

Patrick Henry Butler

Written and submitted by Patrick Henry Butler's great great grandsons, John Russell Butler and Stan Butler. Sources include the book Butler Family Migrations, pension records, compiled military records, and Wayne County Courthouse records.

Patrick Henry Butler was born on August 12, 1826, in Shelby County, AL. He was the son of Christopher Columbus and Mahala Cole Butler. On October 1, 1850, he married Agnes Tarrah Daniel in Marshall County (Lewisburg), TN. Records of this marriage were only recently discovered. In the 1850 census for Marshall County, there was at least one other Butler household in the county at that time. It has not been determined if these were relatives of Patrick. In 1860, Patrick was living in Fayette County, AL, near his brother James M. Butler.

The following information comes from his military records. There are no records available that we can find that give the exact date of Patrick's enlistment into Confederate service. He is listed in Co. H., 6th Regiment, AL Cavalry. In an affidavit in Patrick's pension file, he states that he was conscripted and carried into service in late 1863 and placed under Colonel Pickett. It should also be noted that when he entered the CSA he either left six children and an expecting wife, or seven children and wife. There is no more documentation of his Confederate service. According to his Union military record he was captured by Union forces on May 26, 1864, near Decatur, AL. His capture, along with the following dates, is documented in his Union file. From Decatur he was next documented in Nashville, TN. May 30, 1864, shipped from Nashville to Louisville, KY. May 30, 1864, received at Louisville, KY. June 4, 1864, shipped from Louisville, KY to Rock Island, IL. June 6, 1864, arrived at Rock Island, IL.



Roll Call, Rock Island, IL

Rock Island Prison has often been called the Andersonville of the North. Although the death rate was very high among prisoners, this rate decreased significantly after the diseased prisoners were separated. According to information, the prisoners were fed one meal per day consisting of approximately 12 oz. cornbread, 4 1/2 oz. salt meat, and 2 oz. beans. The bread was shaped like bricks and according to one prisoner's diary, it was about as hard. Some days they were fed as late as 2:00 p.m., and other days not fed at all. Rats and mice were eaten when they could catch them. It was reported that even dogs came up missing. It is probably impossible for us to imagine the conditions and hardships of this time in history. (More information about this prison is available on their Web site).

On October 6, 1864, Patrick signed an oath of allegiance to the US, for which he received \$100.00 bounty and was placed with the US (Rebs) Volunteers Co. E., 2nd Regiment. He was then assigned to one year of frontier service. The term, Reb, must have been a way of identifying ex-Csoldiers.



Confederate POW's taking the oath

This is the way it is stated on the enlistment papers. At the time of his enlistment, Butler was described as being age 40, complexion dark, hair dark, eyes grey, and height 5 ft. 7 in.

After his enlistment on October 6, 1864, Patrick is next documented on March 18, 1865, at Fort Riley, KS, as being sick. Patrick states in a later affidavit that he suffered severe frostbite of both feet while en route to Fort Zero in January 1865, and was treated at the post hospital at Fort Riley. We think this was



Fort Riley, Fall 1866

probably meant to be Fort Zarah which was near present day Great Bend, KS. In another affidavit, he states that the frostbite occurred while marching from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Riley. After much thought concerning these two different statements, we think he may have left Fort Leavenworth with Fort Zarah being his destination. However, since Fort Zarah is approximately 125 miles southwest of Fort Riley he probably would have passed through Fort Riley. The unanswered question is

why he does not appear on Fort Riley records until March 18, 1865? Could it be

possible that even after suffering the frostbite, he continued on to Fort Zarah only to be returned to Fort Riley in March to the hospital? Affidavits from doctors in later years reveal that Patrick had no toenails on either foot as a result of the severe frostbite.

On March 18, 1865, Patrick was reported as being sick at Fort Riley. On March 31, 1865, he returned to duty. April through October 1865, he was present on roll call at Fort Riley. On November 7, 1865, he mustered out as a private at Fort Leavenworth, KS.



