemetery in Charles Town. The Fairview-Gibsontown Cemetery is located adjacent to the Page-Jackson Elementary School along Augustine Avenue and a few miles south of Charles Town.



Albert Washington Grave
Fairview-Gibsontown Cemetery
Charles Town, West Virginia



Jasper Thompson Grave
Fairview-Gibsontown Cemetery
Charles Town, WV

Jonathan Frame of the 43rd USCT is buried in the Cedar Hill Cemetery in Bolivar, West Virginia.



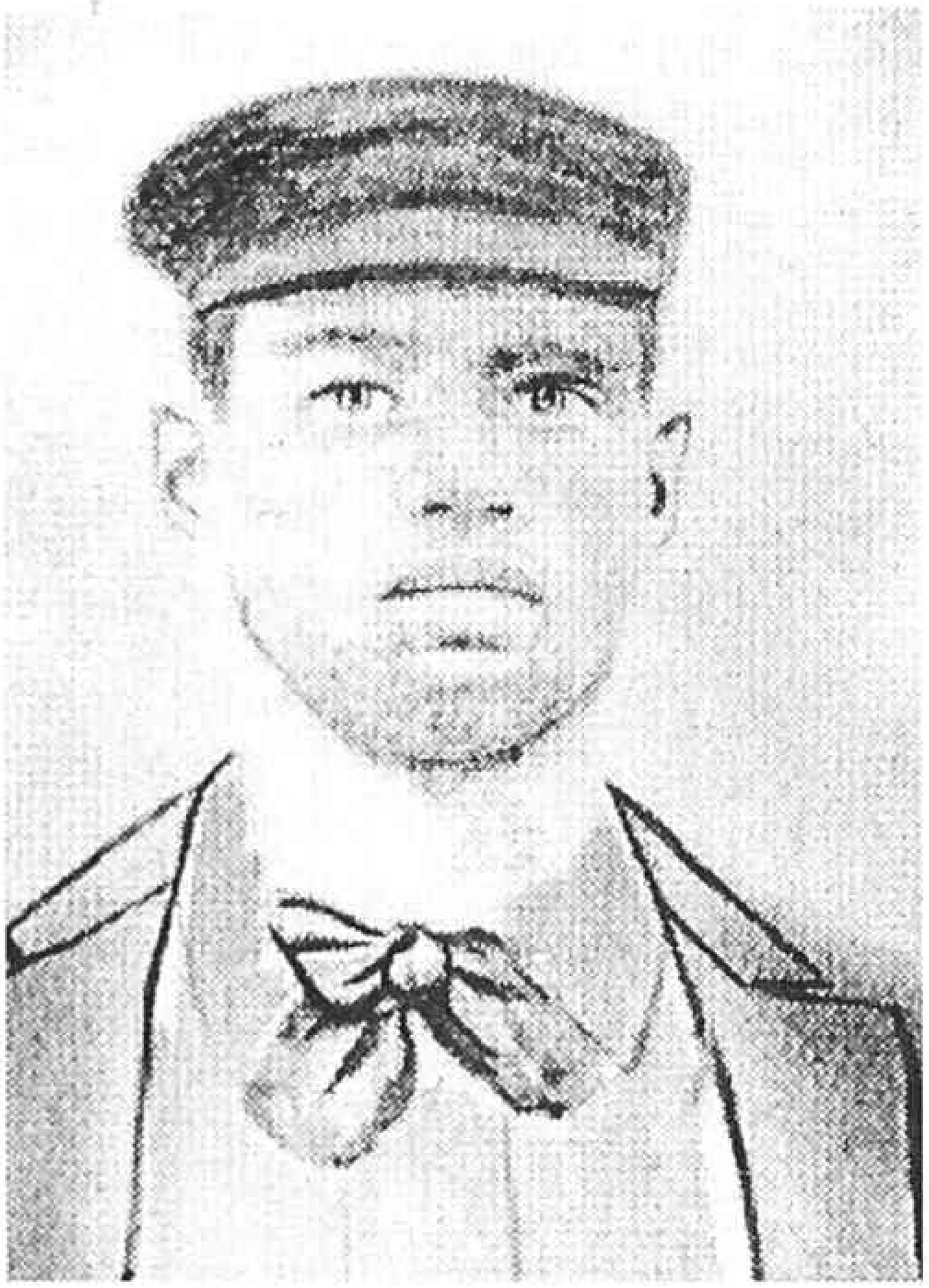
Jonathan Frame Grave
Cedar Hill Cemetery
Bolivar, West Virginia

Daniel Arnett of the 5th USCT is buried in Rose Hill Cemetery in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. (Rose Hill Cemetery is much more noted as being the burial ground for many Confederate soldiers.)



