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Marion O. Smith

*Volunteer State Community College*

Joseph C. Douglas

*Volunteer State Community College, [joe.douglas@volstate.edu](mailto:joe.douglas@volstate.edu)*

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## Civilian and Soldier Names of Hundred Dome (Coach) Cave, Kentucky, 1859-1862

Marion O. Smith and Joseph C. Douglas<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Volunteer State Community College

Hundred Dome (now Coach) Cave is a complex three mile long grotto in Bald Knob near the east side of Edmonson County and several miles southeast of Mammoth Cave National Park. During 1812-13 it was owned by Williamson Gatewood (b. c.1775) of Bowling Green who mined it for saltpeter. In early 1813, when he offered the cave for sale, it was “in full operation, affording [an] abundance of good dirt” with the furnace “conveniently situated to water and wood.” In addition, there were enough “iron-grates to work 8 50 gallon kettles,” Probably, his brother Fleming Gatewood, a former part owner of Mammoth Cave, managed the operation.<sup>1</sup>

By the late 1850s, the cave was owned by John D. Courts (1806-1870), whose father, John, around 1810-12, operated a powder mill in southern Barren County with his brother-in-law Braxton B. Winn. J. D. Courts married a first cousin, Elizabeth Brown Winn, a daughter of Braxton B. Winn, and they had no children. For a time, probably about 1858-61, they had members of a family named Peddicord boarding with them. Included were Wilson Lee (1803-1875), his wife Kiturah B., and two of their sons, Kelion Franklin (1833-1905) and Carolus Judkins (1840-c.1862-63). W. L. Peddicord was a Marylander and a railroad contractor who had lived in Ohio and West Virginia before moving to Sumner County, Tennessee, in late 1856. K. F. Peddicord, born in Belmont County Ohio, also did railroad engineering jobs, and during 1857-58, lived in Nashville while employed by the Louisville and Nashville company. Afterwards, he joined his father in Kentucky to work on the same line.<sup>2</sup>

While living in Kentucky Kelion F. Peddicord “discovered and explored a number of caverns, the largest of which was the Hundred Dome Cave,” which he perhaps

first began investigating about October, 1859. He, with aid from Courts, “fitted up” the cave “and opened it to the sightseeing public, having carriages to meet the trains for the accommodation of visitors.” There must have been some Kentucky publicity because on January 28, 1860, in faraway Marshall, Texas, the newspapers there referenced it as “recently discovered” and abounding “in geological curiosities.” Three Peddicord names are scratched in Hundred Dome Cave: K. F. and C. J. December 5, 1859, and W. L. with no date. “KFP” is also inscribed in nearby Slave Cave.<sup>3</sup>

Other 1859 visitors were “A K Bagby Deb [December] 1st” and “R. M. Dolley” next to a Freemason’s symbol. Bagby was Albert Kimbrue (1814-1894), a son of Reverend Sylvanus Bagby and Zarilda Courts, and therefore a first cousin to John D. Courts. He was born in Virginia and moved to Glasgow, Kentucky as a young man, and worked as a master carpenter and furniture maker. His wife was Martha Wooten and they had seven children. A daughter, Mary Alice (1841-1927), in December 1860, became the second wife of Edward K. Owsley (1820-1889), who from 1861 until 1866 was the

proprietor of Mammoth Cave and hotel. Dolley has thus far defied identification.<sup>4</sup>

On January 19 and 23, 1860, Gilbert S. Bailey (1822-1891), a Baptist preacher then residing in Woodford County, Illinois, toured Hundred Dome Cave with K. F. Peddicord and probably others. On his first visit he scratched “G. S. Bailey Metamora Ill” and the date. “J F South Bowling Green Ky Jan 23 1860” and “W H H Mills Jan 1860” are also inscribed on the walls, and possibly they accompanied Bailey. Mills remains unknown but John Fletcher South (1817-1873) was a Warren County, Kentucky, Baptist minister.<sup>5</sup>

