

Commemorative Biographical Encyclopedia of the Juniata Valley, Comprising the Counties of Huntingdon, Mifflin, Juniata, and Perry, Pennsylvania, J. M. Runk and Company, Publishers 1897

George Washington Wert, farmer, Millerstown, Perry County, Pa., was born in Greenwood Township, Perry County, March 28, 1843. His education was received in the common schools. At the age of eight years, he went from his home to earn his own living, and for a number of years was in the employ of **George Ulsh** doing chores on the farm, and in the winter attending school, his compensation being his board and clothing, excepting for the last two years, during which he was paid three dollars per month in addition. For the next two years he worked for **Isaac Lenkard** for eight dollars per month, after which he came home and worked on the farm for his father until September, 1861, when he enlisted in the United States military service at Duncannon, Pa., being assigned to Company A, Ninth Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry, First Brigade, Third Cavalry Division. The company was commanded by **Capt. Griffith Jones**, who was later promoted and his place filled by **Capt. Charles A. Appel**, who being also promoted, his place was taken by **Capt. John Boal**, killed March 16, 1865, at Averysboro, N. C. Captain Boal's place was filled by **Capt. William M. Potter**, who was wounded at Readyville, Tenn., September 6, 1864. At Carters Station. **Mr. Wert** was struck by a ball; and again at Cripple Creek, a ball having passed through his captain's arm, struck **Mr. Wert** in the right hand. His next wound was received at Griswold Station; a minnie ball entered his left leg near the hip, and passing downward, lodged in his leg and still remains. This wound was received in a hand to hand encounter with a rebel soldier, who thrust a revolver into **Mr. Wert's** face and called on him to surrender, but seeing, as he looked directly into the muzzle of the revolver, that it contained only one ball, **Mr. Wert** resolved to risk all and make a desperate fight. He quickly raised his hand and struck the revolver just as the shot went off; and the ball entered his leg as described. Then he wheeled his horse and made a dash for liberty through the rebels who had come in between him and his regiment, and as he spurred his horse to utmost speed, received from the rebels a volley of bullets, nine of which pierced his overcoat, and one scarred his back. After reaching his regiment his colonel asked him where he was wounded; he did not want to tell, as they were about to make an assault on the rebels, and he wanted to take part and secure revenge for his wounds. But his colonel, seeing that **Mr. Wert** was faint from loss of blood, sent him back to the field hospital, where he lay for one day, and was taken thence in an ambulance, with the army, to Savannah, Ga., there he lay in a rice house for two days, whence he was conveyed to Beaufort, S. C., lay there for two weeks, and was then taken to Davies Island, New York Harbor, where for two months he was under the care of Dr. De Witt, called by the soldiers "Dr. Witless." In April, 1865, he was released from the hospital, rejoined his regiment at Lexington, N. C., and remained with it until he was mustered out of the service, at this point, in July, 1865. He received an honorable discharge at Harrisburg, Pa.

At Greenwald Station, one of the regiment, **William Cauffman**, having had his right leg shot off, was lying on the field, almost perishing for water, and begged his comrade, **John Fritz**, to get him a drink; but as the nearest place for obtaining the cooling beverage was a point within the rebel lines, **Fritz** refused to go for it, saying he would not risk his life for a drink of water for anybody. **Cauffman** then said, "If **Wert** were here he would go through h—l to do it for me," and **Wert**, overhearing the remark, and determined not to fall below the estimate of his comrade for courage and self sacrifice, forthwith dashed into the rebel camp, snatched a bucket of water

