

FRANK H. PIXLEY

On the 10th of the past month (January 1883) our quiet community was startled by the intelligence that the young man who's name heads this article had met his death by a kick of a horse, which he was helping to handle in the street of this village. The injury was purely accidentally, apparently without the special fault or neglect of anyone, and was one of those untoward events which may happen any time, even to the most prudent.

He belonged to one of the oldest families in this county, was widely known and esteemed, and a brief notice of his life is due alike to his memory and to the feelings of his numerous friends.

Frank H. Pixley was born upon the old Pixley homestead 1 ½ miles southwest of this village, in the year 1845. He was the youngest of a family of 13 children (five sons and eight daughters) ten of whom survive him. He was the son of Jonathan and Polly Pixley, who settled in May, 1831, upon the farm in this (Avon) township, which has ever since been the family homestead.

Frank remained at home after the usual manner of farmers' boys, until the second year of the war and the 18th year of his age. He felt a strong desire to serve his country in the war for the Union, and so earnest was his patriotic feeling that he concealed from the officer a few weeks of his true age in order that he might gain admission to the ranks as a soldier.

He enlisted in the 24th regiment of Michigan Infantry, Company 'F', and was enrolled (at Detroit, Aug. 11, 1862), for three years, or during the war. He immediately went forward with his regiment to Washington, where, in August, they were enrolled in the 'Iron Brigade' in the First Army Corps, Army of the Potomac, under command of General Wadsworth. This famous brigade was one of the great fighting brigades of the war, and was composed of the Second Wisconsin, Minnesota, Indiana, Sixth Wisconsin, Twenty-Fourth Michigan, and Seventh Wisconsin Regiments. It fought through the entire war to Lee's surrender at Appomattox, and was in the battles for Gainesville, Second Bull Run, South Mountain, Fredericksburg, Antietam, Fitz Hugh's Crossing, Gettysburg, Chancellorsville, Mine Run, Spotsylvania, Wilderness, Laurel Hill, Cold Arbor, North Ann, Petersburg, Hatcher's Run, Weldon Railroad, and Five Forks, and closed its grand career upon the immortal day of Appomattox.

Through all those long, dark days and years Frank was at the front, in the weariness of the march and heat of the conflict, in the anguish of disease and the danger of the charge, in the gloom of prison or the rapture of victory, one of the coolest, bravest, most patient, most faithful and most hopeful soldiers of his brave regiment. This is the universal verdict and report of those marched and fought and starved and suffered and triumphed by his side.

He was honorably discharged and mustered out of service as a corporal at Detroit, June 30, 1865.

For two years after his discharge he resided at Detroit, and was there married to Miss Lula Hanselman, on Sept. 20, 1871, who, with two bright little daughters, aged 8 and 10 years, survive to mourn his death.

From Detroit he came, with his little family to reside near his aged and widowed mother upon the old homestead in Avon and there maintained his residence until his death.

He was kind, generous, industrious, and true hearted. Malice or hatred never found a place in his heart and it was not in his nature to do ill to any one. He was not endowed with a brilliant genius; his station in life was not exalted, as some count exaltation; yet he possessed the two brightest powers of a noble Creator – a true heart and an honest manhood.

Then let us drop a tear upon Frank's lonely, snowy grave, with the wish that this world had more of his plain honesty, his manly courage, and his unselfish, truehearted affection.

Rochester, Feb. 5, 1883 Newspaper Clipping