The following March 24, in the *Louisville Journal*, Bailey published a long description of Hundred Dome Cave, using at least eighty-four names for internal sites, all presumably assigned by K. F. Peddicord. During his stay in Kentucky he also visited Mammoth and Diamond Caves. Three years later he included descriptions of all three in a booklet entitled *The Great Caves of Kentucky*. The Hundred Dome chapter was very similar to his 1860 *Louisville Journal* article except that the order through the cave is somewhat different and about nine less in-cave place names were used. He also presented a crude map keyed with sixty-one of the cave’s features.<sup>6</sup>

Other 1860 graffiti in the cave includes “R S Courts” and “J D Wickliffe July 7[9?]. Courts is undoubtedly somehow related to the owner, but thus far he is a mystery. Wickliffe could be one of two John D. Wickliffes: a Muhlenberg County farmer (b. c.1799), or a Nelson County lawyer (b. c.1839), more likely the latter.<sup>7</sup>

In April, 1861, the American Civil War began. At first Kentucky tried to remain neutral. But that was untenable and by September Union and Confederate forces

were arrayed against each other inside the state’s borders. Southerners occupied Columbus, Bowling Green, and Cumberland Ford. The Federals took over Paducah, and augmented Kentucky Unionist units by sending in reinforcements from the Midwestern states. On November 9, Kentucky became part of the Department of the Ohio with Brigadier General Don Carlos Buell in command. During the next three months many more regiments arrived from the north, and were primarily distributed to camps near Elizabethtown. More units were stationed at Bardstown, Lebanon, Somerset, and Columbia. The regiments were drilled and assigned to brigades, and brigades were organized into six divisions, all designated the Army of the Ohio. Meanwhile, Confederate forces around Bowling Green gained strength, and by October 13, General Albert Sidney Johnston, head of the southern army in much of the west, moved his personal headquarters there. During these months there was little action, just occasional geographic maneuvering. Part of the Union army advanced to Munfordville on the Green River. The bulk of the Confederates remained at and near Bowling Green, but Brigadier General Thomas C. Hindman maintained a force at Cave City to watch the Federals.<sup>8</sup>

Kelion F. Peddicord and his brothers Columbus A. and Carolus J., in spite of their Northern birth, all joined the Confederate Army. Kelion became a sergeant in Quirk’s Scouts of John Hunt Morgan’s cavalry, and Carolus served in Ben Hardin Helm’s 1st Kentucky Cavalry, CSA, and then in Quirk’s Scouts. Kelion was captured July 19, 1863 at Buffington Island, Ohio, while on Morgan’s “Great Raid” and spent the rest of the war as a prisoner of war. Carolus was captured near Gallatin, Tennessee, and reputedly was held captive a couple of months before he

was escorted away and shot. After the war, in 1867, Kelion moved to Palmyra, Missouri, where he followed several occupations in succession.<sup>9</sup>

The only 1861 date located in Hundred Dome Cave is beside “T. Toney.” It is not known if he was a civilian or a soldier at the time. However, he almost certainly was Thomas Toney (1842-1911), a son of Jesse and Mary (Elliott) Toney and in 1860 a student in Bowling Green. During the war he was a 2nd lieutenant in the 2nd Kentucky Cavalry, CSA. Later he became a doctor and dies at his home, 302 Main Street, Joplin, Missouri, of a spinal injury.<sup>10</sup>

In early 1862 the Confederate positions in Kentucky began to give way. First, Brigadier General Gorge H. Thomas thrashed the rebels under Felix K. Zollicoffer at Mill Springs south of Somerset in the southeastern part of the state. Second, Ulysses S. Grant’s army advanced through western Kentucky and captured Forts Henry and Donelson on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers in Tennessee. The Fall of Fort Henry alone caused Johnston to evacuate Bowling Green between February 8 and 14, after which the Army of the Ohio moved south to capture Nashville, generally following the Louisville and Nashville Railroad.<sup>11</sup>

