

Ray W. Andrews: 1824 – 1905 and Polly (Mary) Wiswell Andrews: 1831 - 1881

by John Andrews

Ray W. Andrews lived life to its fullest. He was a farmer, politician, land speculator, gold miner, newspaper owner, Union soldier, frontiersman, a husband and father. He was creative, imaginative and resourceful. He had a personality that was attractive to some and a scandal to others. He never hesitated to move great distances across the country long before the transcontinental railroad was built. At times he was financially successful but at the end of his life he died alone, with no funds, the resident of an old soldier's home.



Ray W. Andrews was born in August, 1824, in Ohio.¹ He married Mary C. Wiswell² on October 18, 1849. County records show that a Mr. William Davis officiated at that marriage. The first time Ray's name appeared in a census was 1850, when he was 25 years old, and Mary was 19. They were living in Sharon Township, Franklin County, Ohio. Ray's occupation was farming.³ In 1851, Ray and Mary's first child, Ella, was born in Ohio.

Mary's brother, Daniel Wiswell, and his wife, Colista, were living in Franklin County, Ohio, in 1850. They moved to Illinois in 1851. That event may have influenced Ray and Mary to move. In 1852, they sold 20 acres of land in Franklin County, Ohio, to A. J. Douglas, for \$737. By September of 1853 Ray and Mary were living in Illinois, where their second child, Douglas A. Andrews, was born.

Picture of Ray and Mary ca 1953, taken in Onarga, Illinois

¹ The 1830 census shows a Hiram Andrews living in Franklin County, Ohio. The 1850 census lists Hiram, age 50, and his wife Louisa, age 49 living in Sharon Township, Franklin County, Ohio. His occupation is a distiller of liquor, he owns \$4000 of real estate, and 5 children live in the household. The children are ages 5 to 21. It is possible Hiram and Louisa are related to Ray W. Andrews; however, their relationship is unknown.

[Other researchers believe that George H. Andrews is Ray's father, and that the 1860 US Census of Ray in Onarga, Iroquois Co., Illinois is the only time when he gave his correct age, 34. And this would put his birth date from late Jun 1825 to late May 1826, in Ohio.]

² Mary C. Wiswell, born in 1831, in Worthington, Franklin County, Ohio, is the daughter of Amasa Wiswell and Rebecca Lockwood Wiswell. Daniel Frederick (D. F.) Wiswell is her brother. In November of 1900, Daniel F. Wiswell's daughter, Nora Belle Wiswell, married Ray W. Andrews' grandson, Jesse Andrews in Evant, Texas.

³ Ray and Mary live within three houses of a Hiram and Louisa Andrews. There are two other Andrews families living in the same township.

Ray was actively involved in community life in Onarga, Iroquois County, Illinois. On July 23, 1856, Ray was listed as Vice Grand (second highest elected officer) of the newly organized Onarga Lodge, IOOF, # 208. He was also a member of the Iroquois Lodge, #83, A. F. & A. M., which was the first Masonic Lodge in Iroquois County.

Ray was the clerk of the November 6, 1855, election in Onarga precinct. That general election approved the township system of local government and following that election the county was divided into political townships. Onarga was one of eleven townships.

The supervisors of each township, working together, constituted the Iroquois County Board of Supervisors. In the election of April 1, 1856, 88 votes were polled in the first Onarga township election. Ray won that election, making him the supervisor representing Onarga, Illinois. He served on the Iroquois County Board of Supervisors from 1856 to 1861. Since supervisors had to face a yearly election, Ray ran for and was elected to that office five times.

There was a lot of conflict during the time he served on that board; as a result, Ray was involved in numerous disputes, a number of which ended up in court. Some of the conflicts tarnished Ray's reputation as the following article from "The History of Iroquois County" demonstrates.

"At the May (1858) special term of the board of supervisors two important measures were passed...One provided for the publication of the current proceedings of the supervisors...The last was only permissive and amounted to nothing but a gerrymander to rid the board of an attempt of Ray Andrews to create influence for himself...The 'Republican' had teemed with appeals in this matter. At this session both that and the 'Press' came forward with propositions to publish the proceedings free of charge if furnished by the county clerk...Ray Andrews had been the central figure in all the proceedings of the board. It is surprising that he should have had so much influence, and it seems paradoxical that, well know to be without principle, and corrupt, his support of any measure, or his antipathy to it, was nearly certain to bring it to successful issue in one case, or to be fatal to its chances in the other. It is hard to believe that those in whose nostrils his reputation was inodorous should not have firmly opposed him. He was energetic, insinuating, unscrupulous. His push and manners made him agreeable to a large class with whom it was an easy matter for him to become a hail-fellow on short notice. It long has been, and likely long will be, that a vigorous, unprincipled character, capable of much harm, will inspire a certain degree of timidity and passivity. In all bodies, too, a few men of strong character rule, while the majority are either echoes or gaping spectators."⁴

