

Our Family News Letter

Issue 11

Greendale, Wisconsin

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Captain Gary's Greatest Adventure On The High Seas of Lake Hartwell, SC

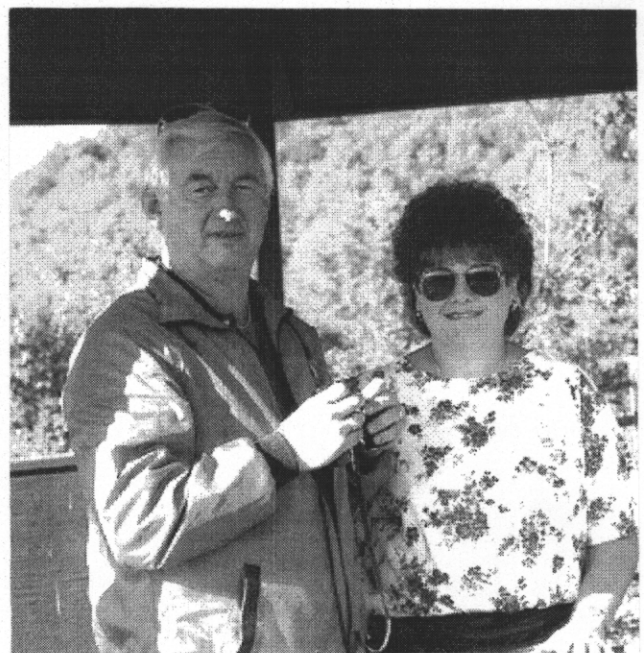
Gary Heck, my much older and wiser brother, retired to South Carolina and decided to become a sea captain. (In South Carolina, in order to qualify as a sea captain, you have to be able to open a box of Cracker Jack's and remove the "prize" without assistance.) Captain Gary bought a pontoon boat fully equipped with a 50 horse power outboard motor. The only problem was that Captain Gary didn't bother to read the instruction book that came with the boat.

The previous owner of the craft, Captain Hook, a crafty fellow with one arm, told Captain Gary that one fill of oil should last the entire year. Captain Hook apparently forgot to tell Captain Gary that this only applies if you leave the boat tied to the dock and only start the engine every now and then to impress your dumb northern relatives.

Well, Captain Gary took his wife Carol, Joanne and Marv Pfeiffer, and Gloria and I out on the lake for a four hour cruise. It was supposed to be a one hour ride but Captain Gary ignored the small craft warnings, the white caps on the water, an occasional ice fisherman and the birds flying backwards past us. A mere 50 mile an hour wind was nothing to an old Cracker Jack eating person like Captain Gary. With the salt from the barnacles smacking at his lips, he called out for his trusty crew to keep rowing. We, the members of his crew, were huddled under umbrellas or behind whatever protection that we could find drinking our beer to gain courage. Despite our efforts we were soaked to the skin.

When we were about twenty miles away from our starting point the engine shut down because it ran out of oil. Simple problem. Just pore a can of oil in the engine, right? Wrong! It seemed that Captain Gary didn't **have** any oil. He kept mumbling that Captain Hook said that **you didn't need any oil**. We the crew were sneaking up on Captain Gary with knives clinched in our teeth ready to throw him overboard along with his potted bread plant.

Just then, Carol, our trusted shipmate, sighted a marina off the starboard bow. We, the crew, gave a big cheer for Carol and demanded that Captain Gary tack into the wind and make for yonder marina. He did so, recognizing that mutiny and being fed to the sharks was his only other choice. After filling the engine with the most expensive oil I have ever seen, Captain Gary headed the ship north into the oncoming storm and eventually to our home port of Chickasaw Point. What an adventure!

