

Princeton Clarion newspaper article on Perryville, 25 Oct 1862

The attached article appeared in the *Princeton Clarion*, Princeton IN, Sat 25 Oct 1862, on page 2 (accessed on Newspapers.com 2 / 4 at <https://www.newspapers.com/image/437883987/> ). I am grateful to Tim Beckman for this citation, which appears in his excellent article, "The 42nd Indiana At The Battle Of Perryville, 'Baptism of Fire,'" Revision I - March 2004, at [http://freepages.rootsweb.com/~indiana42nd/history/42nd\\_History\\_Perryville.htm#\\_ednref17](http://freepages.rootsweb.com/~indiana42nd/history/42nd_History_Perryville.htm#_ednref17) .

The article is titled "Correspondence from Buell's Army, Crab Orchard, Kentucky, Oct 17th, 1862" and is signed "Tent No. 1, Co. E, 42nd Reg. Ind. Vols." It appears to have been written by a person who was present during the battle, most likely a member of Company E, possibly ("Tent No. 1?") the company commander, Captain French.

Attached are the following copies from Newspapers.com:

- the full page containing the Oct 17th letter;
- an extract of the page with columns 1 to 3; and
- an extract from column 2 with the description of William Mathews' death;
- an extract from column 3 with a casualty that includes William Mathews as Killed, and Cornelius Mathews as Wounded in the thigh. The extracts from columns 2 and 3 are marked with red comment lines in the full-page and three-column copies. [Note: This is the only reference I have seen that mentions Cornelius' being wounded at Perryville.]

For purposes of this project, the important references in columns 2 and 3 are transcribed as follows:

In column 2, the paragraph beginning about 60% down the page describes the death of William Mathews:

[After being ordered to withdraw from the creek up the hill to the main Union line near the Squire Bottom farm...] "This was immediately done by a greater part of the regiment, but the command not being generally heard, Capt. French called on his men to rally and stand by their colors (our company is the color company.) This we did, and thus our company remained in the hollow some minutes after the balance of the regiment had gone – Major Shanklin having lost his horse, and observing our company still there with a perfect herd of the enemy approaching, came back on foot and told us we must get out of that place. In falling back we had to cross the road and climb a steep bank into a field, where both the musketry and cannon had fair play upon us. But we went over with our flag flying, although the whole atmosphere was hissing and quivering with the missiles of destruction which the enemy with savage yells poured upon us. Here it was that several of our men were wounded, and here too William Mathews of Owensville turned and fired upon the enemy who were fast closing behind us. But it was the last shot for the brave boy, for a ball immediately entered his forehead passed through his head killing him instantly. His death was instantaneous and evidently without pain, as he simply shrank back against the fence, without a single distortion of feature or a groan. A few minutes afterwards Major Shanklin was wounded in the head, and borne off the field by some members of our company."

In column 3, the paragraphs beginning about 30% down the page list the casualties in Company E. (I have changed the format to a list for ease of reading):

“The loss in Capt. French’s company is as follows:

Killed: William Mathews and Robert Mooney.

Wounded:

R. B. Lucas, severely in the thigh;

Andrew Spence, in the [sic] sholder;

Cornelius Mathews, in the thigh;

George Reid in the foot;

Robert Richardson, in the head;

John Patterson, in the leg;

George Hilman, slightly in the thigh;

Thomas J. Ward, slightly in the arm;

William J. Pruett, slightly in the hand.

Corporal John R. Dougherty and Simeon Weidenhammer were taken prisoner and released on parole.

None of the wounds will prove fatal to life in our company. I understand that in Patterson’s case amputation has become necessary, and has been successfully performed.”

In the two following photographs that I took in 2009, the treeline running right to left down in the lower ground runs along the small creek where members of the 42nd Indiana were trying to collect water to fill canteens for the unit when the Confederate attack began. The point from which the photos were taken reflect the general area in which the main Union lines were located along the higher ground. Many of the 42nd's casualties, including William Mathews, occurred during the 42nd's attempt to move back up the hill to their main lines while under intense Confederate rifle and artillery fire. One of the primary landmarks in this part of the battlefield was then and is now Squire Bottom's farm house on the right side of the photo. Barely visible in the first photo but more visible in the second are the markers denoting the 42nd's place in the battle, two white objects near the creek at the bottom of the hill. These markers were placed in 2003 by Tim Beckman and other friends and descendants of members of the 42nd. Tim's excellent article on Perryville includes additional photos, at [http://freepages.rootsweb.com/~indiana42nd/history/42nd\\_History\\_Perryville.htm](http://freepages.rootsweb.com/~indiana42nd/history/42nd_History_Perryville.htm) .













