

## BALLARD GENEALOGY NOTES # 1

By: Anne Ballard Bergsman

In my introductory genealogy class at the National Archives, we were told that "the Pension Files are rich in genealogical material." I had no idea how true that was. A few weeks before the class began, I had stopped by the library of the National Genealogical Society to do some preliminary browsing. A book entitled Index to Indian Wars Pension Files 1892-1926 jumped out at me. I found an entry for Levi W. Ballard, who had fought in the Rogue River Indian War<sup>1</sup>, showing a widow's pension for Mary E. Ballard, but had no idea what it referred to or how to use this information. I found out in my class.

In the class I learned that as time went on, pension legislation liberalized eligibility criteria, since fewer persons were alive to qualify. Sometimes the serviceman had fought only a very short period. The need to prove eligibility meant there could be pertinent family data in the files. Since Pension Files have not been microfilmed, I could consult the original documents if I could properly identify them. I consulted the microfilmed index at the National Archives to retrieve the rest of the identifying information: the particular war, the application number, and the certificate number. An hour later I could consult the file.

Somehow I couldn't believe they would actually find it, or that I would find any information in it. I was looking for a clue about Levi's second wife. I only recently found out that he was married again between his marriages to his first wife (the mother of Irving and William Rankin) and to my Great- Grandmother Mary Esther (the mother of my Grandfather Arthur). This second marriage was a short one--she died not long after giving birth to a son. The child supposedly went to "her family," but what happened to him later?

The files told everything. In order to prove eligibility, my great- grandmother had to prove: that her husband had fought in the war and been paid for his service; that he was dead; that they had been legally married; and that she was his sole surviving widow. Many affidavits were needed to support the required criteria--it took 2 years to prove eligibility (not so long, really, given the mail service at the turn of the century and compared to the difficulty of dealing with governmental bureaucracy today!).

Mary E. Ballard, aged 69, a resident of Auburn, Washington, claimed a "Widow for Service Pension under Act of June 27, 1902." Her claim was filed on October 9, 1902 and was finally granted on December 29, 1904, retroactive to June 27, 1902. She stated L. W. Ballard had been a private and a surgeon in Capt. Keith's company in the 2nd Regiment of the Oregon Mounted Volunteers under Col. John Kelsey from April 21, 1856 to June 27, 1856 [78 days], and that he was also attached in Capts. Wallans, Blakley, Nolan, and Robinson cos. Her claim stated

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<sup>1</sup>The first issue of Washington Historical Quarterly has a description of the Indian Wars in Oregon, including the Rogue River uprising.

that she and her husband were married November 4, 1857; that she had not previously been married; that his previous wife (Phebe A. McConnell) had died April 27, 1850; that her husband died in Auburn on January 28, 1897; that she had not since remarried; that he was paid for his service; that she is a citizen of the United States. The two witnesses to the claim were Aaron S. Neely [sic] and Sarah V. Brannan; both the Neeley and Brannan families were among the very earliest settlers in the Auburn area.

It is not clear which affidavits were included with the original claim. But the final file includes many documents to prove each point of eligibility. Levi's name was missing from the list of Capt. Keith's company on file with the War Department. So the Bureau of Pensions requested a copy of his signature to send to the Treasury Department. In the file were a cancelled check as well as the original of a notarized Warranty Deed selling part of the Ballards' homestead property [this is probably the item my father remembers as "the document my grandfather said was submitted that was to be returned, but never was"], showing L. W. Ballard's signature. The Treasury Department traced his signature and verified that "Levi Ballard late Asst. Surg. 2nd Ore. Mtd. Vols., was allowed pay for 78 days service from Apl. 21 1856 to July 7, 1856 by award #1145, cert. 8080 of June, 1862." The file also includes corroborating testimony from several men who had served with him in Keith's company.

Next, King County, Washington death records showed that Levi W. Ballard died of peritonitis on January 28, 1897.

Finally, numerous affidavits were required to prove that Mary E. Ballard was Levi's lawful widow and had not remarried. A Notary Public for Oregon typed a copy of her original marriage certificate, stating that he had examined the original and it was "old and faded and bears proof that it was written many years ago." A childhood friend of Mary's wrote she could swear they were married because she had been a bridesmaid in their wedding. Aretta G. Condict filed an affidavit that Mrs. Mary E. Ballard was married at her home, since Mrs. Ballard was a cousin of her [Aretta's] husband, A. H. Condict. Mrs. O. V. Roe, niece to Levi, and William R. Ballard, son of Levi and his first wife, both also sent testimony. The current [in 1902] pastor of the Methodist- Episcopal church of Newark, New Jersey, stated that church records showed that Robert B. Yard, former pastor had performed the marriage in Morristown. Somewhere along the line, the second wife must have been mentioned, which caused more problems because the original application had no previous mention of the extra wife between Phebe and Mary. [The original application form had no room for it.] The county probate judge for Richland County, Ohio had to explain that there was no public record of either death because the county did not keep death records prior to 1867. A final pair of affidavits presented the details. The first gave testimony of having examined the family Bible and gave the marriage dates of Levi to each of his three wives, the death dates of the first two wives as well as of Levi himself. The second was from Charles Clark, who stated that Angeline McGoogin [Levi's second wife] was his maternal aunt. He mentions visiting the Ballards shortly before his aunt died; that after her death, her sister, Mrs. Clementine Torbett, took charge of her only son, Homer S. Ballard, and kept him until his death in 1856. (It is not clear if Clementine is his mother or another aunt.)