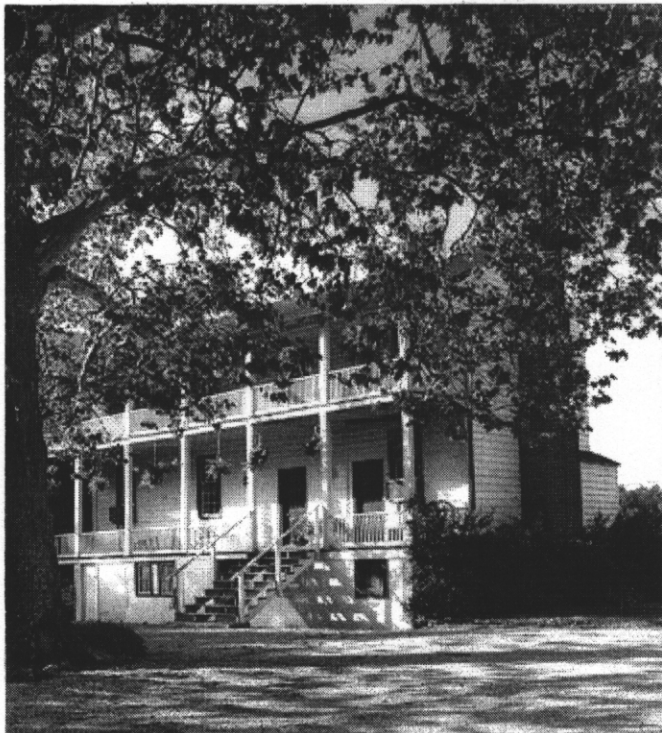


Captain Gary and First Mate, Carol

Henry Heck wounded at battle of Drewery's Bluff, VA in 1864

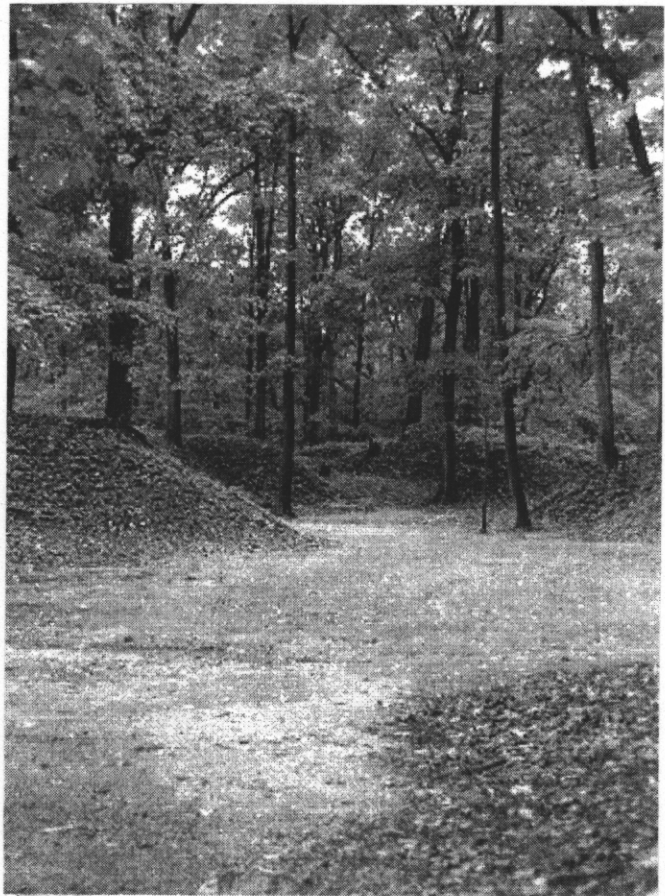
After many years of research into my great grandfather's Civil War experiences, I was finally able to visit the actual battlefields where his regiment fought and where he was ultimately wounded. The experience of researching the entire Bermuda Hundred campaign of April - June 1864, and finally seeing Drewery's Bluff and the Drewery's Bluff battlefield was awesome.

The battlefield wasn't at all like Gettysburg. At Gettysburg there are over 1,800 monuments, plaques and statues spread over miles of battlefield, richly preserved to commemorate the men who fought there in 1863. At Gettysburg you can take a two hour bus tour and have nearly every important event pointed out to you. Drewery's Bluff battlefield, on the other hand, is today a residential neighborhood with paved roads, mail boxes, churches and playgrounds. One of the local residents wasn't even aware that a large battle had taken place there. Finding the actual location of Henry's regiment, the 19th Wisconsin Infantry, was going to be quite a task.