⁴ History of Iroquois County, compiled by John Dowling, pages 392 - 393

It's possible that Ray's seemingly bad reputation may have been influenced by newspaper competition. Two newspapers were involved in the dispute over publication of the proceedings of the board of supervisors and at the same time Ray owned another newspaper. He and Joseph Thomas owned The Middleport Weekly Press in Iroquois County. They employed Harmon Westbrook, then Caleb Pink as the editors. Newspaper competition was brutal and Ray's character may have suffered as a result. On July 27, 1858, The Middleport Weekly Press was sold to the Hon. John Chamberlain, ending Ray's ownership of that publication.

Ray was one of three people who organized the first agricultural fair ever held in Onarga. That event, organized by Ray, Dr. A. N. Crawford and William C. Moore, occurred on October 14, 15, and 16, 1857.⁵

Ray and Mary owned property in Onarga. On January 15, 1858 Ray received title to an additional 120 acres of land from the U. S. General Land Office, in the District of Lands formerly subject to sale at Danville, now Springfield, Illinois.⁶

The 1860 census has R. W. and Mary Andrews living in Onarga, with three children; Colonel C. Andrews, born about 1858 in Illinois, Douglas A. Andrews, born in September of 1853 in Illinois, and Ella Andrews, born about 1851 in Ohio. Ray is still farming and he owns land worth \$8,000 and personal property worth \$600. The census also reveals that Mary Wiswell Andrews' parents, D. F. and Colista Wiswell, were living in Onarga, that year.

“At the opening of the Civil War, the population of Iroquois County was approximately 16,000. Over 1,500 men from Iroquois County enlisted in the Union forces during the war and over 300 were killed or died in combat.”⁷ Ray was among those who enlisted. He joined the Union Army on May 29, 1861, becoming a member of the Illinois Volunteers, 25th Regiment, an infantry unit. His enlistment was for a term of three years. Ray was the commander of Company F, a unit almost entirely composed of men from Iroquois county.⁸ The Company Muster-in Roll shows he joined the St. Louis Arsenal rolls on August 6, 1861, where he was acting Brig. L.M./Brig 3 Div. Army of the West during September and October of 1861.

On March 7th and 8th of 1862, the men of the 25th Illinois were involved in the Battle of Pea Ridge, in Arkansas. That unit suffered the loss of 3 men who were killed in action, 3 men missing and Ray was one of 18 men wounded. On March 25, 1862, Ray W. Andrews was granted a leave of absence because he had diarrhea for about 30 days and a cough for about the same period, as well as a knee injury making him unfit for duty. He took 20 days' leave. The Muster roll for May and June of 1862 show him as acting Brig. Commissary on Col. William N Coler's staff. Then, the Muster roll for July and August, 1862 contains the remarks: “A. C. S. 1 Brig. 4 Div. since June 12, 1862.” From June 30 to October 31, 1862 he was on detached service. His letter of resignation, submitted on November 21, 1862, states the following:

⁵ Ibid., page 589.

⁶ The land was W ½ of the SW ¼ and the SE ¼ he SW ¼ of Sec. 17, Twp 26, North of Range 14 W.

⁷ Beckwith's History of Iroquois County.

⁸ Ibid.

“I received a severe injury in my right knee joint at Springfield, Mo., in November 1861 which has ever since more or less incapacitated me from marching with my Co. At the Battle of Pea Ridge I received a severe blow on the same right hip from a Fr—ti-n of a rail which was struck by a cannon ball—since that time my knee has grown worse until it is impossible for me to march on foot.”

His first injury to his right knee occurred on the night of November 11, 1861, while he was wrestling at a camp near Springfield, Missouri. That injury was diagnosed as a rupture of the attachment of the Sartorius muscle. His Medical Certificate of November 16, 1862, said he would be unable to resume his duties as a company commander. His pension papers also list asthma and a hernia as disabilities that were contracted during the winter of 1888 and 1889.



Pea Ridge battle site where Illinois 25th Infantry fought.

The gold rush in the Montana Territory was a magnet drawing men to that frontier. Ray was among those who made the long, arduous trip sometime after his discharge and prior to November of 1865. He established residence in Helena City, County of Edgerton, Montana Territory.