SATURDAY MORNING, ::::: OCTOBER 29, 1862  
WILLIAM KURTZ, EDITOR.

**THE ELECTIONS**—The 8th of January Democrats have elected their State ticket by 9,000 majority or upwards. The Legislature is sufficiently democratic to assure a U. S. Senator—some democrat we hope—that will never suffer himself to become, not even "for once in his life," a sectional man. They have the matter now in their own hands, and can wield it upon the old landmarks of the Jacksonian Democracy. If they will and save the Union by a hearty co-operation in "prosecuting the war to a speedy and honorable close." Will they do it?

—This appears to be growing up among our people a feeling of distrust in me, not distrust at the want of energy in our leading Generals—Baell, Hallock, McCiellan, &c. Nor is it to be wondered at when we see the first army in the world lying in camp on the Upper Potomac and the other escorting Bragg into Tennessee—allowing their supplies to be gobbled up and burnt by a few thousand cavalry in their rear. These things may be all strategy and all in accordance with military science but we cannot see it. We fear our army is much demoralized for the want of proper discipline in the ranks.

A great many causes are assigned for the defeat of the Union candidates at the late election in this State, and among all of them the President's plan of "compensation emancipation" as carried out in the District of Columbia, as I urged in his recent Proclamation, had more to do with it than all other causes combined. It is visionary and impractical, and will not be sustained by the people of the northeast.

—We leave before us the "Union Comet," edited by friend Ringier, and printed on common wrapping paper at Bardonia, Ky. It is published regularly every now and then, at the most convenient place, at a small price in country *parcels*, such as *lightning-rocks*, *corn whiskey*, *Kentucky apple-jack*, *second-handed too* hicks or *connoisseurs' mules*. Succeed to the enterprise and! hope to receive the next number to *believed* from the heart of Dixie if itself's army does not go into winter quarters at Louisville, Kentac' y!

UNION DEMOCRAT.—The *Chicago Union Democrat* has published an editorial in the *Indianapolis Journal*, the Union party of Indiana owes a debt of gratitude to the patriotic Democrats who fought and died with it, which can never be paid. Nothing more wisely, more patriotic, has ever been exhibited in the history of our country. Though the conduct in the late contest was not perfect, the Union party at a time when it was not known whether any opposing party would dare to trust itself on our troubled country, it rescued its troubles, when a faction was almost everywhere, when treason looked down upon the loyalists, and dark times, when the people were miserably ignorant of the opposition and why they were at terrible war, and had to face the bitter disappointment of seeing their party fall away from them, and bear the reproaches of those who had no malice or patriotism to stem the tide; though assailed with the elements of a bad friendship and allowed nothing for the honorable motives that impelled them; it was a manner isolated not clamored by the party they acted with and repudiated by the others, having nothing to hope for but the integrity of their nation and the safety of the Union, and yet they stood firm on the ground they had to take, and fell there as glorious dead of patriots as ever lived any land. In the contest none have been so active as they, so persistent, unflinching and alive to the importance of the cause. They never understood the danger to be to the Union, the Republicans did, still countless numbers have awoken them too late to repair their error.

The rebels held a council of war at Camp Dick Robinson, previous to their retreat. The general disposition was to remain and fight. Bragg alone objected saying he would not fight Buell in Kentucky. Buckner responded, "Then, I suppose I must again be exiled from Kentucky." Cheatham, Polk, Hardee, Buckner, Smith, and others, were unanimously for fight. Bragg assumed the responsibility of overruling their decision, and ordered a retreat.

The New Albany Ledger says the result of the campaign in Kentucky, up to Tuesday, have been about as follows: The Federal loss in all the skirmishing, and at Perryville, is about 4,500 in killed, wounded and prisoners. The rebel loss in killed including all engagements, is 2,200 3,500 wounded, and 5,000 prisoners. (lost and ret.) Total rebel loss—10,700.

CRAB ORCHARD, KENTUCKY. }  
Oct. 17th, 1862. }

Ed. Clarion:—I suppose that our friends at home would perhaps like very well to read a few lines from the 421, and as we have lately been in quite a sharp little battle, no doubt a letter will be more interesting than at another time.