The Half-Way House near Richmond, VA

To begin with, I had some maps from 1864, which indicated the location of the 19th Wisconsin on May 13th - 16th, the time period when Henry Heck was wounded. There were some key points on that map that I needed to locate in order to find the site of the 19th Wisconsin. One point was a farm house owned by the Friends family and another was a stage coach stop called The Half-Way House. Still another landmark was Proctor's Creek where it was crossed by the Old Stage Road. The Richmond and Petersburg railroad formed the western boundary of the battlefield while the Old Stage Road formed the eastern boundary. The Richmond Turnpike ran right down the center.



The battlefield at Drewery's Bluff, VA

A turnpike was a toll road with a surface usually of dirt, stone or logs. Those who used the road were required to pay a fee based on what they were transporting. The first American toll road was built in Virginia in 1785.

The first thing that we found was that the Jefferson Davis highway today lies on the exact spot that the Richmond Turnpike stood in 1864. That was a big help. Not surprisingly, about half way between Richmond and Petersburg we found the old Half-Way House which was built in 1760. During the battle it served as the headquarters for General Buttler, Commander of the Union Army of the James. Buttler was Henry's Commander. The Half-Way House is a restaurant today which goes by the same name. It claims that Washington, Jefferson, Lee, and Grant stayed there. I'm sure that Henry at least marched past there but we'll never know if he ate there. Bullet holes could still be seen in the doors and in the walls of the old building. The place had to look exactly the same as when Henry passed.

After about an hour of searching we were able to find a small marker that had been erected to commemorate the battle of Drewery's Bluff. We found the exact location of the 19th Wisconsin at the start of the battle and at the end. If you look at the 1864 map you will find the 19th Wisconsin just left of center above the name Sanders. The 19th was pulled back to protect the Half-Way House, and you can see that move on the map at the five-o'clock position again just above the name Sanders.

Meet a distant relative: Alonzo Burgess

Alonzo Burgess was the son of Benjamin Burgess and Rebecca Chase. He was the brother of Patience Burgess, wife of Peter McNulty and consequently my great - great grand uncle. Alonzo was born on August 27, 1820 in East Bennington, Bennington County, Vermont. In 1825 he moved with his family to Hannibal, Oswego County, New York and from there to the Wisconsin Territory in 1836. On July 6, 1844, he married Artemesia Kellogg. She died on May 8, 1863. Alonzo married Mary A. Buswell on July 1, 1867.

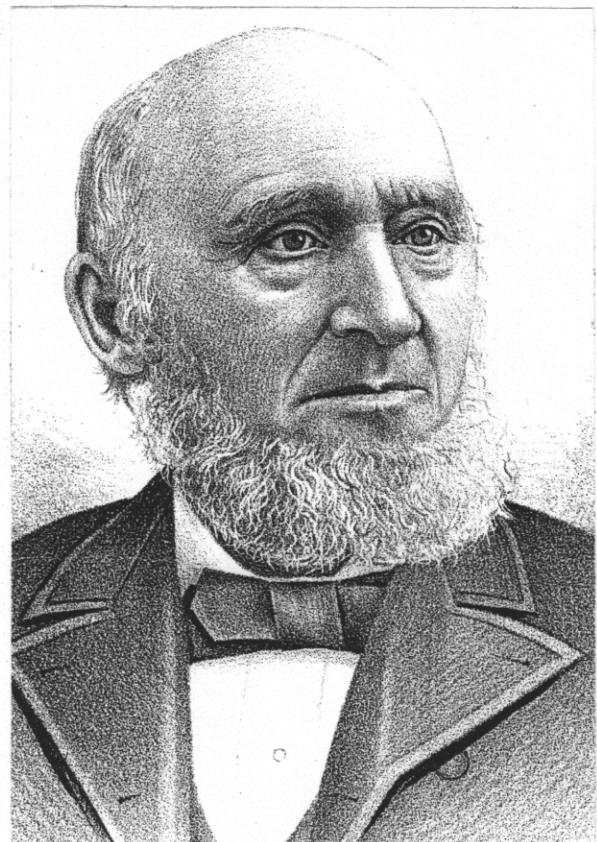
Alonzo had five children by his first marriage and two by his second. His children by order of birth were Adelia, Emeretta, Frederick, Carrie, Martha,

May and Roy. Roy went on to become a judge in Racine County. Alonzo died on February 28, 1902.

