

James S. Town Collection

Guide to James S. Town Archival Collection, Company A, 32nd Wisconsin Infantry
Regimental Volunteers

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Repository

Civil War Museum, Resource Center, Keno, Wisconsin

Language of Material

Material in English

Abstract

This collection consists of 20 documents that include muster roll records, certificates of service, pension and health records, vouchers, applications for widow's pension increases, a few family letters and medical records indicating the date and cause of Pvt. Town's death in 1863.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Use Restrictions

No photocopying please

Preferred Citation

(Identification of item), The James S. Town Archival Collection, The
Civil War Museum, Kenosha, Wisconsin

Provenance

Processing Information

Interpreted and processed by Frederick (Rick) Holtz, 2012

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:

Private James S. Town of Waupun, Wisconsin volunteered on August 13, 1862
and died of disease on October 16, 1863 in Memphis, Tennessee.

COLLECTION LIST:

Doc.#1 of 20: Copy of a printed Volunteer Roster of Wisconsin Volunteers, pg. 474
showing the date Pvt. Town's enlistment and the date of his death.

Doc.#2 of 20: A "Claim for Mother's Pension" in the case of Caroline Town, the mother of
Private James Town of Company A, 32nd Regiment Wisconsin Volunteers
resided in Fon du Lac County in the town of Waupun. The record lists Pvt.
Town's reenlistment date of September, 20, 1864, and that he died in Memphis,

Tennessee hospital from "Chronic Dysentery" on October 16, 1863. It documents that Pvt. Town contributed the "greater part of his wages with the purchase of provisions and other necessities of life for the support of his mother before his enlistment and after his army service a said portion of his wages would also be used for a similar purpose". It lists his property valued at \$1000. Signed by War Dept. Agent, E. H. Talbott, Belvidere, Wisconsin, dated, August 10, 1865. The monthly "Mother's Pension" claim amount was set at \$8.00 per month to commence on October 17, 1863.

Doc.#3 of 20: A personal letter to a Mrs. Brown from a Mr. M. B. Pierce, dated, October 16, 1863 explaining the death of Private James Town. (This letter was probably used as additional proof by Jame's mother Caroline that her son Private Town died of disease in Memphis, Tennessee). The letter notes that Pvt. Town died at approximately 7 A.M. from "chronic dysentery" and that "he had been ailing for some time before going into the hospital". He was not at first considered "dangerously ill" and that Pvt. Town "did not think he was going to die at all". When asked if he wished to send any word him, he said, "He did not". But it was found that "he was so low", that "he was probably unaware of what he was saying." The letter continues to say that "All was done that could be done for him in the way of medical treatment." "He had but little pain, and he died quite easy." "All in his company had the greatest respect for him and he will be sadly missed." "His memory will be cherished through all coming times". "As a mother you will meet him in a world where there are no more partings." "I hope that God will be with you in this most trying hour." "His personal effects will all be sent home" and "all his papers will be sent to Washington immediately." "I remain with earnest sympathy",
"Your's truly,"
M. B. Pierce

Doc.#4 of 20: From the Pension Office, #87.000, "Act of July 14, 1862 Certificate of Evidence of Service and Death, applied by Mrs. Caroline S. Town, mother of Pvt. James S. Town, Co. A, 32nd Wisconsin Volunteers, died at Nashville, Tennessee on October 16, 1863, from diarrhea.

Respectfully referred to the Adjutant General for the official evidence of service and death.

Signed, Joseph H. Barrett, Commissioner,
April 29, 1865

Received, March 24, 1865 by E. H. Talbott, Belvidere, Illinois,
Acting Attorney

Doc.#5 of 20: State of Wisconsin, No.#53449, Rate Increase of Widow's Pension for Caroline S. Town, mother of Pvt. James S. Town, deceased. Mrs. Town to receive \$8 per month Commencing on October 17, 1863. Certificate dated, August 15, 1865, and sent to E.H. Talbott, Belvidere, Illinois, Acting Attorney.
(Kindly note: The bottom portion of this document has been torn off or removed).

Doc.#6 of 20: Record of Service and Pay for Pvt. James S. Town, dated, October 16, 1863, Memphis, Tennessee
To Certify that James S. Town, Private of Captain G.G. Wendorff, Co. A, 32nd Regiment of Wisconsin Infantry, Volunteers of the State of Wisconsin, born in Rock County, State of Wisconsin, aged 19years, 6 feet, dark complexion, blue eyes, black hair and by occupation a Farmer, having joined the company on its original organization at Waupun, Wisconsin, and enrolled in it at the muster into the service of the United States at Oshkosh, Wisconsin, on the 25th day of September, 1862, to serve a term of Three Years.