Daniel Arnett Grave
Rose Hill Cemetery
Shepherdstown, West Virginia
(Find A Grave)

The only other local USCT soldier who we have an image for besides Martin Delany is John "Tooney" Harris. This is a drawing of Harris who fought with both the 28th USCT and the 2nd USCT Cavalry.



John Harris
Courtesy: Linda Murr, associate member of Jefferson County Black History Preservation Society

The United States Colored Troops were approved with the passage of General Order #199 by Congress on May 22, 1863, though several regiments including the First Kansas Colored Infantry, The Cincinnati Brigade, the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, the 55th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, the First South Carolina Volunteer Infantry (African Descent), the First Louisiana Native Guards,

the Corps de Afrique, and several other regiments predated Congressional approval.[5]

Soldiers from the United States Colored Troops filled 135 infantry regiments, six cavalry regiments, thirteen heavy artillery regiments, and one light artillery regiment. The African American Civil War Museum in Washington, DC contains the service records of 209,145 black Union soldiers and sailors.

The USCT men fought in 449 battles including over 39 major battles. Twenty-five colored soldiers received the coveted Medal of Honor.[6]

By 1864, ten percent of the soldiers fighting for the Union were black. In the entire war 68,178 Black soldiers died – 2,751 died in battles.[7]

At the Battle of Fort Wagner, depicted in the Hollywood movie *Glory*, the commanding officer of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, was a white man,[8] Colonel Robert Gould Shaw. Colonel Shaw had Jefferson County connections.[9] Shaw, then a lieutenant. in the 2nd Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, was detached to Harpers Ferry, Virginia in August 1861 as part of Major General Nathaniel Banks' army. Their orders were to guard the crossings of the Potomac River.

Shaw was from a well-to-do Boston family with strong abolitionist beliefs. While at Harpers Ferry, Shaw wrote home, telling his family that he "visited the engine house where (John) Brown made his last stand and ultimately surrendered to U. S. Army Colonel Robert E. Lee". He also said he "toured the jail cell in Charlestown that

5 William Gladstone, *Men of Color*, Thomas Publications, 1993.

6 William Gladstone, *Men of Color*, Thomas Publications, 1993, pg. 4 and John David Smith, *Black Soldiers in Blue*, pg. 52.

7 Bob O'Connor, *The U. S. Colored Troops from Jefferson County*, 2017.

8 All USCT units were established in 1863 with white officers.

9 Bob O'Connor," Shaw Inspiring," *Spirit of Jefferson*, July 17, 2019, pgs. 7 – 8.

confined Brown until the gallows swung his body into martyrdom".[10] In a letter to his mother from Harpers Ferry in July, 1861, Shaw said, "What a beautiful place this is. Our tents are pitched among the trees around the house of the Superintendent of the Armory. We look down upon the Shenandoah River. Altogether it is the prettiest encampment we have had."

In a letter dated July 30, 1861, Shaw told this to his sister: "We use the engine house which John Brown took possession of, for a guard house. There are three or four loop holes which he made to fire through, and marks of musket balls on the walls inside. It seems to be the worst place he could have chosen to defend against an attack, for when the doors are shut, it is like a brick box, as all the windows are high up, and his loop holes are so small that they give no range at all to the men firing through them."

Shaw also expressed to his family in another correspondence, that "the government should call on all the blacks in the country to come and enlist in our army."[11]
When the United States government approved the formation of the United States Colored Troops on May 22, 1863, Shaw's father suggested that his son come back home to Massachusetts to lead the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, one of the country's first colored regiments. Although reluctant at first, young Shaw agreed upon the new assignment.

In a very gutsy move, Colonel Shaw volunteered his colored regiment to lead the fatal attack on Fort Wagner on July 17, 1863. It was the first-time Black soldiers had been in action in a major conflict. Colonel Shaw died that evening leading his men in the assault on the fort which was located at the entrance to the harbor in

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10 Russell Duncan, ed., *Blue-Eyed Child of Fortune – The Civil War Letters of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw,* University of Georgia Press, November 1999.

11 Russell Duncan,ed., *Blue-Eyed Child of Fortune – The Civil War Letters of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw*, University of Georgia Press, November 1999.

Charleston, South Carolina.