We left Louisville on the 1st inst. and composed a part of the army corps No. 12, which is under command of Maj. Gen. McCook. Gen. Ruesan's division, of which our regiment belongs, is in the 1st corps and Gen. Jackson's division, in which is the 8th Ind. is, also with us. Jackson's division and ours were engaged about the same time and near the same place. On the morning of the 8th inst. we started from the town of Maxwell with the sound of cannon in front to forward us of the coming combat. Our progress was slow as there was considerable skirmishing in advance of us. About twelve o'clock we arrived within a mile or two of the town of Perryville, where the whole corps was halted and formed in line of battle. Loomis' battery was posted upon a hill in position to bear upon the rebels who were just beyond a series of small hills, upon a more elevated position. Our brigade (the 17th under command of Col. Lytle) was formed near, and in the rear of Loomis' battery to support it and also to act upon the flanks if used by us.

Our regiment was badly in need of water having had but little since the day previous. As the rebels had possession of the only spring in the neighborhood, I immediately chose for water was a creek almost dry which was down the valley in front of Loomis's battery and between him and the rebels. We were accordingly in haste down here to get a drink, and make off. &c. While there a brisk cannonading was kept up between our lines and the rebels, the balls and shells from both sides passing over our heads, occasionally a shot would burst above us and scatter its fragments among our men, and one cannon ball fell into the hollow near Col. Jones' horse. But as no one was hurt we were not accustomed to such things and continued eating our dinner.

Before long, however, the rebels ceased firing which puzzled some of us exceedingly, but we were not long in the dark as to this movement, for they moved their batteries away where to the right near the other end of the hollow which we occupied, and immediately commenced pouring grape shot upon us. Almost simultaneously with this firing, we received one from a regiment of sharpshooters, approaching us from the front, behind which came a brigade in solid line. We were up in a minute and the command was given to "fire by file" which our men did carefully and with effect. The commander of the brigade sent word for us to fall back until we should be in line with the balance of the brigade when we would be supported.

This was immediately done by a greater part of the regiment, but the command not being generally heard, Capt. French called out to his men to rally and stand by their colors (our company is the color company). This we did, and thus our company remained in the hollow some minutes after the balance of the regiment had gone—Major Jorshakin having lost his horse, and our company being left there with a perfect lack of the means of escape. Some came back on foot and told us we must get out of that place. In falling back we had to cross the road and climb a steep bank into a field, where all the musketry and shrapnel fell upon us. But we were not over with our first volley, and the whole atmosphere was hissing and stirring with the missiles of destruction, smothering the enemy with savage rays poured on us. Here it was that several of our men, including William Williams, the nephew of Owen's, turned and shot the enemy who were fast closing behind us. But it was the last shot for the brave boy, for a ball immediately entered his forehead passing through his head killing him instantly. He died as instantly as he was born, and evidently without pain. I simply shrank back against the fence, without a single distortion of feature or a word. A few minutes afterwards M. Jorshakin was wounded in the head, and I think it was by some members of our company.

[illegible]

On A. also fell here. When we had almost reached the rally below a rebel bugle came up on our left, and one or two of their Regiments on our right. They advanced in a column, and we fired at them and thus aroused and captured an all-American regiment. It was ordered to advance up this hill and thus prevent the junction of these two forces and evade them. Seeing that the rebels were not to be driven to tight places, they raised a well like ten thousand savage voices, and poured into us the most terrible volley ever seen on a hill. The air was filled with the roar of our fire, smoke and hissing destruction. Bullets whistling cannon balls with their heavy rushing sound and bomb shells with their terrible booming and exploding, explosions, merrily up, came, and war was a terrible, terrible, awful and grand. Nothing but the heavy timber in which we were at the time, saved our regiment from being cut to pieces. The rebels were not so good as we.

We passed the brow of the hill and frustrated their designs, and we were here captured by some other regiments. Night came, and the rebels fled the scene of Death and Horror.

We expected another battle on the next day but when daylight came our enemy had fled. The battle had been a terrible one. The dead lay all over the battlefield. Some had died like Mathews without a pang sunk to sleep like an infant in its cradle, lulled into the deep sleep of death amid the roar of cannon, the rattle of musketry and the crash of falling men and dying. Others had evidently struggled long and painfully with the grim monster. There were more of the rebel dead on the field than ours. Their dress was filthy and the ghastly appearance of their corpses.

Those of our wounded, who fell into their hands, were treated with the same tenderness they gave to their own, but most of the shoes were robbed from our

The loss in Capt. French's company is as follows: Killed, William Mathews and Robert Mooney. Wounded, R. B. Lucas, severely in the thigh; Andrew Spence, in the shoulder; Cornelius Mathews, in the thigh; George Reid in the foot; Robert Richardson, in the head; John Patterson, in the leg; George Heman, slightly in the thigh; Thomas J. Ward, slightly in the arm; William J. Pruett, slightly in the head.