While there, he purchased several mining claims; and, later he and James Scott Brewer,...”led a group of 22 men to the mouth of the Musselshell River with the hope of securing the freight business from that point to Helena City.”⁹ Ray, James S. Brewer and William Jenkerson are credited as being the first people to “open up the Musselshell country.”¹⁰

While working to secure the freight business to the Musselshell, Ray was mining for gold in Helena City. On November 18, 1865, he and A. Fall, together purchased a quartz claim from an individual named R. Flormann for \$75.¹¹ That investment immediately turned a profit because Ray sold his half of the claim to A. Fall on November 29, 1865 for \$500.¹²

One week later, on December 6, 1865, Ray granted his Power-of-Attorney to Richard A. Hungerford, of Onarga, Iroquois County, Illinois for the purpose of selling any and all property to which he was entitled to and any and all property his wife, Mary was entitled to in Iroquois County, Illinois.¹³ The cash from that sale went to Ray, in Helena City, County of Edgerton, Montana Territory. The last payment on that property was to go to Mary Andrews, who apparently was still living in Illinois.

On February 9, 1866, Ray and Jas. Lane Smith paid E. H. Harrison \$100 for another quartz claim. That transaction was recorded in the Edgerton County Clerk and Records Office on March 16, 1866.¹⁴

On March 20, 1866, four days after the above transaction was recorded, Ray sold lots 5 and 6 of block 14 in Onarga, to Thomas J. Wood for \$500. The very next day Mary bought the same lots from Mr. Wood.¹⁵

Since Montana was not yet a State, it was subject to federal oversight. “Amid the chaos of the closing months of the Civil War and the aftermath of Lincoln’s assassination, Montana was largely forgotten in Washington and key federal positions remained unfilled”¹⁶ The Montana governor, Edgerton, was forced to resign as governor of the Montana Territory in 1866 for political reasons.

⁹ “*Life and Death at the Mouth of the Musselshell*, Edited by H. Duane Hampton, Stoneydale Press Publishing Company, 2011, page 175

¹⁰ *Ibid.* page 186

¹¹ Lewis and Clark County Clerk and Recorder’s office, grantee book D, page 41. Deed indicates that Ray W. Andrews and A. Falls paid \$75 to R. Flormann for mining claim No. 2, South West on the Brunkswick Lode near 7 and 10 Mile Creeks in Edgerton County. The deed was witnessed by J. S. Brewer and J. A. Milligan. Note: Edgerton County was later changed in name to Lewis and Clark County.

¹² Lewis and Clark County Clerk and Recorder’s office, grantee book D, page 74.

¹³ The Power of Attorney was granted on December 6, 1865 in Edgerton County, Montana Territory and recorded on March 23, 1866 in the Iroquois Clerk and Records Office, Onarga, Illinois, page 630.

¹⁴ Lewis and Clark County Clerk and Recorder’s office, book E, page 7. The claim was located on the southerly ½ of discovery 100 feet; also west and northerly (containing 200 feet) on the Harrison Lode. J. W. Carter signed as a witness to the transaction.

¹⁵ Iroquois County deeds book, page 631, recorded March 16, 1866

¹⁶ *Montana A History of Two Centuries*, Michael P Malone, Richard B Roeder, and William L Lang, University of Washington Press, Seattle and London, page 100

He was replaced by Thomas Francis Meagher, who was appointed acting governor. The Montana Democrats and Republicans were sharply divided over many issues which led to the first territorial legislature adjourning without passing a redistricting bill. As a result, acting governor Meagher “called the lawmakers to assemble in Virginia City on March 5, 1866”.¹⁷

Statehood was an important political issue; and though Montana lacked sufficient population to justify statehood, Congress had allowed Nevada to become a state two years prior in spite of its small population. Territories desiring statehood were required to submit a state constitution for congressional approval; so, acting governor Meagher “summoned a constitutional convention to meet in Helena on March 26, 1866”.¹⁸

The political infighting was so bad that both sessions ended in pandemonium. The Republicans charged that both sessions were illegally called and the majority of the Territorial Supreme Court declared all acts of the second session null and void. But the acting governor and the Democratic legislature simply ignored the ruling.

An election was held in September of 1866 and Ray W. Andrews was elected to represent Edgerton County at the Third Extraordinary Session of the Montana Territorial Legislature which was held during the winter of 1866-67.¹⁹ At that session, Ray was appointed to serve on the Elections Standing Committee for the House. He served in that capacity with C. P. Blakely and J. Donegan.