and two tin cups from a table, and returned to his comrade with the refreshing draught. Such deeds of unselfish heroism were not infrequent during the memorable days of conflict. **Mr. Wert** had a wide and well sustained reputation among his comrades as a practical joker, and they tell many stories of his mirth-provoking proceedings. One such incident is the following: on an occasion when he was detailed to aid in harnessing and hitching up a mule train, one of the mules was very refractory, unmanageable and even vicious. When **Mr. Wert** was proceeding to put the harness on this animal, he reared on his hind legs and placed his forelegs on **Wert's** shoulders, one on each. **Wert** instantly caught the mule's hoofs, one in each hand, and resolutely and firmly held the animal in this position until his comrades had buckled on the harness. Upon reaching home at the close of the war **Mr. Wert** resumed work on the farm, and cleared seven acres for his father, with whom he remained for three years. In the fall of 1868, he was thrown under a team and was severely kicked in the breast and shoulders by a horse. In the spring of 1867, after his marriage, he settled on the farm he now owns, resided there three years, then removed to Reading, Pa., and lived there two years, during which time he was engaged in general work. His next removal was back to his farm; there he remained until 1876, and then returned to Reading, where he was employed in railroad business for several years. In March, 1877, he met with the painful accident of having his two fingers mashed between couplers, and in July, 1878, he had his right heel crushed in the same way. On February 25, 1879, he was struck by a locomotive and thrown under moving cars, thus being disabled for twenty-six days. At Womelsdorf, Pa., September 2, 1879, he had three fingers crushed while coupling cars, and on account of this accident lost one week's time. At Lebanon, Pa., on February 25, 1882, his leg was crushed under the wheels of a Pennsylvania railroad stock car, and this laid him up for four months. On March 17, 1883, **Mr. Wert** returned to the farm which he bought from his father two years before. In the fall of 1886, while threshing at the home of his father, he was struck on the cheek by a piece of casting and received a painful wound. While he was splitting rails, Friday, January 28, 1887, the axe rebounded with great force and struck him above the eye. While hauling lumber February 16, 1887, the wagon overturned badly breaking both of his wrists. Only a wonderfully strong constitution and remarkable vitality coupled with the splendid pluck of **Mr. Wert** have sustained him under these injuries and secured his recovery. He holds membership in the Duncannon Post G. A. R.

Mr. Wert takes an active part in politics, and is one of the hard workers of his party. He served as tax collector in 1885. Many accidents, reverses and disappointments have fallen to his lot, but his successes and good fortunes have been more numerous and uniform, and he is perennially jovial, and kindly, enjoying his own blessings and delighting in the welfare of his friends; he is therefore popular and highly esteemed.

In the spring of 1867, **Mr. Wert** was married in Greenwood Township, to **Anna M. Rowe**, born in Lancaster County, Pa., September 14, 1848, daughter of **Henry** and **Anna Mary (Clark) Rowe**. The parents of **Mrs. Wert** were natives of Lancaster County, Pa. In 1864, **Mr. Rowe** and family removed to Juniata County, Pa., and in the following year to Pfoutz Valley, where their daughter was married in 1867, after which her parents removed to Berks County, Pa., and there died.

The following is the list of battles participated in by **Mr. Wert**: Tompkinsville, Ky., July 19, 1862; Paris, Ky., July 29, 1862; Richmond, Ky., September 2, 1862; Perryville, Ky., October 8,

1862; Carter's raid into Tennessee, twenty-one days; Franklin, Tenn., March 4, 1862; Thompsons Station, Tenn., March 4 and 5, 1862; Spring Hill, Tenn., March 10, 1863; Brentwood, Tenn., March 25, 1863; Franklin, Tenn., April 10, 1863; Harpeth Creek, Tenn., June 4, 1863; Triune, Tenn., June 11, 1863; Rover, Tenn., June 24, 1863; Middletown, Tenn., June 25, 1863; Shelbyville, Tenn.; La Fayette, Ga.; Chickamauga, Tenn., September 19, 20, 21, 1863; New Market, Ala., October 6, 1863; Dandridge, Tenn., December 24, 1863; Mossy Creek, Tenn., December 26, 27 and 29, 1863; Dandridge, Tenn., January 16, 1864; Sevierville, Tenn., January 26, 1864; Fair Garden, Tenn., January 27, 1864; Readyville, Tenn., September 6, 1864; Lovejoy Station, Ga., November 16, 1864; Macon, Ga., November 20, 1864; and Griswold Station, Ga., November 22, 1864.

www.theperryhistorians.org