

# Life of James W. Hall

Submitted by Dave Seiter, July 2015  
to Eaton County Genealogical Society Military Special Interest Group

MilitaryInfo	ServiceYears	Rank	PoaMiaKia	Info2	Died	DiedAt	Cemetery
Companies "A" and "G" of the 8th Michigan Cavalry	5 Dec 1862 to 22 Sep 1865	Pvt to Sgt	Andersonville, GA 7 Aug 1864 Millen, Ga Savannah, GA Florence, SC Paroled 26 Feb 1865	Life of James W. Hall 1841 to 1931	17-Oct- 31	New Smyrna, Volusia, Florida, USA	Edgewater Cemetery, Edgewater, FL



On 10 September 1841 in Danville, New York James Wallace Hall was born to Levi F. and Nancy E. (Brown) Hall. James Great Grandfather was Ephraim Hall a revolutionary war soldier who died 8 June 1842 in Navarino, Onondaga, New York. About 1842 Levi moved James, His older brother George, and their mother Nancy to Kalamo, Eaton County, Michigan where James' grandfather Elijah Hall lived with his wife Lydia. Elijah became a land owner purchasing for the sum of \$500.00, the north east quarter of section 20 in Kalamo township from John Flory and his wife Aurelia. A short three months later on May 5, 1849 Elijah split off the north west quarter of the north east quarter of section 20 and sold it to Levi. There Levi thrived as a stone mason and farmer. James was following in his father's footsteps until 10 March 1861 when James's mother passed away. She was buried in Mason Cemetery, Eaton County, Michigan. Levi remarried 19 October 1861 to a woman 3 years older than James. 5 Dec 1862 James went

to Marshall Michigan and enlisted in company "A" of the 8<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of December Levi sold his land to his son James W. Hall for the sum of \$300.00 with the provision that Levi be allowed to live out his life on the land. James mustered in 30 December 1862 at Mount Clemens, Michigan and trained at Camp Butler, Mt. Clemens, Michigan from 30 December 1862 to 2 May 1863. They left the State for Covington, Ky., May 12, 1863; their first assignment was Operations against Everett in Eastern Kentucky June 13-23 1863. At Triplett's Bridge Ky. on June 16<sup>th</sup>, 1863, The 10<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Cavalry led by Lt. Col. R. R. Maltby overtook Colonel Everett's command at Triplett's Creek Bridge in Rowan County. Maltby's men defeated the Confederates, and took several prisoners. Then Col. DeCoursey's 8<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry arrived, they mistook Lt. Col Maltby's men for rebels, in the confusion Colonel Everett and the rest of his command escaped to Russell County, Virginia. June 27-July 25, the 8<sup>th</sup> with several other Union regiments, pursued the rebel General John Hunt Morgan on his famous raid through Indiana and Ohio. Following several engagements and a long close pursuit, On Sunday July 26, 1863 routed by his pursuers Morgan fled north to Salineville. By 8 am they were overtaken with 30 killed, 50 wounded and 200 taken prisoner by 9<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry, At West Point, Ohio the 15<sup>th</sup> Indiana Independent Battery of Light Infantry, Kentucky 1<sup>st</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Cavalries, and the 8<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry continued to press Morgan who surrenders 6 hours later in a field near West Point, Columbiana County, Ohio. They move on to Mt. Sterling, Ky. and were attached to 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade 4<sup>th</sup> Division, 23<sup>rd</sup> Army Corps, for Operations against Scott in Eastern Kentucky. At Paint Lick Bridge, under Col. W. P. Sanders the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Michigan, 1<sup>st</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Kentucky, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Ohio and 15<sup>th</sup> East Tenn. cavalry, and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> East Tenn., 45<sup>th</sup> Ohio and 112<sup>th</sup> Ill. mounted infantry, pursued Scott. After fighting the Confederate rear-guard all night, they pushed in on the main body in their position at Paint Lick bridge. After battling for an hour a charge was made by a portion of the Union troops, they captured 30 of the enemy and the wounding of a number with no Union casualties. James was at Camp Nelson two week in August, 1863 being treated by regimental Surgeon the cause seems lost to history. In August, 1863 the 8<sup>th</sup> was attached to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> Division, 23<sup>rd</sup> Army Corps, For Burnside's Campaign in East Tennessee August 16-October 17, they March across Cumberland Mountains to Knoxville, Tenn., August 16-September 2 and encountered the rebel forces at Winter's Gap, Cleveland, Calhoun, Athens and Charleston. In to October 1863 the 8<sup>th</sup> was attached to the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 4<sup>th</sup> Division, 23<sup>rd</sup> Army Corps, meeting the enemy at Sweetwater. In preparation for the Knoxville Campaign the 8<sup>th</sup> was attached to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 4<sup>th</sup> Division, 23<sup>rd</sup> Army Corps. After Longstreet's advance on Knoxville had been effectually checked on the 14<sup>th</sup> at Huff's ferry, the Federals fell back to Lenoir's station. The move was accomplished in good order, notwithstanding the condition of the roads. At Loudon the enemy attacked while the artillery was with difficulty being drawn up a hill. The attack was repulsed with the loss of one caisson. Again at 10 p. m. when the Federal forces were in camp at Lenoir's station the Confederates attempted to drive in the skirmishers but was repulsed. The losses were not reported. In early November 1863, Lt. Gen. James Longstreet, with two divisions and about 5,000 cavalry, was detached from the Confederate Army of Tennessee near Chattanooga to attack Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside's Union Department of the Ohio troops at Knoxville, Tennessee. Following parallel routes, Longstreet and Burnside raced