Obviously, Mary Andrews and the three children had moved to Helena City by the time the Third Session met because Douglas A. Andrews, Ray’s 13 year old son, was appointed and served as a page in the House of Representatives.²⁰

A House Bill (No.4) was introduced authorizing and empowering Ray W. Andrews to establish, maintain, and operate a ferry across the Missouri river at or near the Musselshell River. That Bill was amended on November 12, 1866.²¹ It was reported on November 24, 1866 that House Bill No.4 had been correctly enrolled and presented to the Governor for his approval.²²

¹⁷ Ibid., page 101

¹⁸ Ibid., page 102

¹⁹ 6,639 total votes were cast in the September, 1866 election. Edgerton County, the largest county in the Territory, recorded a total of 2,206 votes.

²⁰ Douglas A. Andrews was recognized and officially thanked by members of the House of Representatives on December 15, 1866.

²¹ House Journal – Third Session, page 59, reads “that Ray W. Andrews is authorized and empowered to establish, maintain and operate a ferry across the Missouri River at or near the Mouth of the Musselshell river, for the term of fifteen years from the passage of this act, and shall be entitled to the exclusive control of the banks of said river, for a distance of two miles and a half each way from the point where said ferry shall be located, together with all the privileges, and subject to the conditions prescribed by law and by this act.” That report was received and adopted.

²² Council Journal of the Third Session, page 142.

In sheer rage and frustration, the Montana Republicans sent a representative to Washington to ask Congress to declare the acting governor's legislative sessions illegal. "In a highly unusual move in late February 1867, the Radical Republican leadership in Congress pushed through a measure declaring the second and third Montana legislatures null and void."²³ That act ended Ray's hope of having a legally recognized ferry crossing on the Missouri River near the mouth of the Musselshell.

A listing in the 1868 Helena City Directory indicates that Ray maintained a residence on Ewing Street. That listing simply read: "R. W. Andrews, ILL., Miner, Ewing Street."

Ray and Mary obviously owned other property because they sold a city lot at Bridge and Dry Street in Helena City in August of 1868. The recorded deed indicates that Lot 7, Block 5, at Bridge and Dry Street was sold to M. Simon, Joseph, Isaac and Johnson Pinchover for \$100.²⁴

After the sale of that property Mary and the children must have remained in Helena City and Ray took up residence in a very primitive community which had formed on the banks of the Musselshell River near the spot he intended to establish a ferry. C. M. Lee, a gunsmith and merchant, was among those living on the Musselshell. Lee kept a record of the daily events occurring on the Musselshell in a diary which ran from 1868 to 1872.²⁵ Numerous entries describe events Ray was involved in from September 8, 1868 until May 31, 1869.

Lee's diary has been published in a book titled: *Life and Death at the Mouth of the Musselshell*. The book's editor, H. Duane Hampton, notes that "Many of C. M. Lee's days—even weeks—were uneventful, and a number of entries reflect the monotony. Other days, however, were filled to overflowing with an excitement, a very real danger and an enveloping fear that few modern persons living outside an active war zone have ever experienced. Tragedy is here, both human and environmental tragedy. Men kill one another, and the journal entries that report the event are matter of fact in tone; these men exterminate surprisingly large numbers of bison, antelope, and wolves. The journal describes 19th century entrepreneurs and laborers attempting to make a living in taming the wilderness, with little care or concern for the results of their taming. They were exploiters, pure and simple. They exploited the land and the animals, and the indigenous people. They even exploited one another."²⁶

²³ Ob sit, Malone, Roeder, and Lang, page 102.

²⁴ Lewis and Clark County Clerk and Recorder's Office, Book H, page 251.

²⁵ *Life and Death at the Mouth of the Musselshell*, Edited by H. Duane Hampton, Stoneydale Press Publishing Company, Stevensville, Montana, 2011

²⁶ *Ibid.*, page 19

Ray was very active member of the Musselshell community. "One newspaper item described him as: 'Captain Andrews, the ubiquitous, is practicing law, medicine, surgery and dentistry, whacking bulls, poisoning wolves, chopping wood, killing buffalo, building houses, and making himself generally useful.'²⁷ At least part of that description must be accurate because most of the men living on the Musselshell made their living by chopping wood that was sold to the river boats that traveled on the Missouri River. They also killed and skinned buffalo for pleasure, sometimes for food and they made money selling the hides. Dead buffalo were often left at the place they had been shot and cyanide was poured on their body. Wolves attracted to the dead buffalo would die from ingesting the cyanide. Hunters would return to collect and skin the wolves and later sell the hides. Lee's diary contains numerous references to Ray's involvement in all those activities.

No doubt the most memorable of Ray's experiences were the two Indian attacks in which he nearly lost his life. The first attack occurred on March 22, 1869 and the following is Lee's account of that attack.

