

Historical Document

Title: Larkin Poe

Sub- Title: A Short Time Resident of Catoosa County

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Author: Roger Bowman

General Description: Poe and Brotherton Families at Chickamauga Battlefield

Author's Comments:

Other Notes:

Larkin Poe

A Short-Term Resident of Catoosa County

When it comes to the selection of places to settle, raise your family and farm, Larkin Poe and his father-in law George Brotherton made what turned out to be poor choices.



Readers will realize that these two sites, marked by 3 and 4 on the above map are within the Chickamauga Battlefield, in Catoosa County (the Walker County/Catoosa County line in this image runs along Glenn-Kelly Road to the west of their cabins and fields. Poe's field was across the Lafayette Road where the Georgia Monument now stands. Not only were these homes on the battlefield, but they were located where Confederates in Longstreet's Corps broke the Federal line and turned the battle in some of the heaviest fighting of the battle.

It is not known exactly when George Brotherton and his wife Mary (Polly) Carter Brotherton came to live here as they are not enumerated in the 1860 Federal Census but they were living in District 27 of Hamilton County, Tennessee in 1850, where George listed his occupation as "shoemaker". In this census they listed the Brotherton children as:

- Susan Brotherton (19)
- Sarah Brotherton (17)
- Thomas Brotherton (14)
- Nancy Brotherton (11)

Samuel Brotherton (9)

William Brotherton (7)

We know from later census records that at the time of the battle, another daughter Elizabeth had been born in 1854 to George and Mary.

Their daughter Sarah above had become the wife of Larkin Poe before 1860 as they were enumerated in the 1860 Census in Catoosa County.

Larkin Poe

Larkin Haskew Poe was born on June 17, 1833, in Tennessee to John Poe and Mary Rebecca Hinkle Poe. His siblings were:

Robert Stephenson Poe (1822-1886)

James Calvin Poe (1822-1906)

Sarah Poe McKinney (1828-1875)

Francis Marion Poe (1834-1901)

Nancy Poe (1834-1907)

Jessie Henry Poe (1837-1906)

Rebecca Jane Poe Boyd (1841-1919)

In the 1850 Census, this family was living in District 27 of Hamilton County.

Larkin Poe and Sarah Brotherton Poe

They were married in Catoosa County before 1860 since Sarah was enumerated with her husband Larkin Poe in Catoosa County in the 1860 Census on July 3, 1860, before their first child was born that year. We assume that Larkin and Sarah were living in the community near Old Stone Church based on known home sites of neighboring families in the census.

Their children were:

Hilliard B. Poe (1860-1940)

Augusta Georgia Poe Cain (1862-1947)

Mary A. Poe (1865-1882)

Thomas L. Poe (1871-1925)

Arthur Key Poe (1875-1955)

At some point the family relocated to the extreme western part of Catoosa County and took up residence in a cabin on land that they were likely renting, just to the north of Sarah's parents (Mr. & Mrs. George Brotherton). It has not been determined when this move occurred and whether or not it was associated with Larkin's enlistment in the Confederate Army.

Larkin Poe Military Service and the Battle of Chickamauga

Larkin appeared as number 42 on the muster roll of Colonel Joseph T. McConnell's Regiment dated March 4, 1862, it does not appear that he was with this unit when it was mustered in as the 39th Georgia Infantry Regiment on March 20, 1862.

Confederate records do show that L.H. Poe mustered in with Captain Bradshaw's Independent Company (Ringgold Rangers), on June 15, 1862. Muster rolls for July and August of 1862 show that he was "absent – on special service" and that his \$50 bounty had not been paid.

The Georgia 4th Cavalry Regiment (Avery's) was formed with eleven companies in January 1863, using Avery's 23rd Georgia Cavalry Battalion as its nucleus. It served for a time with the Conscript Department in Tennessee, then was assigned to J.J. Morrison's, C.C. Crews', and Iverson's Brigade. The regiment participated in the Chickamauga, Knoxville, and Atlanta Campaigns, skirmished in Northern Georgia and East Tennessee, and took part in the defense of Savannah. In January, 1865, the unit was reorganized and called the 12th Cavalry. It went on to fight in the Carolinas and surrendered with the Army of Tennessee.

The next official record covers November and December of 1863 and records him as a Private in Company K of the 4th Georgia Cavalry and that he was last paid on June 30, 1863, and that he is "absent without leave". This was two months after the Battle of Chickamauga.

Catoosa County farmer Larkin Poe was serving as a teamster in Company K, 4th Georgia Cavalry, in Rome, Ga., when the battle at Chickamauga began. Poe's unit moved forward, but the company did not arrive until after the battle was over. He borrowed a horse and rode to his home in search of his wife, Sarah, and his two children

This account of Larkin Poe's return to his home on the battlefield is from "History of Walker County Georgia" by James Alfred Sartain, and is quoted as follows"

"The moon was far down the west and cast a ghostly light over the woods and fields. The stillness of the night was unbroken except for the sound of my horse's hooves and the hoot of some solitary owl. I had seen an old house near Jay's mill filled with wounded and suffering men, and I had hardly started till I began to see dead soldiers yet unburied, lying in and near the road. I rode on, turning my horse first to the right and then to the left to avoid the thick-strewn bodies. In places I saw where great trees had been splintered by shells and riddled by bullets... Just before reaching the Brotherton house I came upon a scene of death and destruction noteworthy even on that terrible field. I saw a piece of artillery, evidently a Federal piece, which had been knocked from the wheels by a direct hit from our guns, and apparently most all of the horses and men belonging to the gun had perished there for their bodies lay in grotesque heaps around their piece."

