

Notes on Benjamin Nadow's Civil War pension file records

by Conrad W. Terrill

These notes were made 18 Oct. 1983 at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., on examination of the the Civil War pension file records for Benjamin Nedow, Private, Co. G, 2nd Reg. Mass. Hvy. Art'y Vols. The records concern his disability pension and Mary Nadow's widow's pension. I don't know whether or not these notes cover all the records in the file. There were many records, and I xeroxed only a few of those on which I took notes, since my primary purpose was to collect enough information to write up the story of Benjamin Nadow's Civil War experiences, as part of a story on the Benjamin Nadow Sr. family for my father, for Christmas 1983. I think I might have glanced at Benjamin Nadow's service records (a separate, much smaller, folder) and decided not to bother making notes on them since they contain so little information in comparison with the pension records. Anyways, they might be summarized at the bottom of p. 6 (I believe I found this summary in the pension file).

CWT, 13 Feb. 2011

18 Oct. 1983 - National Archives

Civil War Pension Records - Benjamin Nedow
Private, Co. G, 2nd Reg. Mass. ^{Inf.} Art'y Vols.
Hvy.

Notes: (first perusal.)

born Swanton Vt., 5'5" tall, light complexion, blue eyes, light hair,
shoemaker when enlisted. date of death: May 15, 1899 - prob.

West Swanzey, Cheshire Co., N.H., m. Mary 5 Oct. 1865 (~~Mary does~~
~~not~~

Addresses:

Leffersville, Worcester Co., Mass.; 26 Mar. 1879

21 Feb. 1878

Holden, Worcester Co., Mass

: ~~2 Dec.~~ 18 May 1869.

19 Oct. 1865

28 May 1866

Leffersville

15 Jan. 1878

15 Feb. 1879

W. Swanzey, Cheshire Co., N.H.

29 Nov. 1890

Worcester, Mass. (?)

Ex. 21 Nov. 1868

Mary does not write, 16 May 1899. She was married under the name of Mary Hill (de Cote), on 5 Oct. 1865, by a Justice of the Peace, at Quechee, Vermont (Widow's Test. for Pension, 21 Apr. 1902, Cheshire Co., N.H.). She was not previously married (or if so, left blank the line where the name of her previous husband should have been written). Quechee is a village in the town of Hartford, Vt. She and Benj. were not residents of Vt. when married but were there visiting relatives and acquaintances in that vicinity. She was not married previously. Neither was he. She was 18½ and he 19 when married. "My husband enlisted when he was 16 years old but being a large and fully developed boy was accepted as 18 years old. We have never been divorced and lived together from time of marriage to date of my husband's death." from Gen. Affidavit, 21 Apr. 1902, Cheshire Co., N.H.). Benj. Nedow, Jr. died in Swanzey, May 15, 1899, at age of 54 years, 10 mos., and 4 days. Cause of death, pneumonia complicating disease of heart. (From records of Town Clerk, Swanzey, ~~16 Feb. 1901~~, George I. Cottle, attached sheet to Gen. Affidavit, 21 Apr. 1902)

Mrs. W. D. Knight was Benj. and Mary's daughter. (letter from City Clk. St. Albans, July 16, 1902 to Mrs. W. D. Knight, Keene, N.H., informing her of failure to find their marriage record. In period 1861-68.) Her adr. was 25 Portland St. (letter from town clerk of unnamed town on write on bottom of Mrs. Knight's request to search records, 1865-67. Prob. Blackstone, same town clerk who wrote paper described below, Sam'l E. Pingree.)

Copy from the Registry of baptisms at St. Paul's Church, Blackstone, Mass.: Oct. 14 - 1866 - I baptized Mary, born the 6th of Zephania Nadeau + Mary de Carte (?). Spons - Maxime Nadeau and Harriette Nadeau (?), signed E. Y. Sheridan. The above is a true copy - W. A. Power, Pastor of St. Paul's Church, Dec. 17 - 1901. (Apparently an affidavit on letter paper written by Sheridan and the Pastor for Mrs. Knight, (presumably).)

Gen. App., Cheshire Co. N.H., 7 May 1902. Cyprion ~~Nadeau~~ Nedaw.

Cyprion Nedaw, aged 78, residence, Swansey Factory, N.H. P.O. Ad Keene, N.H. was the father of Benj. Jr. Benj. Jr.'s real name was also Cyprion but he was always called "Ben" or "Benjamin". Mary's maiden name was commonly called "Hill" but was really de Cote. Cyprion signed with his mark X. Sworn before Wm. S. Tuttle, Just.