"March 22. Warm. Three teams and 6 men were busy today hauling logs from the first point up the Musselshell. One team, Jack Masterson, Tom Stewart, Jake Leader, and Charley Morrison were out in the timber. Captain Andrews, with his team, was just coming in loaded about half a mile distant, and Bruer, with his team, was going back empty a few hundred yards away from the stockades, and everybody laying around heedless of danger.

Jennie, the only white woman in the place, and two Crow squaws were out about as far as Bruer's, but in low place to one side of the road where they could not be seen from here, on their way in. A party of 4 or 5 Sioux Indians on foot raised their yell on the hill to the right of the road about half a mile distant, and rushed for the teams and women. I was just coming out of the shop with a loaded gun to fire at a target as the alarm was raised: then the Indians were about half way down the hill, and scattered in every direction. Bruer had abandoned his team and was making good time in the direction of the M. H. & F. Co. stockade.

Captain Andrews' team was apparently standing still, while he was making towards the Musselshell River closely pursued by 10 or 12 devils that came in behind him. While the women could not be seen, Bruer, I saw fire a couple of shots with his Henry then disappeared behind the stockade. I rushed back into the shop and seized some more ammunition and a couple of revolvers. By this time nearly every man in the place was out with his gun. Some of the Indians were within 300 yards of my house and were scattered all over the bottom.

One of the squaws had received a shot through the thigh, and Jennie, in stopping to assist her to her feet had received a shot through the neck that stunned her and had been scalped not over two hundred and fifty yards distant. As a lot of us passed behind my house, we met the two squaws coming in at the top of their speed, but none of us had any idea of Jennie being there.

²⁷ Ibid, page 173

We saw the Indian raise up and strike at something with his coup stick, then break and run as Veits opened on him with his Henry rifle, while I began firing at some across the flat. At the same time the firing became general from all quarters and the men fast approaching the Indians who instantly began to retreat as fast as they came.

In a few moments Captain Andrews came in safe and sound and began to inquire for Jennie, which was the first intimation any of us had of her being outside of her house. She was soon found and brought in still alive but shot through the side of the neck and scalped. At the same time a party went out to the timber and got the Col. 's oxen. They were just in time as the Indians were driving them off as they came up.

On their way out they were found by the party that were in timber at the time of the attack, who had escaped by crossing and re-crossing the Musselshell. The Indians kept firing at long range but their ball did not come in heavy. Nobody hurt but the women. All of the cattle are wounded. Some of them will die or have to be killed.

During the fight, a couple of Crow Indians of the last war party came in on the other side causing some alarm over there. They report 300 lodges of Sioux at Round Butte some 50 or 60 miles below and that the country is full of their war parties. Also they stole a lot of horses, but the Sioux overtook them and they had to leave them and escape the best they could., and could not tell where the balance of their party was. The Sioux today shouted to us that they were two hundred strong and would give us a fight again tomorrow."²⁸

There was no sign of the Sioux the following day, but Ray had to kill one of his wounded oxen; and the following day another frontiersman known as the Colonel had to kill one of his oxen.

The second Indian attack occurred on May 8, 1869. Lee's graphic description follows:

May 8. Warm and the river slowly rising. Cloudy today. About 9 o'clock this morning Davis and some squaws were out on the bank of the Musselshell River getting wood when they were fired upon by a party of Indians and run in by them, one ball passing through Davis' squaw's clothes and barely touching the skin on her arm.

At the first alarm nearly every man seized his gun and gave the devils chase for a half mile where some 40 of them cached themselves in a small coolie that runs into the Musselshell River, evidently for the purpose of allowing our party to pass them and cut them off. But instead of doing that our party instantly surrounded them and kept up such a fire with their breech loaders that an Indian could scarcely show his head nor the balance of the Indians could not come to the rescue.

Not knowing the force of the coolie exactly, our boys kept crowding up slowly until two of them were shot. Jake Leader through the head and killed instantly, and a moment afterwards, Greenwood received a shot in his left shoulder that lodged in his body. This slightly checked, the balance some 12 or 15 in number, until a

²⁸ Ibid. pgs. 50, 51

reinforcement of 8 or 10 good men from the other side arrived, and they determined to settle old scores right there. About this time it began to rain hard, but no one paid any attention to the weather as all were armed with breech loaders using metallic cartridges.