The said James S. Town was last paid by Paymaster Major Fenno to include the 30th day of June, 1863.

He has received Fifty six and no hundredths dollars, advanced by by the United States on account of clothing.

Signed by M.B. Pierce, Lie tenant, Co. A., 32nd Wisconsin Infantry

Doc.#7 of 20: Dependent Mother's Declaration of Army Pension, Fon du Lac County, State of Wisconsin.
On this Twenty third day of February, 1865, personally appeared before me, the undersigned a Clerk of the Circuit Court, in and for the County and State above named, Mrs. Caroline S. Town, who, being duly sworn according to law, disposes and says, that she is aged 43 years, that she resides at Waupun in the County of Fon du Lac, Wisconsin, and is the widow of Freeman Town, deceased and

mother of James Salem Town who was a Private in Company "A" of the 32nd Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteers, Infantry in the Civil War of 1862-63 for suppression of the Rebellion against the United States Government, and that she has not in any way been engaged in, or abled or abeted said rebellion. That she is not now in receipt of a Pension under any act of Congress, and that she makes this declaration for the purpose of having her name placed on the Pension List of the United States by reason of the service and death of her said son, under the provisions of the Act of Congress entitled, "An Act to Grant Pensions, approved, July 14, 1862, and to commence on the 16th day of October, 1863.

That said son, James Salem Town died at Regimental Hospital, Memphis, Tennessee on or about the 16th day of October, 1863 by reason of disease, known as Chronic Diarrhea Contracted.

That said Private James S. Town left no surviving him no widow or legitimate child or children under sixteen years of age; and that she was mainly but not entirely dependent on him for support: that prior and subsequent to his enlistment he contributed for the same as follows, viz:

"By the carnage of his manual labor for the period of ____ years or more would for his enlistment-which was on or about August 18, 1862, and also by his monthly government pay during his time of service until his death. And also by the County Board for the County of Fon du Lac, the aforesaid which has provided by Law for parents who were dependent upon sons voluntary. By R. Nance. And that her said son was born to her at the Town of Gendee, Rock County, Wisconsin, on or about the 13th day of May, 1844. That she has not married since the death of her son the said James Salem Town, and that he died unmarried.

She hereby constitutes and appoints E. H. Talbott of Chicago, Illinois, as her Attorney to prosecute this claim and procure a Pension Certificate.

Caroline S. Town, Waupun, Wisconsin

Oscar F. Gee and Henry Amadon, Witnesses
dated, February 23, 1865
M.W. Simmons, Clerk of the Circuit Court
Fon du Lac County, Wisconsin

Doc. # 8 of 20: Adjutant General's Office, Washington, D.C., dated, May 6, 1865
Sir:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt from your Office of application for Pension No.#87.080 and to return it herewith, with such information as is furnished by the files of this Office.

It appears from the Rolls on file in the Office that James S. Town was enrolled on the 13th day of August, 1862 at Waupun in Co. "A", 32nd Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteers to serve 3 years, or during the war, and mustered into service as a Private on the 25th day of September, 1862 at Oshkosh, in Co. "A", 32nd Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteers to serve 3 years, or during the war. On the Muster Roll of Co. "A" of that Regiment, for the months of September and October, 1863, he is reported "Died in Regimental Hospital at Memphis Tennessee, October 16, 1863 of Chronic Dysentery"

I am Sir and very respectfully,
Your obedient servant, S. ___ Rieck,
Assistant Adjutant General

The Commissioner of Pensions
Washington, D.C.

Doc. #9 of 20: Personal letter dated, October 16, 1863, Memphis, Tennessee to Mrs. Town,

"Its with Sadness and with much sympathy that I am obliged to communicate to you the death of your son James S. Town. His spirit took its flight about 9 o'clock this morning (October 16th). I was not with him when he died but was with him part of the time last night. I saw then that he could not survive a great while longer. Joseph Brooks was in to see him early this morning and said he did not appear to be only worse, so I thought I would not go to see him till after morning drills. But when we came in from drill, he was dead. He died very sudden but appeared to go easy. Mrs. Town, this is no doubt very sad news for you. Be assured he received good attention. Everything was done for him that could be done. He first had the Chronic Diarrhea and died with the laceration of the bowels. We made an export to send the body to you, but I am sorry to say we could not raise the money. We have had no pay since the 14th but little since then. There is not money

in our company to buy a coffin. In saying nothing about the expense, so we expect to bury him this afternoon with the honors of war; with all honors due a good soldier.