Benj. Nedaw was captured at Plymouth, N.C., Apr. 20, 1864. He was a prisoner at Andersonville Ga. and other rebel prisons. [He was one of about 30 out of about 250 who were taken prisoner at that time who tried to return. He was retained a prisoner 325 days and when he entered our lines he was ^{very} much reduced in health & strength - that - he was soon after taken down with fever which left him with an affection of the heart, which still exists.]

I take pleasure in certifying to the good conduct and soldierly qualities of said Nedaw, and hope that he may be allowed a pension for the disability incurred by him while in the service.

ABR Sprague

(To whom it may concern)
(personally acquainted with Nedaw)

Late Lt Col 2nd Mass. Hvy Arty
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Sworn before Clk of Police Court, City of Worcester, 28 May 1868.]

Edward Brier and ~~Luther~~ J. Bacon of Holden P.O. Jefferson, know Benj. & Mary since 1865. ^{They Benj. Emma} lived in Jefferson to 1883 (village in Holden), all worked in same Mill. Three children (girls) Mary, Emma, Louise. They

moved to N.H. about 1883 but have been back many times since visiting relatives who still lived here and have seen them on those occasions. (Gen. Aff. 13 Feb. 1902, Co. of Worcester, Mass. for Widow's Claim of Mary, supporting her contention that she was Benj's wife, in lieu of proof of marriage.)

Fred H. Dickerman⁴⁹ and John P. Hill, 69, ^{P.O. W. Swanzen} attested that they have known couple since 1882 or 1883. "Generally regarded as excellent people." Daughters all now married. (Gen. Aff., Cheshire Co., N.H., 26 Apr. 1902.)

Luba Botwin of Keene N.H., P.O. adv. 75 47 Taylor St., aged 79 years, was aunt of Benj. Nedaw, the soldier. Signed w. mark. (Gen. Aff. for Wid's Pension, 8 May 1902, Cheshire Co., N.H.)

(Marriage circular questionnaire. 4 June 1898) Filled out by somebody for Benj. Wife = Mary Hill. Married 1865, St. Albans Vt., Minister. Record = Town Clerk of St. Albans Vt. Not prev. married. Children: Mary b. Oct. 6, 1866; Emma b. Aug. 22, 1868; Lou b. Nov. 27, 1870. Adv. West Swanzen.

Emma became Mrs. Emma Greene ~~for~~ yes.
Zephania Nedaw = Cyprian?

Mary died 17 May 1906 at Keene N.H.

Deposition - Case of Mary Nedaw. 20 Apr. 1903, Tanton, Benj. Nedaw (Father). Benjamin Nedaw, (the father) age 79. P.O. 82 Plain St., occupation none. Benj. was down in West Boylston when he enlisted, ~~do you know~~ (Did you know his wife before he married her?) I knew her father and mother more than 50 yrs ago + saw the ch when she was a little girl. (What was the parents names?) He always went by the name of the Italian. His correct name was Antoine Hill. he lived in Highgate Vt. - the Americans used to call him ~~de~~ ~~Cole~~ Coli once in a while but I don't know why they did it -- but it was not very often he was called anything but Italian. (What is your first name in French?) Pronounced Su-pri-a. my son Benjamin was always called by the French speaking people Supria (?sp.) but by the Americans and all who spoke the English language called him Ben or Benjamin. ~~He~~ lived with Benj (son) five or six years up to the time he died. His widow lives on outskirts of Keene w. daughter. Emma Green

Deposition - Case of Mary Nodow, Taunton, 20 Apr. 1903. Maxim Nodow, age 58, P.O. 82 Plain St. Occupation - none. ~~Benj.~~ [Summary] Benj. "was in Andersonville prison about a year and had what they called starvation fits + he died of them he died in Swansea 6 miles from Keene N.H. his widow is with his daughter - she is paralyzed I think they get their mail from Keene, but she lives a mile and a half out. (Where was Benj. married?) At Swanton Falls or Highgate Vt. after he came home he went to Vt. and got acquainted with this lady + married her. (Who was Cyprina Nodow?) I don't know. (What is Benjamin in French?) Su-pri - a it is pronounced as it is spelled but I don't know the correct spelling of it. (What is Hill in French?) I think it is Hill. (Did you ever hear the name DeCoti?) No sir. (Where did they live when their first child was born?) In Uxbridge Mass. my wife (now deceased) took his child Mary to be baptized, my wife was sponsor for the child. It was a good while ago + I don't recollect what my wife did say to the priest. ... Last saw widow at funeral in May 1899. "My father lived there for a number of years with Benj. until he died + since then he has lived with me. Benj. 3 daughters, all live near Keene.

Mary last paid \$12 to 4 Apr. 1906. Filed claim May 17, 1902.

Benj. admitted? May 18, 1869 at \$4. Heart disease Dec. 1863.

