

McCallie Letter to Judge Lusk Recalls Bradley's History as Guerilla Battleground in Civil War

Judge's Ancestor Had Home Burned in Farm Defense

Former Neighbor Writes Jurist for Information

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BY BARNARD COOPER

Surring history of the bitterness of Civil War days in Bradley County, including the killing of a foraging raider by a determined old gentleman who was the grandfather of Judge Charles W. Lusk, of the Hamilton County criminal court, was brought to light in recent correspondence between Judge Lusk and a former Tennessean, who wrote for information on events he vaguely remembered having heard of in childhood.

The ex-Tennessean, Joseph Madison McCallie, assistant to the superintendent of the New Jersey State House for Boys, at Summit, N. J., said his great-great-grandfather was the great-grandfather of the well-known McCallies who operate the McCallie School in this city.

"My father, Andrew Jackson McCallie, with his 10 children, lived, during the Civil War, a few miles from Cleveland, Tenn., and had as neighbors the Weatherlys and the Lusks," Mr. McCallie wrote. "When I was born, in 1863, my father named me, I am told, after your father, Joseph. Hence my excuse for asking you a few questions.

"Was the Lusk that shot and killed a Confederate soldier in the road near where our parents lived a relative of yours, and what became of him? My sister, Mary Ann, age 15, was at the burial of this killed soldier and has said that your sister was there also. Where could I get the story of the killing and burial of this particular soldier killed by a Mr. Lusk?

GUERRILLAS RECALLED

"I remember, as a child, seeing a small book entitled 'Bradley County During the Civil War.' It contained some gruesome pictures of guerrilla depredations at that time. Do you remember such a book and can you tell me where I might get a copy with such a title or a similar title?"

Judge Lusk informed McCallie in his reply that his father's diary showed that when he was teaching school at Kelley's Chapel in 1861 several children of A. J. McCallie were among his pupils.

"There were never more than five from his family and rarely less than three," Judge Lusk wrote of the McCallies in his father's school. "The school seems to have closed on Friday, May 10, 1861. On that day there were two in attendance from the McCallie home.

"Father's career as a teacher then ended until after the Civil War. He and two of his brothers, Samuel I. Lusk and Lavander C.

Lusk, entered the Federal army. When he was mustered out in June, 1865, Father was a captain in Col. James P. Brownlow's First Tennessee Union Cavalry. The colonel was a son of William Gannaway Brownlow, the 'Fighting Parson.'"

LUSK KILLED RAIDER

Mr. McCallie went to the right source for information about the killing of the Confederate soldier—if he was a Confederate soldier—for the man was killed by Judge Lusk's grandfather, Joseph Lusk.

At that time Bradley County was a sort of 'no man's land,' caught between Union and Confederate armies, and the citizens had been harassed by bands of guerrilla raiders, the judge explained.

The Lusk farm, where the grandfather, then almost 74 years old, was struggling to keep his family alive, had been raided several times and much property had been taken away or destroyed. Early in February, 1864, another band of men, wearing Confederate uniforms, appeared at the place.

DEFENDS PROPERTY

The old gentleman, an excellent shot and a veteran of the War of 1812, was determined to defend what he had left.

Judge Lusk's letter to Mr. McCallie continues:

"He shot the Confederate soldier after calling to them to halt. They had been chasing his grandchildren, who were going hard to get away with the few remaining mules

with which he and his young grandsons were trying to raise a crop and thus keep life in them.

"Early in the 1890s James A. Lambdin, who by that time had come in possession of the old Lusk farm, was digging out clay for a brick kiln and uncovered the skeleton of this dead soldier. I went to see him. He had been an immensely tall and large man. His remains were reinterred and I suppose they are still there."

LUSK HOME BURNED

The following night, the judge added, a large detachment came in search of his grandfather and, failing to find him, burned his home.

Judge Lusk wrote that the book asked about by Mr. McCallie, now very rare, was "History of the Rebellion in Bradley County, East Tennessee," by J. S. Hurlburt, published in 1866.

Another episode related in Judge Lusk's letter throws revealing light on the character of his ancestor. After telling of the killing of the raider and the burning of his grandfathers' home in reprisal, the judge wrote:

"In the meantime, Grandfather went to see my father, who was with his regiment in upper East Tennessee. There, Grandfather, in real earnest, demanded of Col. Brownlow to be allowed to enlist in his regiment despite his 74 years—a demand which was laughingly declined—upon which Grandfather swore he could outshoot any man the colonel had and dared him to a test then and there!"

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