Alonzo's paternal grandparents were Benajah Burgess and Zilpha Matteson. Both the Burgess and Matteson lines have been traced back to the late 1600's in America and even further back in Europe.

The engraving of Alonzo is from a biographical sketch of him from 1892. It was published in a book on Racine County, Wisconsin. Alonzo farmed 250 acres of land located on County Line Road KR, just east of I-94 at a place called Kelloggs Corners. The remains of a Methodist church and school attended by the Burgess family can still be found at that location. Descendants of Alonzo still live on the original farm land today.

Alonzo and his family are buried at the Sylvania cemetery which is located about 1/2 mile north of the intersection of KR and I-94 on the west side of the interstate highway. The cemetery is surrounded by tall pine trees and is very easy to see from the interstate.



Peter McNulty Buys Land From Federal Government in 1839

While searching through a CD from the United States General Land Office, I was surprised to find a land record sale in Wisconsin from the Federal Government to Peter McNulty in 1839. This was a lot earlier than I had expected.

Before homesteaders received their patent for government land, they had to file applications and witnesses had to testify that the homesteader had actually lived on the land for a period of time. Four months was generally considered the minimum amount of time. This suggests that Peter McNulty arrived in the Wisconsin Territory in or before 1838, and possible as early as the Burgess family did in 1836. He may have met the Burgess family in New York state prior to 1836.

I sent for the file application as well as for a copy of the written testimony, but little additional information was found. On March 14, 1839, Peter paid \$100.00 for eighty acres of land. The going rate at that time was \$1.25 per acre.

Perhaps we should begin at the beginning of this story of our Irish ancestor.

From his naturalization record we know that Peter was born in Northern Ireland in 1807. His exact birthplace is unknown but is most likely County Down or County Armagh. Other possibilities include Magheralin, County Down and Armagh, County Armagh.

The McNulty family finds its earliest roots in Western Ireland in the county of Donegal on Donegal Bay in the period from 1300 to 1600. The derivation of many Irish surnames is open to doubt, but there is none about that of McNulty: in Irish it is "Mac an Ultaigh", which translates to Son of the Ulsterman.

At the age of 27, Peter McNulty departed Ireland from the port city of Warrenpoint which is located on the east coast of Northern Ireland on the bay of

Carlingford Lough. The date of his departure was April 10, 1834. From there his ship sailed out into the Irish Sea, through the North Channel between Ireland and Scotland into the Atlantic Ocean.



Shown above is a map of Northern Ireland, with the port of Warrenpoint circled at lower center.

After approximately one month at sea his ship landed at St. John's, New Brunswick. Peter probably stayed at St. John's for a month, perhaps working for passage to the United States. From St. John's he traveled to Boston, arriving in the United States on June 8, 1834. We are not sure if he arrived in Boston by ship. His entire trip from Warrenpoint to Boston took two months.

We lose sight of Peter McNulty for the next five years. Then, on March 14, 1839, at the age of 32, we find the first record of him in Wisconsin where he purchased eighty acres of land from the Federal

Government. The land that he purchased was in Kenosha County, in the town of Somers. The southwest corner of his land was at the intersection of today's highway 158 (52nd Street), and 104th Avenue. The land is now owned by the Kenosha Municipal Airport. The main runway is located in the center of his land.

His land was described as "The East half of the South West fractional quarter, of section 31, in Township 2 North, of Range 22 East." The land was transferred to Peter McNulty by the President of The United States, Martin Van Buren.