He was buried with his men in a mass grave at the entrance to the fort. Attempts by the government to re-inter Shaw were squashed by the family, who decided that their son would rather be buried in that mass grave alongside his brave men. [12]

Peter Washington, born in Jefferson County, was a member of Company F of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry and took part in the assault on Fort Wagner, South Carolina. Peter Washington survived the war.[13]



Lt. Robert Gould Shaw
Commanding Officer, 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry
(Elementsunearthed.com)

Another white officer of the United States Colored Troops had

12 Bob O'Connor, "Shaw Inspiring," *Spirit of Jefferson*, July 17, 2019, pgs. 7 - 8
13 Fold3.com service records

Jefferson County connections. He was Francis Meriam who attained the rank of Captain in the 3rd South Carolina Colored Infantry. Meriam was one of the raiders who advanced on Harpers Ferry with John Brown to capture the federal arsenal in October 1859. Meriam, from Framingham, Massachusetts, had met Brown in the Kansas Territory.

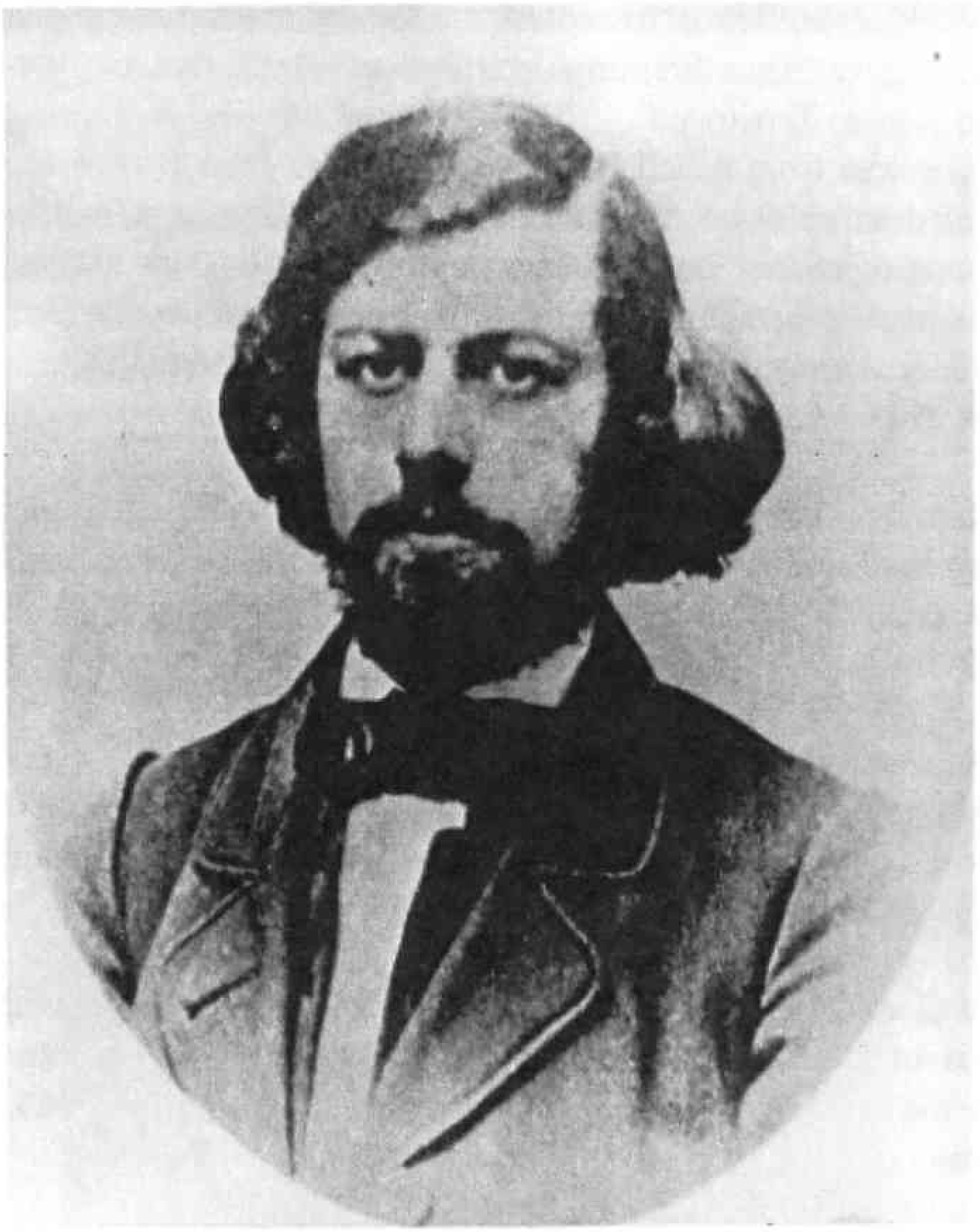
Meriam was from a rich Boston area family. John Brown seemed attracted as much to Meriam's ability to always have substantial amounts of money on his person as much as he was attracted to Meriam as a person who might be a good soldier for Brown's Provisional army. In fact, Meriam brought $550 cash to the Kennedy Farm when he appeared there to aid Brown's efforts.