After skirmishing around two or three hours it was evident that there were no Indians in the brush opposite the coolie in which the Indians were secreted across the Musselshell. Three men succeeded in gaining a point in the brush not over 75 or 100 yards distant from the mouth of the coolie where they had a good view of the situation of the Indians and opened a deadly fire upon them. At this stage of the action the situation of the Indians was desperate indeed. The long rain had rendered their flintlocks nearly useless and destroyed the elasticity of their bows.”²⁹

According to author John S. Gray, in his written account of the battle, “Young Henry McDonald suggested that a few of the men sneak across the Musselshell to get in the rear of the enemy and flush them out into range of the others. He was promptly joined by Frank Smith, husband of the scalped spouse, Jennie Smith, and Frenchy Girard, the refugee from an earlier Indian raid.

The Indians spotted them and unlimbered their rain-soaked weapons in a futile effort to prevent the crossing of the daring trio who were wading in water to their armpits. McDonald’s buckskin pants became so stretched in the water that he kicked them off to fight the rest of the battle bare.

The white men positioned themselves opposite the open mouth of the coulee and were firing into it when, unfortunately, the main party from the stockade mistook their flesh-colored buckskins for Indian epidermis, and began shooting at the wrong target. Grinnell, Girard and McDonald had to beat a disgusted retreat back across the river.

Having cleared the script with their colleagues, another more successful attempt was made, in which McDonald was replaced by Jim Wells, another survivor of a disastrous Indian attack the preceding fall. Wells, Smith, and Girard crossed the stream farther up and maneuvered to the rear of the trapped Indians. When they delivered a rapid fire straight up the open mouth of the coulee, the desperate braves fled from concealment out into a withering cross-fire from waiting whites. Many dashed for the river, only to bog down in mud and weeds. Not one would have escaped had it not been for the whites in the safe perimeter who fired indiscriminately at friend and foe alike. Within minutes the fight was over.”³⁰

Lee’s diary notes that...”*For a few moments only did they stand this raking fire, then made a desperate rush to escape. Several hit the dust in a short distance and not a few were seen to stagger and fall as they ran, those escaped into the brush. Six were found dead in the hole. In all, there were thirteen of what can with safety be called, good Indians.*

²⁹ Ibid. pages 50, 51

³⁰ Fight on the Musselshell, by John S. Gray, in *The True West*, Nov. – Dec. 1965, Vol.13, No.2, whole No. 72, on file at the Montana State Historical Society, Helena, Montana

When the boys made the rush upon the Indians, several of them were still able to sit up, but no questions were given or received. A rifle or revolver placed alongside of their head soon terminated their earthly career, and perchance before the body was done quivering, the scalp was dangling at the wampum of some desperate individual who was anxious to preserve some trophy of the fight.”³¹

“Already the Crow squaws of the post, having assembled near the field, were executing a war dance in the rain to celebrate the imminent defeat of their tribal enemies. McDonald later wrote, ‘After the battle I passed by them on my way to the settlement to get some clothes for myself, and their attentions were rather embarrassing in my undressed condition.’

This is the last touch of humor in this incident; all the rest is shocking and gruesome. It should be remembered however, that gallantry on the field was a characteristic devoid of survival value in Indian country. The frontiersmen most active in this affair had all suffered and suffered recently, at the hands of the red man. They were out to even the score. Their feelings and attitudes were not those of the detached observer a century later and a thousand miles distant.”³²

John Johnson set the example of mutilation by cutting off the head of one that he declared was his meat and by cutting him open and taking a piece of the liver to put a taste in his mouth. The example was contagious, for I assure you they were men that had no tender sympathies for poor Mr. Lo or any of his family. In fact, most of them had buried the mangled remains of friends or comrades too often to not retaliate. The only alternative an Indian fears the more terrible the retaliation, the sooner he is ready for peace.”³³

As a result of this battle, John Johnson was given the name, “Liver Eating” Johnson” and he is also known as Jeremiah Johnson. “According to J. J. Healy, Johnson had been a sailor and whaler until he was nearly 40 years old...He was a giant and a wonder in his way...a man about six feet two inches and weighted about 250 pounds and did not have a bit of spare flesh on him...he was a fine offhand shot...and had a voice on him like a buffalo bull”³⁴

The following day, May 9, Lee writes in his diary...

”Today a party went out and examined the brush on the other side of the Musselshell River and discovered the Indian’s camp with all their baggage. So terribly frightened were they that they never stopped to pick up a thing. From appearances they must have been laying in wait for several days to get a favorable opportunity. Nearly everybody today has plenty of Indian trophies that they are busy cleaning and drying.