for Campbell's Station, a hamlet where the Concord Road, from the south, intersected the Kingston Road to Knoxville. Burnside hoped to reach the crossroads first and continue on to safety in Knoxville; Longstreet planned to reach the crossroads and hold it, which would prevent Burnside from gaining Knoxville and force him to fight outside his earthworks. By forced marching, on a rainy November 16, Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside's advance reached the vital intersection and deployed first. The main column arrived at noon with the baggage train just behind. Scarcely 15 minutes later, Longstreet's Confederates approached. Longstreet attempted a double envelopment: attacks timed to strike both Union flanks simultaneously. Maj. Gen. Lafayette McLaw's Confederate division struck with such force that the Union right had to redeploy, but held. Brig. Gen. Micah Jenkins's Confederate division maneuvered ineffectively as it advanced and was unable to turn the Union left. Burnside ordered his two divisions astride the Kingston Road to withdraw three-quarters of a mile to a ridge in their rear. This was accomplished without confusion. The Confederates suspended their attack while Burnside continued his retrograde movement to Knoxville. Had Longstreet reached Campbell's Station first, the Knoxville Campaign's results might have been different. On December 13, Shackelford was near Bean's Station on the Holston River. Longstreet decided to go back and capture Bean's Station. Three Confederate columns and artillery approached Bean's Station to catch the Federals in a vice. By 2:00 a.m. on December 14, one column was skirmishing with Union pickets. The pickets held out as best they could and warned Shackelford of the Confederate presence. He deployed his force for an assault. Soon, the battle started and continued throughout most of the day. Confederate flanking attacks and other assaults occurred at various times and locations, but the Federals held until Southern reinforcements arrived. By nightfall, the Federals were retiring from Bean's Station through Bean's Gap and on to Blain's Cross Roads. Longstreet set out to attack the Union forces again the next morning, but as he approached them at Blain's Cross Roads, he found them well-entrenched. Longstreet withdrew, and the Federals soon left the area. Union forces under Maj. Gen. John G. Parke advanced on Dandridge, Tennessee, near the East Tennessee & Virginia Railroad, on January 14, forcing Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's Confederate troops to fall back. Longstreet, however, moved additional troops into the area on the 15th to meet the enemy and threaten the Union base at New Market. On the 16th, Brig. Gen. Samuel D. Sturgis, commanding the Cavalry Corps, Army of the Ohio, rode forward to occupy Kimbrough's Crossroads. As the Union cavalry neared the crossroads, they discovered an enemy infantry division with artillery that had arrived the day before. The Union cavalry could not dislodge these Rebels and was compelled to retire to Dandridge. About noon the next day, Sturgis received information that the Confederates were preparing for an attack so he formed his men into line of battle. About 4:00 pm, the Confederates advanced and the fighting quickly became general. The battle continued until after dark with the Federals occupying about the same battle line as when the fighting started. The Union forces fell back to New Market and Strawberry Plains during the night, but the Rebels were unable to pursue because of the lack of cannons, ammunition, and shoes. For the time being, the Union forces left the area. The Confederates had failed to destroy or capture the Federals as they should have. The 8<sup>th</sup> caught up to Sherman's forces on their push to Atlanta at Big Shanty and now were attached to the 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Dept. of the Ohio, they saw action at Spring Place before being attached to the 3rd Brigade, Cavalry Division, District of