Corporal John R. Dougherty and Simeon Weidenhammer were taken prisoners and released on parole.

None of the wounds will prove fatal to life in our company. I understand that in Patterson's case amputation has become necessary, and has been successfully performed.

Gibson county has lost twelve men killed in the battle, to wit: Two in our company; five in company A, of the 89th; one in company P, of this regiment; two in company E, 80th; and two in Capt. Shawer's company 80th. Elsie, Kimball and Frank Montgomery of the 80th, have died since the battle of wounds received there.

We have marched to the point since the battle, and have been lying here for thirty six hours. Bragg is still ahead of us.

In the action Gen. Jackson and Terrell were both killed. Col Lytle was wounded and taken prisoner. Col Jones now commands our brigade. We hope our friends will write to us frequently and occasionally send us copies of papers which contain important items of news, or general information.

Postage stamps are generally scarce among the men also and if friends would enclose two or three occasionally they would perhaps hear from the boys oftener. We have not seen a *Clarion* for a long time.

Since our regiment left Alabama we have been on the march and now have no tents, no cooking utensils except what the boys carry, so you may be sure we are not in the best plight in the world.

Our friend had better address all letters to the c  
via Louisville, Ky. about  
Post No. 1 Co. E. 42nd Reg. Ind. Vol. best

At a recent meeting of the members of the M. E. Sabbath School in Princeton Ind., the following resolutions were offered by Rev. James Wickertsham.

WHEREAS, It has pleased Almighty God to remove from our midst by the hand of death three of our members Richard Dorsey, F. C. Trappett, and E. P. Glick, who died in the defense of their country's honor. Therefore,

*Resolved*, That in the death of these our brethren we have lost three of our most regular, prompt and efficient teachers, the community three of its best citizens, our country in this the hour of its extremity, three of its most courageous defenders.

ed of  
symp-  
I fe  
with  
ment.

Resolved, That we tender to the bereaved widows and orphans of Bro's. Dorsey and Triplett our sincere sympathies in the hour of their greatest sorrow.

Resolved, That now when gloom visits  
 the hearthstone and grief wrings the  
 widow's heart, we offer unto Him who is  
 acquainted with grief, unto Him who does  
 not willingly afflict, unto the widow's and  
 orphan's God, our united prayers in their  
 behalf that He may say unto their troubled  
 souls, Peace.

WM. D. DOWNEY,  
 Secretary.

—The Philadelphia North American says: "It is now absolutely necessary that the Administration should take warning by the elections and reduce its expenses, punish its incompetent military commander, dismiss his or his associates, and reorganize its financial policy in such a way as to restore the credit and currency of the nation to a healthy basis."

A contemporary says, "a female re- ing in  
sult in Rochester was detected by trying thous  
put her cents on over her head!"



the brigade when we would be supported.

This was immediately done by a greater part of the regiment, but the command not being generally heard, Capt. French called on his men to rally and stand by their colors (our company is the color company.) This we did, and thus our company remained in the hollow some minutes after the balance of the regiment had gone — Major Shanklin having lost his horse, and observing our company still there with a perfect herd of the enemy approaching, came back on foot and told us we must get out of that place. In falling back we had to cross the road and climb a steep bank into a field, where both the musketry and cannon had fair play upon us. But we went over with our flag flying, although the whole atmosphere was hissing and quivering with the missiles of destruction which the enemy with savage yells poured upon us. Here it was that several of our men were wounded, and here too William Mathews of Owensville turned and fired upon the enemy who were fast closing behind us. — But it was the last shot for the brave boy, for a ball immediately entered his forehead passed through his head killing him instantly. His death was instantaneous and evidently without pain, as he simply shrank back against the fence, without a single distortion of feature or a groan. A few minutes afterwards Major Shanklin was wounded in the head, and borne off the field by some members of our company.

We soon rallied with the balance of our regiment and were allowed a few minutes

most of the shoes were robbed from our dead by their barefooted soldiery.

The loss in Capt. French's company is as follows. Killed; William Mathews and Robert Mooney. Wounded; R. B. Lucas, severely in the thigh; Andrew Spence, in the sholder; Cornelius Mathews, in the thigh; George Reid in the foot; Robert Richardson, in the head; John Patterson, in the leg; George Holman, slightly in the thigh; Thomas J. Ward, slightly in the arm; William J. Pruett, slightly in the hand.

Corporal John R. Dougherty and Simon Weidenhammer were taken prisoners and released on parole.

None of the wounds will prove fatal to