³¹ Ibid., Lee, pg. 54,

³² Ibid. Gray, pg 29

³³ Ibid, pgs 53 and 54

³⁴ Ibid pg 187

Captain Andrews is busy as he says, advancing the interests of science, by boiling and cleaning the skulls of the dead Indians. The balance of the carcass being left to feed the wolves. Among the relics of the battle are 13 scalps, 6 or 8 guns, a lot of bows and arrows, butcher knives, tin cups, canteens, buffalo robes, war bonnets, and a lot of their medicine bags, besides the clean and grinning skulls. Greenwood, I think, is not dangerously ill, though seriously wounded."³⁵

Five days later the first river boat, the *Deer Lodge*, arrived. Lee writes,

*"She left Sioux City April 6th. The river is in good stage. Several men left here on the boat for the upper river...One boy got off the boat for the M. H. & F. Co house. Captain Andrews had his Indian relics systematically arranged and labeled and exposed to the public view on the levee. They were a great curiosity to Pilgrims and steamboat men."*³⁶

On either May 20 or 21, Lee was not sure which, a second river boat, *Importer*, arrived. Lee noted in his diary, *"T. C. Power and family on board with some friends. They are deadly opposed to the prosperity of this place. After looking at Captain Andrews' show of relics Mrs. Power remarked that she would like to see the savage that cleaned those skulls. In charity for her, we will presume that she has never had any near or dear friend murdered, mutilated, nor outraged, or she would not speak so slightly of the efforts of brave men to preserve themselves from a similar fate, nor of their justly feeling proud of their achievements."*³⁷

*"The temper of the times is best revealed by the closing paragraph of the Helena newspaper account of the fight. 'Next to the skulls were three bottles containing pickled Indian ears, which present quite a saucy appearance. Above, suspended on poles, were numerous scalps, war bonnets, coup-sticks, medicine poles, hatchets, knives, bows and arrows, and various other trophies—the whole forming a very imposing and curious museum.'"*³⁸

On May 23, Ray sold his yoke of cattle, and on May 31, 1869, he boarded the river boat *Nile* and left the Musselshell for the "states". One of the Musselshell frontiersmen, Henry McDonald, reported that Captain Andrews took the skulls on a lecturing tour throughout the states.³⁹ However, that claim has never been substantiated.

The 1870 census has Mary living with her daughter, Ella, and sons, Douglass (sic) and Colonel, in Onarga. She owns real estate valued at \$3000 and has personal property worth \$400. Ray is not listed in that census.

³⁵ Ibid pgs 54 and 55

³⁶ Ibid pg 55

³⁷ Ibid, Lee, pg 55

³⁸ Ibid, Gray, pg 50

³⁹ Ibid, Lee, pg. 173

But the 1875 census of Olathe, Kansas, has Ray, age 51, and Mary, age 42, living together again in Olathe. Their sons, Douglas and Colonel, are also living with their parents. Douglas is working as a printer and he owns \$130 worth of personal property. Ray was working as a gardener; he owns real estate valued at \$460 and personal property valued at \$194. That census shows Ray came to Kansas from Montana.

That same census, 1875, shows Mary's brother, Theodore Leroy Wiswell, and his wife, Isabel, living in Olathe with their seven children and Rebecca Miller, Mary and Theodore's mother. Theodore was working with patent rights. The family had moved to Olathe by 1870.



Mary Andrews' gravestone

According to the census of 1880, Ray and Mary are again living apart in Olathe City, Johnson County, Kansas. Mary, age 47, lives 5 households from Ray. Her son, Colonel C. Andrews, lives with her. That census lists Ray's age as 55 and indicates he was born about 1825 in Ohio. He reported that both his parents were born in Ohio, and Colonel C. Andrews' census record shows his father, Ray W., was born in Ohio. In 1880, Ella Dayton, Mary's daughter, and Ella's husband, Charles, are living in Olathe next door to Mary and Colonel.

Mary Andrews died January 27, 1881 in Johnson County, Kansas, and was buried in the Olathe Cemetery, Olathe, Kansas.

On July 12, 1883, a marriage license was issued by the Office of the Probate Judge of Johnson County, Kansas, allowing Ray W. Andrews, age 55 and Louie Renfrew, age 31, to be married. There is no evidence such a marriage was ever performed. They both swore they were unmarried at that time and were capable of entering into a marriage. ([If] Ray was born in 1824, he would have been 51, rather than 55, at the time the marriage license was issued. [Thus another age inconsistency.]