As the Union Army moved forward, its soldiers were aware that they were traversing a cavernous terrain. Consequently, when an opportunity arose, many of the men visited caves in the region. Mammoth Cave was already world famous with a substantial literature, including Charles W. Wright’s 1858 guide. Possibly due to the many Louisville newspaper reports from 1859 to 1861, which were often reprinted throughout the country, numbers of soldiers may have already known of other caves such

as Diamond, Osceola (Indian), and Hundred Domes.<sup>12</sup>

A graffiti search of Hundred Dome Cave on September 5, 2015 yielded the following names, initials, and fragments:

J G Nickols Feb 18th 1862  
W L Lamborn 79th P. V.  
Lieut J Fults 6th Regt W[?]  
W[?] H\_\_\_\_\_ Soldier 1862  
H. P. Schuyler 1 Wis Regt  
W B McCu? 78 PA VOLS  
A\_\_a Morney[?] 79 Pa \_Vol  
A Dyer 1st Wis. V  
B Clark 1862  
W W Hamilton 78 1862 Co. D  
W. W. H. 78 Regt PV  
H T W 1862[?]  
Lieut. Will. H. Smock 6th Regt W[?]  
A B Bonna\_\_[?] 1[?]8th Reg  
J. H. Fridy Lancaster Co Pa 79th Regt  
PV<sup>13</sup>

The fellows from this group which have been identified were all members of the Second Division under Brigadier Alexander Mcd. McCook. The 6th Indiana was in Brigadier General Lovell H. Rousseau’s Fourth Brigade, and the 78th and 79 Pennsylvania and 1st Wisconsin were in Brigadier General James S. Negley’s Seventh Brigade. On February 16 and 17, 1862, portions of the division marched south from Munfordville to camp not far below the ruins of Bell’s Tavern at present day Park City. Men of the Seventh Brigade congregated at what they called Camp Hambright near what they termed “Dripping Cave” which was used for a water sources. The namesake of the camp was Henry A. Hambright (1819-1893), colonel of the

79th Pennsylvania. The Fourth Brigade presumably was nearby. McCook's soldiers remained in this area until the 23rd. During that time a number of them broke their routine by checking out the natural attributes of "Dripping," Hundred Dome, and other caves.<sup>14</sup>

"N. J.," possibly of the 78th Pennsylvania, in a March 16 letter to a friend in his home state, described his trek through Hundred Dome Cave:

*The first room of the cave is fitted up for a ball room. It is floored and has closets, and staging for the band, and all complete.... The long avenues, the spacious rooms, the deep chasms, the high domes, the huge columns, the formations which encrust the rocks, the myriads of dormant bats which hang in ponderous (and almost numberless) beavies from the ceiling, all presented to me a new and interesting scene. We had no guide, and no light only that which our paraffine [sic] candles produced. We clambered down ladders and stair-ways, across bridges and around ledges, sometimes walking and sometimes crawling. We could not see the bottom of many of the chasms by the dim light of our candles, neither could we see the ceiling of some of the highest domes. We continued our explorations until our curiosity was entirely satisfied, and then returned to camp with a number of specimens...*<sup>15</sup>

On February 24, the 57th Indiana Infantry of Colonel Henry M. Carr's Twenty-first Brigade and Brigadier General Thomas J. Wood's Sixth Division left Munfordville

and marched south to Cave City. The next day they continued along the railroad "as far as Bell's tavern" where they camped until noon, February 26, waiting for their wagons to catch up. This delay "was improved by the men in visiting the numerous caves with which the country abounds. One very large one, not more than a mile from our camp, called Hundred Domes Cave, was visited by nearly all the men of the regiment."<sup>16</sup>

Nine of the soldiers whose names have been found in Hundred Dome Cave have been identified. Two, A. B. Bonnaffon and W. H. Smock are not certain. The others are. Their biographies follow:

Augustus Benton Bonaffon (1837-July 12, 1867), of French heritage and son of Anthony and Margaret Hasting Bonaffon, was a railroad freight agent and steamboat clerk before the war. He served as sergeant, Company K, 12th Pennsylvania (three months) Infantry, April 25-August 5, 1861. The following September 17 he became major of the 78th Pennsylvania Infantry. Subsequently, July 24, 1864, and March 11, 1865, he was advanced to lieutenant colonel and colonel of the regiment, mustering out December 14, 1865. He joined the regular army as 1st lieutenant in the 35th U. S. Infantry and died from yellow fever in Indianola, Texas.<sup>17</sup>

Albert Myron Dyer (April 11, 1840-May 9, 1910), a son of Charles and Anna Wood Dyer, was born in Bennington County, Vermont. By the late 1850s his family moved to Kenosha County, Wisconsin, where in 1860 he lived with a family named Smith. When the war began he served as 1st sergeant in Company G (Park City Grays), 1st Wisconsin (three months) Infantry, April 17-August 21, 1861, and then in Company C of that regiment's three years' organization, September 23, 1861-October 13, 1864, rising

from sergeant to 1st lieutenant, February 17, 1864. Sometime before 1870 he moved to Onondaga, New York, where he was a farm laborer. He remained in that area and is buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Syracuse.<sup>18</sup>

Joseph Halls Fridy (January 3, 1836-March 4, 1900), a son of Joseph and Elizabeth Fridy, was a carpenter and resident of West Hempfield Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He mustered in as a private in Company E, 79th Pennsylvania Infantry September 20, 1861, was promoted to quartermaster sergeant February 10, 1864, and served until the regiment was discharged, July 12, 1865. Probably sometime later, he married a woman named Annie (1838-1909). In 1889 he was a deputy IRS collector in Lancaster County. He and his wife are buried in Mountville Cemetery in his home county.<sup>19</sup>

Josiah Fults (c1838-c1870-74), an Ohio native and Bartholomew County, Indiana, harness maker, married Mary E. Brown in December 1858. Between 1859 and 1866 they had three sons and one daughter. On September 20, 1861 he was commissioned 2nd lieutenant in Company G, 6th Indiana Infantry, but six months later, about March 29, 1862, he resigned. The following year he was a retail liquor dealer, and on May 20 1868, he was appointed postmaster of Elizabethtown. Two years later, still in Bartholomew County, he was listed as a druggist possessing a total estate worth \$5,000. Soon thereafter he apparently died, and Mary B. Fults married a second time on March 15, 1874, to T. C. Ireland. About 1886 they moved to Ringgold County, Iowa, where one of her sons, Romney C. Fults, also lived.<sup>20</sup>

William Wallace Hamilton (September 23, 1835-November 7, 1891) was a son of Robert A. and Anna Mary Evers Hamilton

and was born at Hollidaysburg, Blair County, Pennsylvania. In 1848 his family moved a few dozen miles northwest to Montgomery Township, Indiana County. William grew up on a farm and usually pursued that occupation plus lumbering. On September 1, 1861, he joined Company D, 78th Pennsylvania Infantry, and weeks later, October 12, was promoted to sergeant. He also played the fife, and on January 14, 1863, was discharged at Nashville on a surgeon's certificate of disability. The next summer, July 6-August 18, under a call by the governor occasioned by the Confederate invasion of the state, he served as a 2nd lieutenant in the 46th Pennsylvania Volunteer Militia. On November 29, 1864, Hamilton married Susan Clark and they had at least three sons and one daughter. Briefly, 1865-67, he operated a store in Cherry Tree, also in Indiana County.<sup>21</sup>