Poe rode closer to the Brotherton house, where his wife's family lived. Wounded soldiers filled the house, but the nurses could give him no word of his family. He found his father-in-law inside, and the pair traveled to his farm and discovered it in ashes, bodies all over his fields, and his family gone.

Poe finally discovered that his family had taken refuge with other survivors in a ravine near the Snodgrass house. He found them, along with sixty others, gathered around a log fire.

This group of women, children and elderly had waited in the ravine without shelter, food or water for eight days.

Another account of Poe's return follows and is from a paper written by Fred Brown, entitled "The Families of Chickamauga" which reference the above text as well as "The National Military Park: Chickamauga-Chattanooga, An Historical Guide," By H. V. Boynton

Larkin Poe, who had married Sarah Brotherton, was with Company K, 4th Georgia Cavalry. Some three days after the Chickamauga Battle, Poe was able to return to his home, which was just east of the Lafayette Road, about midway between the Kelly House and the Brotherton Farm.

He found his wife and two children in the ravine, cold and hungry, with the other families, too afraid to return to their homes.

Poe found his father-in-law (George Brotherton) and together they went to see Larkin's home. The house was an ashen heap. He learned that Union soldiers had taken refuge in his house and Confederate artillery blasted them out of the house. Poe observed one Union soldier who had fallen near the house and whose legs, he said, had been burned off up to the trunk of the body.

Following the recovery of his wife and children Hilliard (3) and Augusta (1) it is obvious that Larkin departed at once to Tennessee and settled his family near Ooltewah. Larkin the proceeded to Knoxville where he appears in Federal Records where a appears on a document:

List of Rebel Deserters who have voluntarily taken and subscribed the oath of allegiance to the United States Government at Knoxville, Tenn., between December 4 and 16, 1863, and after confinement for a limited period , have been permitted to go to their homes when the same were situated within our lines, and in other cases were sent to Kentucky, to there be released.

Larkin is shown in this document as a private in the 12th Georgia Cavalry, company not ascertained, and that his residence is Civil District 6 of Hamilton County.

Poe later filed in Tennessee for a Confederate Pension for service in the 4th Georgia Cavalry (which had been absorbed into the 12th).

Apparently Poe immediately took up life as a farmer and by 1870 they had another daughter Mary born in 1864 and another son Joseph who was born in 1865 and Poe had accumulated real estate valued at \$2,000 and was farming.

By 1880 sons Thomas and Arthur had been added to the family.

Returns to Chickamauga

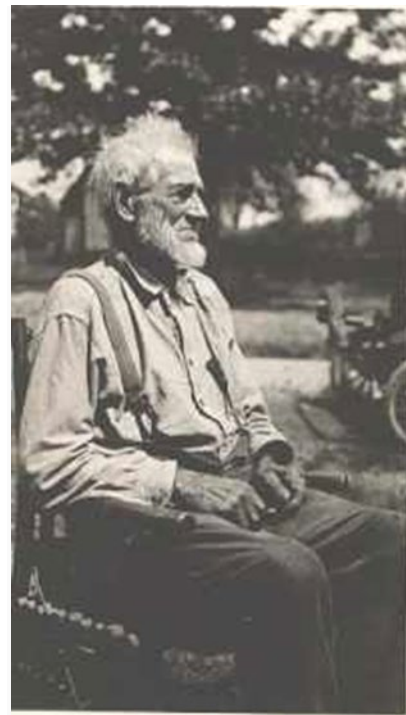
Larkin Poe returned to his old home site and the Chickamauga Battlefield on several occasions following the war and his 15 months of service in the Confederate Army, as evidenced by the following photographs:



Brothers-in-law William C. McDonald, left (1840-1929) and Larkin Poe (1833-1929) standing in front of Brotherton House in Chickamauga Battlefield, Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. These men married Brotherton sisters Sara Jane and Nancy.



Brothers-in-law, Larkin H. Poe (1833-1929) and William C. McDonald (1840-1929) with Julia Snodgrass Reed (1857-1938) in front of the Georgia State Monument erected in 1899 at Poe Field, Chickamauga Battlefield, Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.



Larkin Poe at age 94.

Sarah Brotherton Poe passed away on November 19, 1916 (age 81) and is buried in Plowman Cemetery in Apison, TN.

Larkin Haskew Poe passed away on January 14, 1929 (age 95) and is buried in Plowman Cemetery in Apison, TN.

References

Fold 3 – Official Military Records

U.S. Census Records

“History of Walker County Georgia” by James Alfred Sartain, Vol. I, Published by A.M. Mathews, and J.S. Sartain, 1932, printed by Thomasson Printing & Co.

“The National Military Park: Chickamauga-Chattanooga, An Historical Guide,” By H. V. Boynton

“Historical Sketch and Roster of the Georgia 4th Cavalry Regiment (Avery's)” by John C. Rigdon

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