Rebecca Lockwood Wiswell Miller, Mary's mother and Ray's mother-in-law died December 21, 1888. Her will, recorded on January 2, 1889, distributed her assets to her living descendents, including her deceased daughter Polly (Mary) Andrews' children, Ella Dayton, Douglas A. Andrews and Colonel C. Andrews. Ray, her son-in-law, was awarded \$5 and another \$100 to be used to erect a monument at the head of the grave of her daughter, Polly (Mary) Andrews. The \$100 was also to be used to pay Rebecca's funeral expenses and to erect a stone at her grave.

Ray W. Andrews was admitted to the U. S. National Military Home for Soldiers and Sailors in Delaware Township, Leavenworth County, Kansas, on August 9, 1889. On July 5, 1890, he applied for a military pension on the basis he was disabled due to a double inguinal hernia that left him unable to earn his support. The application was approved on July 8, 1890. He was awarded \$12 a month.

Domiciliary at Leavenworth Old Soldiers Home



In September of 1899, Ray W. Andrews suffered injuries from a beating he endured near the Soldiers Home in Leavenworth, Kansas. Nora Wiswell, Ray's niece and the fiancée of Ray's grandson, Jesse Andrews, received two letters that reported the incident. A letter dated September 24, 1899, to Nora from Jesse stated: "Pa (Douglas Andrews) leaves 3:30 in the Morning for K.C. to see his father. Grandpa got his arm broke and is in bad shape and Uncle Curn wired for Pa to come on first train."⁴⁰ Then, in a letter dated November 8, 1899, Douglas Andrews wrote Nora saying that his father was walking from Leavenworth out to the Soldiers home when two men rode him down and beat him. On October 1, 1899, Nora wrote a letter to Douglas saying: "*I was so sorry to hear of Uncle Rays' accident and hope he is better by now.*"⁴¹ Apparently he did recover because on November 15, 1899, Nora wrote Jesse: "*I was so glad to hear Grandpa (Jesse's grandfather) was getting along so well.*"⁴²

The 1900 census lists Ray W. Andrews, age 76, as an inmate at the US National Military Home for Soldiers and Sailors in Leavenworth County, Kansas. That census lists him as a widow. That census also indicates that both his parents were born in Scotland. (All other census records list Ray's parents' place of birth as Ohio)

Ray W. Andrews received his last military pension payment on February 12, 1905 and he died on February 27, 1905.

⁴⁰ Distant Devotions

⁴¹ Distant Devotions

⁴² Distant Devotions

Personal information obtained from the National Archives, Central Plains Region includes the following additional information:

Height: 5'9"

Occupation: Gardner

Residence subsequent to discharge: Missouri

Nearest relative: C. C. Andrews, Kansas City, Missouri

Rate of pension: \$12.00 (about \$250 in 2006's money)

Date of Admission: August 9, 1889

Date of death: February 27, 1905

Cause of death: cerebral hemorrhage

Pension Certificate: #588.805 sent to U. S. Pension Agency Feb.27, 1905

Personal effects: money on person - \$6.00/pension \$114

A grave number was written on the file and then crossed out. The number crossed out is 2677.

Raymond W. Andrews died at Western Branch Hospital on February 27, 1905, at 7:50AM and was buried on February 28 at 2:30PM. Records indicate that his son, C. C. Andrews was notified and that in response to an order given by C. C. Andrews, Raymond W. Andrews' body was delivered to Olathe, Kansas, for burial. Archive records indicate that a grave number was written in Raymond's file and then crossed out. That number was #2677. It appears that he was indeed buried and then exhumed and his remains sent to Olathe, Kansas, for final burial.

On March 2, 1905, the Olathe, Kansas, Mirror reported that "Capt. Ray W. Andrews, aged 82 years, one of the old residents and history makers of Olathe, died at the Soldiers' home in Leavenworth, Sunday, February 26. The body was brought to this city for internment, and the funeral services were held at Ryan's undertaking parlors, Tuesday of this week. Local G. A. R. friends acted as pallbearers, and the body was followed to its last resting place by many of the deceased's old comrades in arms. As space forbids and extended notice of this issue of the Mirror, suffice it to say Capt. Andrew's death removes one of our oldest citizens."⁴³



Cemetery records indicate that Ray Andrews is buried between Mary Andrews and Rebecca Lockwood. One stone does carry both Mary and Rebecca's names, but no stone marks Ray's grave.

Ray's military service was acknowledged on Saturday, October 15, 2011, on the 150th Year Commemoration of the Civil War, when ten Civil War military markers were dedicated at the Olathe Memorial Cemetery in Olathe, Kansas. One of those stones marked Ray W. Andrews' grave. The stones were obtained and laid through the efforts of the American Legion, Earl Collier Post, 153.

⁴³ Olathe Mirror, Olathe Kansas, March 2, 1905, page #3

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