William Lewis Lamborn (January 6, 1839-July 4/5, 1875), a son of Smedley and Margaret Bolton Lamborn, was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and was educated at the State Normal School at Millersburg (now Millersville). For a while during the late 1850s he was a teacher. On September 23, 1861, he joined Company E, 79th Pennsylvania Infantry as a private, serving until March, 1863, when he was discharged for disability. Early in 1864 he married Phebe M. Barnard (1837-1874) and after her death, Emily Corbin (1845-1880). He had a variety of jobs and residences after leaving the army: Drumore Township, Lancaster County, 1863-66 and later; Currituck County, North Carolina. 1866-69, where he grew peaches, Kent County, Maryland, 1869; Philadelphia, 1870, where he sold fertilizer; Riverton, New Jersey; and Steelton, Pennsylvania. At the last place he invented a railroad frog and a railroad indicator (a machine to note the time a train

passed a station). In 1874 he partnered with George Bent at Harrisburg to manufacture his inventions, and he traveled widely to promote them. He died at Goshen in his home county and is buried in Drumore Cemetery.<sup>22</sup>

William B. McCue (June, 1839-March 31, 1867) of Armstrong County, Pennsylvania, was a son of John and Eleanor Hoover McCue. By 1860 he was married and working as an oil refiner. In September the next year he joined the 78th Pennsylvania Infantry, Company F, and was eventually commissioned 1st lieutenant. At Nashville on November 29, 1862, he resigned. Later, February 29, 1864, he enlisted in Company A of the same unit as sergeant, was once again promoted to 1st lieutenant the following December 2, and two days after that became the regimental quartermaster, serving until September 11, 1865. He returned home, presumably Freeport, and at some point fathered a son, Joseph Benton McCue. He is buried near his parents in Freeport Cemetery.<sup>23</sup>

Herman P. Schuyler (September 1842-August 4, 1909), a native of Albany County, New York, and a direct descendent of Revolutionary War General Philip Schuyler, was a resident of West Troy, New York. After the war began for some reason he traveled west and enlisted in Company A, 1st Wisconsin Infantry September 26, 1861. From sergeant he was promoted sergeant major, October 29, 1862, and 2nd lieutenant, January 26, 1863, and 1st lieutenant, February 3, 1863, resigning April 12, 1864. Soon thereafter and until 1870 he worked with army ordnance at Watervliet Arsenal, New York. Subsequent to that he was head of sales at Troy Steel and Iron Company; private secretary of a Standard Oil Company official in New York City, 1887-90; head of sales at Wellman Steel and Iron Company

at Thurlow, Pennsylvania, 1890-93; and from then until his death he was assistant treasurer of the General Electric Company at Schenectady. His final home was in Albany and he is buried in Albany Rural Cemetery. His wife was much younger and they had a son and daughter.<sup>24</sup>

William H. Smock is one of at least three men with that name in mid-nineteenth century Indiana. Probably the one who toured the cave was the locally born day laborer (c1838-c1880-83) who before the war lived in Hanover in Jefferson County with his parents John and Elizabeth Smock, both Kentuckians. He served as a corporal April 22-August 2, 1861 in the three month organization of the 6th Indiana Infantry before obtaining a commission as 1st lieutenant in Company K of that regiment's three year service. He did duty as such from September 20, 1861, until March 28, 1862, when he resigned. Sometime later he married a girl named Nannie J. and by 1866 they had a son, Harry E. They lived in Ward 6 of Indianapolis in 1870 where he was a pump maker. Ten years hence they lived in Johnson County Indiana, where he was a farmer. In that year's census his parents' place of birth were both given as Kentucky, seeming to verify that he is the same man shown in 1860 Jefferson County. He died soon after, and in 1883 his widow and son were again living in Indianapolis, at 164 W. Maryland Street.<sup>25</sup>

These soldiers are a fairly typical representation of the lives of mid-nineteenth century men of the northern United States. Their life spans ranged from twenty-eight to seventy, with the average around forty-eight. Four went back home and stayed there. The others moved about, sometimes frequently, and pursued a variety of jobs. Although two briefly held positions with the Federal government, H. P. Schuyler, who became

an official at General Electric, became the most prominent. But none of that mattered in early 1862, when for a few hours they sought a distraction from the hardships of military campaigning by visiting Hundred Dome Cave.

### Acknowledgments

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### Footnotes

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