A final record in the file noted that Mary E. Ballard was last paid \$12 on March 4, 1909

and that she died March 12, 1909.

The following is a chronological summary of the facts I learned or verified in this file:

- . December 24, 1844: Levi W. Ballard and Phebe [not Phoebe] Ann McConnell were married.
- . Sons Irving G. and William Rankin Ballard were born.
- . April 27, 1850: Phebe Ballard died in Ohio.
- . November 1850: Levi W. Ballard and Angeline McGoogin were married at the home of her parents, near Shelby, Richland Co., Ohio. They resided at Rome, Ashland Co., Ohio.
- . Son Homer S. Ballard was born.
- . March 7, 1852: Angeline McGoogin died. Angeline's son Homer went to live with her sister, Mrs. Clementine Torbett. Homer died in 1856. Phebe's two sons (Irving and Wm. Rankin Ballard) were sent for a short time to Michigan to live with their grandmother [maternal], who died soon afterwards. They were then sent to the boarding school run by William and Lydia [Levi's sister] Rankin, at Chester, Morris Co., New Jersey.
- . Levi made one or two overland trips west. One affidavit said he went to "Cal" after the death of Phebe. This was probably Gold Rush Fever. He certainly went after the death of Angeline, when we find him in the Oregon Indian Wars.
- . April 21, 1856-July 7, 1856<sup>2</sup>: Levi W. Ballard served as a private and surgeon with the 2nd Regiment of Oregon Mounted Volunteers, in the company commanded by Captain D. W. Keith, and also was attached to Capts. Wallans, Blakley, Nolan, and Robinson, during the Oregon & Washington Indian Wars.
- . November 4, 1857: Levi W. Ballard married Mary E. Condict at the home of her cousin, A. H. Condict, and his wife Aretta G. Condict, at Morristown, New Jersey. The service was performed by Robert B. Yard, pastor of the Methodist-Episcopal Church, 205 Walnut Street, Newark, New Jersey. Mary Condict had been a teacher at the Rankins' boarding school, which was attended by Dr. Ballard's sons, Irving and William.

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<sup>2</sup>Mary's application says he served until June 27 with Keith's company, but he was paid for service until July 7.

- . Soon thereafter, Dr. and Mrs. Ballard and the two boys set out for Oregon Territory, where they lived for 7-8 years before moving to Washington and taking a Homestead Claim.
- . January 28, 1897: Levi W. Ballard died of peritonitis.
- . June 27, 1902: Act of Congress made Mary E. Ballard eligible for a widow's pension.
- . June 30, 1902: Mary E. Ballard starts gathering the paperwork for the pension application.
- . October 9, 1902: Mary E. Ballard files application #8872 for the pension.
- . December 29, 1904: Pension claim #6862 in the amount of \$8 per month was granted after approval by the reviewer and the re-reviewer. The soldier had filed no claim and was not entitled to bounty land.
- . March 12, 1909: Mary E. Ballard died. Her last pension payment was \$12 on March 4, 1909.

Miscellaneous relationship notes:

- . S. Uretta Davenport, residing in Lebanon, Oregon on August 22, 1902, was the niece of Levi W. Ballard, being the daughter of his sister, Mrs. William Rankin (nee Lydia Ballard).
- . Mrs. O. V. Roe, residing in Everett, Washington on August 21, 1902, was another niece of Levi W. Ballard. Her mother (nee Mary Ann Ballard?) was the sister of both Levi W. Ballard and Mrs. William Rankin. Mrs. Roe also attended the Rankins' boarding school.
- . Aretta G. Condict, wife [widow?] of Mary E. Ballard's cousin A.H. Condict, was living in Washington, D.C. on December 6, 1904.
- . Charles J. Clark, residing in Seattle, Washington on April 16, 1904, was the nephew of Angeline McGoogin [she was his maternal aunt]. He lived at Rome, Ohio and vicinity until September 1852, then moved to Indiana.
- . Mrs. Clementine Torbett of Ohio was the sister [another sister or Clark's mother?] of Angeline McGoogin.