Fort Leavenworth

At this point we do not know where his wife Agnes and the family were living. In the 1880 Lauderdale County, AL, census he is listed as living in Township 1, Range 12. This extends from near Threet north through the Johnson Crossroads area up to the state line and includes the May Branch area. According to his original pension file, dated August 14, 1882, Patrick states he has lived in the Cypress Inn area since being released from service. Further affidavits from his neighbors lead us to believe that he actually resided very near the state line in the area of present day May Branch Loop Road. Affidavits dated 1887-1891 from Thaddeus Montgomery, Eli Spain, Thomas J. Cypert, all state that he has lived near them for 20 to 25 years. Calculating the dates, Patrick and family probably moved into the area around 1867. Eli Spain states in one affidavit that he was in service with Patrick in January 1865 in Kansas when he suffered the frostbite. Records also show that Eli and Patrick were incarcerated together at Rock Island. They also signed oaths of allegiance seven days apart and served afterward in the same regiment. Both men were mustered out on November 7, 1865. While there is no way to know, it is possible or maybe even probable that Patrick and Eli traveled together from Fort Leavenworth to Wayne County. From 1865 until 1882 there is no other record of Patrick other than these affidavits. Land records have also been searched during this period with no success. The Thaddeus Montgomery and Eli Spain home place locations are known.

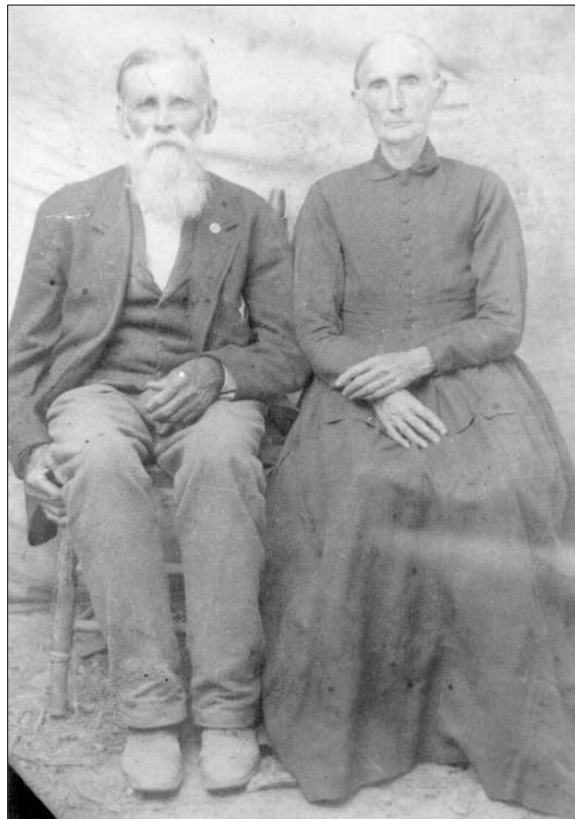
On August 14, 1882, Patrick made his first pension application due to disability or invalid, as it was known at that time. The pension application was approved on August 26, 1882, to begin at a rate of \$4.00 per month.

Apparently, it was a requirement that every so often Patrick had to be examined by a doctor and send this in along with an affidavit from someone stating his health condition and area of residency. Information from doctor's examination reports that by this time his health was beginning to fail.

Patrick remained in the Cypress Inn area until 1886, when an affidavit states his address is District 1, Decatur County, Bath Springs, TN. He may have been possibly living with his brother James M. or his eldest son Thompson Christopher. In 1888, Patrick was living back in Cypress Inn. In 1893, his pension increased to \$12.00 per month. In 1900, Patrick was living with his daughter, Elizabeth Blasingame near Lutts, TN. By this time, according to several doctor affidavits, Patrick is getting in extremely bad health, suffering from numerous ailments. His weight was reported as 122 pounds.

February, 1901, is where we find Patrick's first recorded land purchase. He purchased 100 acres from F.M. Foster for the amount of \$65.00, cash in hand. We have spent numerous hours in the Wayne County Register's office trying to determine the exact location of this land without success. According to Wayne County deed books, it was located on Spout Springs Branch/Weatherford Creek, we believe to be in the Martin Mills area. However, taking into consideration Patrick's health at this time it is doubtful if he ever lived on this land. In 1907, Patrick sold this land to his youngest child, James Russell, who was living very near the area in Cypress Inn where he was probably born in 1869. It is also probably very likely that Patrick was living with James Russell at this time and continued to do so until his death one year later.

Patrick's last pension check, #692124, paid on May 4, 1908, was \$12.00. He died on May 18, 1908, and is buried alongside Agnes, his wife of 52 years, at Mount Pleasant Cemetery, Highway 227, Wayne County, TN. This final resting place we think is within two or three miles of where Patrick and Agnes lived a good part of their latter years.



Patrick and Agnes Butler