In 1842, Peter was found to be living in Pleasant Prairie during the Territorial Census of Racine County, Wisconsin. Later that year he purchased land in Racine County, Territory of Wisconsin on November 16th. The land was located in the town of Southport which is now known as Kenosha, Kenosha County, Wisconsin. Peter was married at that time to Patience Burgess. The land originally belonged to Alfred Foster who was the father of Amanda Foster, the second wife of Benjamin Burgess. Benjamin Burgess was the father of Patience Burgess by his first wife Rebecca Chase. (Pay attention! There will be a test at the end of this lesson.)

We don't know for sure where and when Peter McNulty met and married Patience Burgess. To this date we have found no record of their marriage in Wisconsin. The year of their marriage was probably 1839 or 1840, and the place of the marriage was most likely at St. Francis Catholic church at Brighton, Kenosha County, Wisconsin or at a Catholic church in Kenosha.

The Burgess family members were strong Methodists while Peter was Roman Catholic. This may have caused some difficulty between the Burgess family and the new McNulty Family. Patience became Catholic at some time during her life and followed the faith of her husband.

Patience was born in 1823 in New York or Vermont and arrived in Wisconsin with her parents in 1836. We have conflicting documents indicating

her place of birth. She was 13 years old when she settled on the Wisconsin frontier.

On November 22, 1842, Peter McNulty entered his naturalization declaration to become a citizen of the United States at the District Court of Racine County, in the Territory of Wisconsin. He was 35 years of age at that time, and Patience was 19.

During 1842 Peter and Patience had their first child, a son, Henry McNulty. Henry never married and died at the Racine County Insane Asylum on July 31, 1899.

On April 29, 1843, Peter entered into a mortgage on a small parcel of land identified as Section 6, Town 1, Range 23. That land was located in Pleasant Prairie township West of Truesdell and the city of Kenosha.

On March 11, 1844, a second child, Mary Ann McNulty, my great grandmother, was born at the town of Somers, in Kenosha County. She was later married to Henry Heck on January 16, 1869.

The third child, Adeline McNulty, was born in 1845. She was listed in the 1850 and 1860 census as living with her parents. She married John Newmann on June 5, 1861, at the Catholic church at Brighton.

The fourth child was born in 1847 or 1848. She was christened Elizabeth L. McNulty. Elizabeth married Sherman Aspland on January 5, 1865. Elizabeth and her family were living in Rockton, Winnebago County, Illinois in 1870 and 1880. She could not be located in the 1900 census for that area, however she did attend the funeral of Robert S. Heck in Racine, Wisconsin in May, 1923. A notice in the Waterford Post stated that she was from Rockton, Illinois.

In 1848 or 1849 the fifth child, Peter McNulty Jr., was born to the union. He never married and died on March 8, 1915, at the Racine County Insane Asylum. It is possible that this child was a twin to the fourth child.

On July 23, 1850, a sixth child was born and named John McNulty. John was baptized at St. James Catholic church at Kenosha on October 2nd of that year. John probably died before 1860 as he was not listed in the census for that year.

The 1850 census taken on August 17th, showed the McNulty family living in the town of Pike, Kenosha County, Wisconsin. Peter was listed as head of the family at age 41 (sic), occupation was farmer, value of his land was \$1000 and his birthplace was Ireland. Patience was shown at age 21 (sic) and born in Vermont. Her age should have been shown as 27 and Peter should have been 43. Henry was age nine, Mary A. was age eight, Adaline was five, Elizabeth was three and Peter was two. All of the children were shown as born in Wisconsin. John was not listed.

On May 14, 1853 Peter and Patience purchased 80 acres of land from Volney French. The land was described as the East half, Southwest quarter, of Section 23, Township 2 North of Range 20 East. This was the land just south of Brighton which would be the home for the family for many years. Today, only the crumbled foundation of the house remains.

In 1855 a seventh child was born and he was christened Benjamin McNulty. He died on December 29, 1857 at the town of Pike. The funeral for Benjamin took place at St. Francis Xavier Catholic church at Brighton, Kenosha County, Wisconsin.

On June 1, 1855 a special State census was taken and it listed the McNulty family with five males and four females living in the town of Brighton. The census did not list the names of the persons living on the land, only the number of males and females.