Meriam's assignment in the raid was to stay back at the Kennedy Farmhouse with Owen Brown and Barclay Coppoc. Meriam may have received those orders because of his physical disability. Meriam had only one good eye – the other being glass.

Meriam escaped when Brown and his men were captured at the ferry, fleeing to Chambersburg and beyond with Coppoc and Owen Brown. He was never captured by authorities who were searching for the seven raiders who fled the ferry.

He was wounded during the Civil War in action fighting with the forces of Union General Ulysses S. Grant. Francis Meriam died after the war was over in New York on November 28, 1865. The location of his grave site is not known.[14]

14 http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/jbrown/men.html



Francis Meriam
(www.johnbrown.org)

Bob O'Connor has lived in Jefferson County since 2000. A full-time author, he has published over two dozen non-fiction and historical fiction books, mostly about the Civil War. He is known as one of the leading authorities in the country on the United States Colored Troops, having published over a dozen research booklets containing the service records of the African American soldiers. His database of USCT Prisoners of War contains 2642 records. He also has published the records of USCT casualties of major battles at Petersburg, Olustee, Fort Wagner, and Fort Pillow.

He was named Arts and Letters award winner in 2021 by the Eastern Panhandle chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. for his writings on slavery and the United States Colored Troops.

O'Connor recently also reprinted two books about the African American raiders of the John Brown raid originally published by the Jefferson County Black History Preservation Society Inc. and recently out-of-print. The titles of the reprints are The Life & Death of Dangerfield Newby *and* The Capture, Trial, and Execution of John A. Copeland, Jr. and Shields Green. *They are available on the Jefferson County Black History Preservation Society website.*

He can be reached through his website is www.boboconnorbooks.com or *via his e-mail address* – author@boboconnorbooks.com.

ANNUAL PICNIC

The Jefferson County Historical Society's annual summer picnic was held on Wednesday, August 7, 2024 at McMurran Farm located outside of Shepherdstown. Joy and Eric Lewis have restored their barn in order to host functions, and the grounds near the barn were perfect for placing the tents housing the tables and chairs. This also gave refuge from the potential rain as the dark clouds were heavy. We were lucky the rain held off until later in the night. The Lewis' graciously hosted the event and welcomed guests to tour their historic home and grounds. A robust crowd and guests attended and enjoyed a great variety of potluck dishes prepared by the members, along with the barbeque from Railside in Summit Point and the fried chicken from Martinsburg. All in all it was another perfect Historical Society picnic with members, guests and a few newly added members. A first for this picnic was the addition of a bluegrass musical group – The Hickory Chickens. This may become a staple as the great food, company and music were a very pleasant combination.

The house is considered the oldest brick house in Jefferson County and is a unique Flemish bond brick style. The barn was constructed around 1880. The house was constructed around 1770 by John Taylor, who moved to Shepherdstown from the Tidewater Virginia area. It was later sold to Andrew Reinhart, who then left the farm to his son Jacob Reinhart. In 1859 when John Brown raided Harpers Ferry, Jacob Reinhart was commander of the Shepherdstown Dragoons. Robert E Lee's written report of the raid mentions Jacob Reinhart as having been on the scene when Lee arrived.

In 1907 the farm was sold to Ella Ashby Lamar Koontz, who left the farm to her daughters in 1948. Sam Donley owned the farmland around the house in the mid-1980s while the daughters retained the house and small parcel. The house and farmland were all sold to Art and Kathy Kennedy around 1988. Eric and Joy Lewis purchased the farm from the Kennedys in 2003.

We thank our hosts, Joy and Eric Lewis, for sharing their restored barn, their beautiful home and for their interesting talk and tours. Also, we would like to thank our picnic committee for taking the lead (without a caterer this year) and pulling it all together. Thank you to Bobbi Roper for all the guidance with the set-up of the food tables and for keeping the lines moving. Also, a big thank you to all my family for being there, especially my granddaughter Olivia for picking up the drinks and manning the drink counter. Bobbi said this is one of her favorite functions of the year. Fun was had by all.

~Barbara Gibson