\$4 commencing 11 Aug. 1865. Act of 14 July 1862. (and later Mar. 3, 1873) Filed again under Act of June 27, 1890, on July 19, 1890.

\$24 commencing Mch. 3, 1883 (4th issue)

\$12? commencing 6 Feb. 1878 (2nd issue)

\$18 " Mar. 5, 1879

Disability was "Disease of Heart + debility from prison life."

Deposition D - Case of Mary Nodow (one of E depositions, E was claimant) Jefferson, Worcester Co., Mass., 8 Apr. 1903, by Mary Hill (mother), age 94, P.O. Jefferson. Mary went down from Highgate to Mass. to work about a year or two before the war closed. In 1865 she came home to Vt. and brought a young man with her, ... married they were married. (It never occurred to her to doubt that her daughter was married.)

Deposition C - Case of Mary Nodow, Jefferson 7 Apr. 1903, William Hill, age 58, P.O. Jefferson, brother of Mary Nodow. While I was in the Army my sister came from Highgate Vt. down here to Mass. to work. I came home in July 1865 and that fall my sister came home and brought (apparently to Highgate)

Benjamin Nedow with her and they told us they were married.

Deposition B - Case of Mary Nedow, Jefferson, Phebe Wiswell (Sister).

Age 53, P.O. Jefferson. Mary is about 4 years older than I am. Some time during the war Mary came down here to Mass. to work in the factories. Phebe lived at ~~Highgate~~, in ~~Sheldon~~ Highgate during the war. When Mary came back home to Vt. after the war, Phebe was living with a family in Sheldon about 4 miles from mother's. Mary visited her but it wasn't til a week later when she went on home that she knew Mary had a husband. Benj. and Mary stayed a week with mother at that time and then went back to Mass. but within a year came back for a few months and then in Aug. the whole family went down to Vt. to No. Oxbridge, where their 1st child was born. Mother and family always called Bill but in French it is De Colo. We were never called by the French name. Mother living with brother William. Mr. Nedow has two brothers living here, George and Theodore.

Deposition A - Case of Mary Nedow, near Keene, Cheshire Co., N.H., 7 Apr. 1903

Mary Nedow (personally appeared before me, a not special examiner of the Bureau of Pensions, Russell Barnes) [Note that this is the same day Phebe and William appeared before him in Jefferson, Mass.]. age 57, P.O. Keene N.H. (Spragueville). Reviewed all three pages

Mary was not physically able to attend when witnesses were seen. Unable to leave her bed. Had partial stroke of paralysis partly affecting her speech, seemed fully able to understand, unable to reply much beyond monosyllables, although she made a great effort to answer at length. Daughters, Mrs. Greene, present and assisted special examiner in making out what was meant. He understands they had little if any previous acquaintance and while on their way to visit relatives in ~~White~~ ~~Drer~~ ~~Fun~~ Vermont, stopped over at White Drer Junction and took a drive, and on that drive concluded to get married. ~~There was but~~ one Special Examiner Russell Barnes visited Quechee village and found there was but one S. of P. there in 1865, William Braeg, dead many years now. His daughter, a Mrs. Hewitt informed him that last year, when going away from home for some months, she burned all the old record books belonging to her father. In 1865 no license required to marry in Vt. Law passed in 1870 requiring certificate from Town Clerk where bride or groom resided. Benj. in Holden when made appl. for pension Oct. 14, 1865.

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Lived for a time (with wife) with father before began housekeeping in Oxbridge. First child baptized at Blackstone, Zephania. Under N.H. laws, having lived as man and wife for 3 years and until the death of the soldier, the claimant is his legal widow. They were concerned that claimant's husband, Zephania Nadeau, was not the soldier. George Nadeau, born in 1862, could not give names of any person at Jefferson or Sullivanville (Hobbs) who knew his brother while living there.

The family spell the name Nadeau

 (In blue pencil)

Spec. Exam's letter to Commissioner of Pensions, 12 Apr. 1903.

On back of a cover back sheet: Sarah Agott,
47 Taylor St.,
Lulia

Gen. App. Cheshire Co. 3 Sept. 1902, Widow's Pens., George I. Cutler, M.D., doctor who had attended Benj., referred to him as Benjamin F. Nadeau, Jr. Cause of death pneumonia complicating disease of heart. Cutler also was town clerk. Obadiah Sprague was the Not. Publ.

Mary paid \$25 for atty. L.W. Holmer, of Keene N.H. to handle claims, to be paid only if successful.