Kentucky, Dept. of the Ohio, seeing action at Kennesaw Mountain, Sweetwater, Chattahoochee River, Dark Corners and Campbellton. At Decatur, Georgia on the morning of 27 July 1864 General George Stoneman with 2112 men left to meet with General Edward McCook to destroy the railroad at Griffin, Georgia per orders from General Sherman. General Stoneman for whatever reason changed his orders on his own not joining up with General McCook but proceeded south destroying railroads, rolling stock and private property in the communities of Gordon, Emmet Station, McIntyre and Toombsboro. At the Ocmulgee River east of Macon he was met and repelled by General Howell Cobb who commanded Georgia Militia and Home Guard units. After receiving misinformation about reinforcements to General Cobb, General Stoneman turned toward Andersonville only to run into Alfred Inverson's division, at Sunshine church, who were sent in pursuit of General Stoneman from Atlanta by General Wheeler. Quoting William R. Scaife in *The Campaign for Atlanta*. "At 4:00 p.m. General Stoneman assembled his staff and brigade commanders and informed them that he would himself remain with Biddle's brigade and hold off the enemy" until Adams and Capron could cut their way out with their command. James Hall was a corporal under Capron. At Kings Tanyard, 85 men from William Breckinridge's confederate Kentucky Brigade overtook them on August 3. Cols. Horace Capron later wrote an account in *Odyssey* "I had scarcely lost consciousness in sleep, when I was suddenly aroused by the most unearthly yells and screams, mingled with pistol shots. It appears that a considerable force of the enemy came up on our rear...flanked Davidson's pickets, which was probably asleep, and charged directly across the negro camp upon us. Every darkey, mule, horse and donkey were driven pell-mell upon our poor, worn out troops. Brave men as ever drew a saber in battle ran past their officers in confused, frenzied mass towards the bridge [over Mulberry Creek] As the crowd poured upon it, the bridge gave way with a crash, Followed by the cries of the wounded men. Then commenced another haphazard ride, which not only tried the mettle of our steeds, but our own nerves as well. Ditch after ditch, fence after fence, was scaled, thickets of briars and scrubby trees were brushed through at breakneck speed, while now and then a rifle ball cut the branches from around us, but the thoughts of the terrible suffering in a rebel prison-pen had by far the most powerful influence to stimulate us to renewed exertion." Corporal James Hall and Sergeant George O. Scott, both of Co "A", were captured in a cave near Decatur Georgia on 7 Aug 1864. When he was captured James had a gold watch which he was allowed to keep. Arriving at Andersonville he found that he could trade his gold watch for green onions to stave off the survey. Food was another issue for him; he reported to his granddaughter he had the Jawbone of a dog to eat, whether that was figuratively or literally I can not say but it is widely known the condition at that time. As with others, the solution for him and his friend was to carry dead bodies out for burial gaining extra blankets and rations. With the fall of Atlanta the confederates move many of their prisoners to Millen, Savannah Georgia and then on to Florence, South Carolina and finally James was paroled 26 February 1865 at N.E Bridge North Carolina, he was sent from Camp C.G.B. Maryland then to Camp Chase Ohio on 11 March 1865 arriving 13 March 1865. He was furloughed on 15-16 March 1865 for 30 days. He returned 26 April 1865 and was moved to Company "E" and promoted to Sergeant. He was sent to the

Provost Marshal at Columbus, Ohio 3 May 1865 for being absent without leave. March to April, his 30 day leave paper work was misplaced. He complained of rheumatism of the back and hips from exposure and sleeping on the ground but returned to the 8th as Sergeant of Company "E" where he was discharged at Pulaski, Tennessee 22 September 1865. After the war he returned to find that his father acting as his attorney had sold his land to Joel Bailey for \$600.00 in May of 1864. I make the assumption that James was unaware of the sale until his return home because on the 2nd of May 1866 James sold the same land to the same Joel Bailey for \$25.00. James lived for a time with his brother George in Eaton Co., Michigan About Dec 1869 he married Nancy Haight. Nancy was the younger sister of his step mother. Nancy died 29 November 1877 after giving him one son George W. Hall. He married Clara A. Knowlton in Eaton Rapids, Eaton, Michigan on 28 March 1878 and moved to the Charlevoix area building a log cabin there. Clara was the widow of Hiram Bradford, James's Aunt's son who was in the 13<sup>th</sup> Michigan he returned home and fathered two children before dying. James and Clara raised her two children, his one and having two more together. James moved to Port Orange, Florida in 1900. Clara died in Chattanooga, Tennessee on 13 March 1913. James finally settled in New Smyrna, Florida in 1918 where on 17 October 1931 at the age of just over 90 years old he went to his maker. The Spanish American War Veterans performed the burial with a firing squad and bugler from The American Legion Post in Edgewater. His stone is in Edgewater cemetery, Edgewater, Florida.

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Sources:

The Campaign for Atlanta by William R Scaife

The National Park Service.

The National Archives and Records Administration

James' Granddaughter, Mary (Hall) Kurtz

James' Grandson, Lyman Hall

Obituary in New Smyrna Daily News from New Smyrna, Florida

and numerous on-line sources for information about the 8th Michigan's history.