I talked with James last night and asked him if he didn't want to send some word home to his mother and sister, but he said "not at present". He appeared to think he would get well but I think he was not in his proper mind at the time. His clothes will be sent home in due time. Though he did not die in battle, the Union he died for, he died with the energy of his country. But he no doubt preferred for such a death to a death in a hospital.

He was a brave boy, but many a brave boy must serve and the Book says we're _____ attentive to him in life. The health of the company is very good generally."

Yours with respect,
Sargent D.S. Hurt

Doc.# 10 of 20: State of Iowa, Kossuk County, dated, March 10, 1865, A Sworn Affidavit of Character and Personal Reference.

"Mrs. Juelson Chapin being duly sworn on oath deposes all days. That she is now a resident of county and state of aforesaid, and has been for six months all past.

That prior here-to she resided in the Town of Gendee, Rock County, Wisconsin, in the same house with Mrs. Caroline S. Town, widow of Freeman Town, and mother of James S. Town, a volunteer in Co. "A", 32nd Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteers. Mrs. Chapin says that she was present at the time of birth of said James Salem Town, that occurred at Iowa County and State-past aforesaid on or about the 13th day of May, 1841. The former says that she has been acquainted with said son since the date of his birth- for the period of 14 years.

Caroline Chapin

Subscribed and sworn before me on this day of March 10, 1865 and I further Certify that the person who makes above affidavit is to me personally known as a credible person. And that her statements are true as I believe.

James S. Paine
Clerk of District Court

Doc.#11 of 20: State of Wisconsin, Fond du Lac County
Sworn Affidavit S. M Ryce, Justice of the Peace,
on May 1, 1865
Signed and affixed by Meitten W. Simmons, Clerk of
Circuit Court, Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin

Note: This document which is very difficult to read
appears to be a will or official notification of Pvt. Town's
service in the Union Army and that his mother, Mrs.
Caroline Town, who survived him, should be provisioned
as his heir to all remaining of Pvt. Town's estate, and to
include to Mrs. Town, a widow, a surviving army pension.

Doc. #12 of 20: Muster Roll Certificate from Capt. DeGroat's Co., 32nd Regiment
Wisconsin Infantry Volunteers for Private James S. Town,
dated, September 25, 1862 as Pvt. Town's "Muster-In Date" of
August, 1862 in the town of Waupun, Wisconsin, noting that
he signed for a period of 3 years service and was paid a bounty of
\$25 dollars.

Doc.#13 of 20: Muster Roll Certificate of Private James S. Town, 32nd
Regiment Wisconsin Infantry Volunteers, signed, October
31, 1862, Oshkosh, Wisconsin. It noted that Pvt. Town
was paid the amount of \$13 and that recorded "his absence
on account of illness."

Doc.#14 of 20: Muster Roll Certificate of Private James S. Town, dated
November and December, 1862, and that he was marked
"Absent in Convalescent Camp", Memphis, Tennessee.

Doc.#15 of 20: Muster Roll Certificate of Private James S. Town, dated
January and February, 1863, and that he was marked
"present".

Doc.#16 of 20: Muster Roll Certificate of Private James S. Town, dated
March and April, 1863, and that he was marked "present".

Doc.#17 of 20: Muster Roll of Private James S. Town, dated May and June, 1863,
and that he was marked "present."

Doc.#18 of 20: Muster Roll of Private James S. Town, dated July and August, 1863,
and that he was marked "present".

Doc.#19 of 20: Muster Roll of Private James S. Town, dated September and October, 1863 and records that "Private Town died at Memphis Regimental Hospital of Chronic Dysentery."

Doc.#20 of 20; Muster Out Roll of Private James S. Town, Co. "A", 32nd Regiment of Wisconsin Infantry Volunteers, aged 18 years, dated, June 13, 1865, Washington, D.C., officially states that Private James S. Town died of "Chronic Diarrhea at Memphis, Tennessee on October 16, 1863, and "that final statements were rendered".
Signed by W. S. Thompson, copyist.