Important dates:

enlisted Dec. 2, 1863; discharged Aug. 11, 1865; died May 15, 1899;
decl. filed May 17, 1902; Invalid app'n filed Oct. 19, 1865; Invalid last
paid to March 4, 1899; claim Approved 20 Nov. 1902. 21 Apr. 1903.
Benj. discharged for disability per Order Hd Qrs Dept of NC. Aug 11, 1865.

Records (War Dept.)

Dec. 31/63 Present

Feb. 29/64 Absent. Sick in Hosp. Norfolk Va. since Feb. 6/64

Apr. 30 + June 30/64 Not on file

Aug. 31/64 Name not borne.

Dec. 31/64 + Feb. 28/65 Absent, Captured at Plymouth NC Apr. 20/64

P. of W. records show him admitted to Hosp. at Andersonville, Ga. June 25/64
and ret'd to Pres. July 1/64, Diarrhoea etc.

Med. Recd. Mar. 10 to 20/64 Genl Debility. (Recd. War Dept)

Benj. Nedaw deposed in Worcester 21 Nov. 1868 to I & A that he was 1st treated for Wt disease in Regt. Hosp. in Smithville N.C. and never was sent to any other Hospital or treated in any other till his discharge. That I was under constant treatment after my escape from Rebel prisons having there from my treatment contracted the disease for which I now claim a pension.

Witnesses to decl. filed 21 Nov. 1890 by Benj. in Cheshire Co.:
Cornelius Danovan and Mary Knight, both of Keene.

Decl. for Increase 3 Feb. 1879, Worcester Co., Benj., resident of Holden, age 30. "While a Prisoner of War in Andersonville + Florence in consequence of exposure improper + scanty food ? of clothing &c. he contracted Heart disease scurvy + chronic diarrhea. His constitution is entirely destroyed. Has been for the past four months confined to the house - his life has been despaired of until the past ~~xxxx~~ he has got a little more comfortable but will never again be able to labor. - any effort causes almost suffocation - Has frequent attacks of Fitts - falls in the street - in church, or at home. Cannot be left alone can do no labor. head very dizzy + weak. -
res. Jeffersonville, witnesses. Victor Smith, Worcester, and Levi F. Shepard, of Worcester.

The whole garrison was captured at Plymouth, taken to Andersonville, kept in confinement until Apr. 11, 1865. (Appl. for Increase, 12 Jan. 1878, getting \$4, res. Jeffersonville.)

Norfolk Va. 28 Dec. 1863, taken sick w. a fever. Rejoined regt. about 1 Apr. 1864 having gotten a little better. 11 Apr. 1864 captured, and entire garrison, after 3 days fighting, taken to Andersonville + Florence, SC., where he was kept a prisoner for 11 months when he escaped + rejoined his Regt. but was too feeble to perform duty, therefore was sent to Hospital under treatment till his discharge. (Appl. for Invalid Pension, Worcester Co. 24 May 1866, withs. Oliver W. Newton, and Addison N. Fay residents of Worcester.)

Appl. for Invalid Pension 14 Oct. 1865. withs. Robt. A. Sinclair, Edmund Newton

Mary got \$12 / mo. commencing May 16", 1899, issued Apr. 28, 1903.

ABR Sprague was Lt. Col. 2nd Mass Hvy Arty.

Robert B. Sinclair was 1st Lieut. Co. G, 2 Reg. Mass Hvy Arty.

Officer's Certificate to Disability of Soldier Worcester Mass, Oct. 14, 1865.

Robert B. Sinclair. "he was sick with fever at Norfolk Va. Dec 28/63 which brought on a heart disease which still continues totally disabling him for military duty or labor and I cheerfully recommend him for a pension."

L. James H. Denny, M.D. was asst. Surgeon in 2 Regt. Mass. Hvy Arty. and was acquainted with Benj. "That I believe that he performed the duties of a soldier at the battle of Plymouth N.C. at which we were captured by the enemy - April 20 - 1864 - " Next saw him at Newbern N.C. summer of 1865, considered him fit subject for discharge from total disability. May 2, 1867, Somerville, Mass.

"We the undersigned residents of the town of Holden ..." depose and say that Benj. is disabled

Yates Chapman; Lyman S. Pitts; L. G. Ames, M.D.; Artemas B. Bascom; Chas. W. Lynn, M.D.; Wm. C. Mescalf and Wm. H. Drury (Selectmen of Holden) 4 Feb 1879, Worcester Co., Isaac Darnan L. of P.

Benj. 13 Sept 1873, 5'7", 130 lbs., age 27. thin, pale, feeble-looking evidently broken down from scurvy and prison life.

10 Sept 1875, 5'7", 119 lbs. age 28.

25 Sept 1877, 5'7", 119 lbs. age 30.

5 Mar 1879, 5-7, 120 33.

22 Apr. 1891 5-4, 119 46.