Peter was found paying taxes on the same land in Brighton in the years 1856, 1857, and 1858. In 1858 his property was valued at \$880.00 for the land and buildings and the total value of his personal property was \$144.00. The total tax on his property was \$11.92 for the year. (Oh Yes!

The years before Clinton were indeed "The Good Old Years".)

An eighth child was born on May 25, 1857, at Brighton but he died before June, 1860. His name was Daniel McNulty.

The ninth child born to Peter and Patience was born on July 8, 1859. Her name was Julia. She was killed by her brother Peter Jr. on August 21, 1864, by a blow to the head from a rock. As a result, her brothers Henry and Peter were found by the local courts to be insane and dangerous and they were both committed to the Racine County Insane Asylum.

In the 1860 census taken on July 5th, the Peter McNulty family was living at Brighton and six children were listed by name. Peter was age 60 (sic), Patience age 23 (sic), Her age should have been shown as 37 and his as 53. Henry age 18, Mary age 17, Adaline age 16, Elizabeth age 12, Peter age 10 and Julia age one. Three of the McNulty children had died at less than ten years of age.

In March, 1861 a tenth child, Laurence, was born at Brighton. He married Clara Christie in 1882. Laurence died at Wild Rose, Wisconsin in 1930.

In 1865 Peter paid taxes on the same property at Brighton, however his property value had dropped from \$880.00 in 1858 to \$520.00 in 1865. He had no personal property listed and paid a total tax of \$6.93. No doubt the end of the Civil War had an impact on property values throughout the country.

An eleventh child, Josephine McNulty, was born in January, 1865. She married John Amos Harris on January 17, 1885. Josephine was the godmother of Robert Steven Heck.

In 1867 Peter decided to give up farming and concentrate his efforts on making more children. After all, he was 60 years old by that time, and he did need to conserve his energy. As a sidelight he purchased a saloon on the Southwest side of Kansasville in Racine County. The entire family

moved with him to the property which was located just south of the railroad tracks, on the west side of the street.

A twelfth child was born on September 19, 1867, at Kansasville. Her name was Loretta McNulty. Loretta lived with her uncle Lawrence McNulty at Wilmot in Kenosha County after the death of her father. Loretta married Adam Dibble on February 19, 1887, and lived in Dover and Yorkville in Racine County, and in Antioch, Illinois.

The thirteenth and last child was born in November, 1869, at Kansasville to Peter, now 62, and Patience McNulty, now 46. The child's name was Sylvester. When he was eleven years old Sylvester was working as a servant for Thomas Powers at one of the resorts on Silver lake near Dover and Kansasville. We have no other information on Sylvester McNulty.

During the 1870 census taken on June 24th, Peter, age 63, and Patience, age 47, were living at Dover (Kansasville) and were still in the tavern business. The only children living at home were Laurence, age eight, Josephine, age five, Loretta, age 2, and Sylvester, age six months. Peter Jr. and Henry were living in the insane asylum, and the three older girls were married.

On May 27, 1879 Peter and Patience McNulty sold their tavern to Henry Keller for \$200.00 because of poor health. Peter was suffering from palsy and was considered indigent. The following year, during the census of 1880, the family was shown as living in the town of Dover just a few doors away from Henry Heck and his wife Mary Ann McNulty Heck. Their son Henry McNulty was living with them and was shown as being age 37 and that he was idiotic and insane. Loretta was also living at home and was 12 years old.

Peter McNulty probably died in 1880 or 1881 and was buried at St. Mary's Catholic Church in the town of Dover, Racine County, Wisconsin. An undated entry was made in the church record which shows that Peter was buried in block 2, lot

10, grave 4 in the Tom Morrow lot. The grave is unmarked.

Patience McNulty later moved to Brighton in Kenosha County but it is uncertain with whom she was living. It could be that she was living with her daughter Loretta Dibble after 1887 but that is not at all certain. Patience died on August 30, 1894, and was buried at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church at Brighton. A simple stone marks her grave. It simply states Patience McNulty and it is undated.



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