

Recollections of LIBERTY MADISON CHILTON

Submitted by RICIGS member Jan McKenzie

Liberty is my first cousin twice removed. I found the Chilton Family File in the Casey County, KY Public Library

NOTE: Spelling and grammar have been intentionally left as they were in the transcript I was given. -- J.L. McKenzie

"I write this so my posterity may know where I came from and how I got here. I was born in Casey County Kentucky on Sept. 7, 1838 on the dry fork of the south fork of Green River about ten miles from Liberty the County Seat of Casey County Kentucky. My father's name was James Madison Chilton. His father was named Liberty Chilton a preacher of the Christian Church. He was from North Carolina.

My grandmother on my father's side was named Betsy Gabbard -- Irish people. Her and grandfather settled in heavy woods and cleared out a little farm on the South fork of Green River and lived there until they died. They had five children. My father the oldest his name as I have said James Madison Chilton, born Oct. 17, 1811. Charles Chilton, his oldest brother; lived 1/4 mile of father and George Chilton, next oldest brother and William Chilton the youngest boy died in August before I was borned in September and Rachael Chilton was the baby girl of Grandpa Chilton's family. She married a man by the name of Roberts. Hughy M. Roberts. They are now alive in Adair County Kentucky this 1894.

Uncle Charles Chilton married a woman by the name of Barnet. He died in 1890 at the age of seventy years. He was a Baptist preacher. His children are scattered some in Kentucky, some in Texas and some in Arkansas. Uncle George Chilton and children -- all but one live in Kentucky. Ther were two boys --Jim who is dead and George who is alive so far as I know and the rest were girls I think -- four girls. Uncle Charles children were three boys and four girls. Oldest one Jep and Millard. Aunt Rachel had six or seven children. I dont know much of them -- They moved down in Adair County Kentucky out of our neighborhood so I lost track of them.

My father the oldest married Rachel Clifton (born June 6, 1820) by her had six children -- me the oldest Fortunatis and Gilla [NOTE 1] the three boys are all here in Gentry County, Mo. Now their ages are me first Patsey William next, Sophia Elizabeth next then Fortunatis next and Gilla --baby. [NOTE 2] My father settled

right in a bottom of heavy timber, cleared it out, made a farm of some two or three hundred acres. I helping do the most of it. Father died in 1862 with Typhoid fever. He was exposed by me. It was war times.

[Editor's Note 1: Virgil S.]

[Editor's Note 2: The six children were: Liberty Madison, born Sep 7,1838; Patsey William, born c 1841;

Sophia Elizabeth, born c 1845; Mary Charles "Polly", born c 1848; Fortunatis M., born Mar 13,1851

and Virgil S. "Gilla", born c 1855.]

Now my grandfather on my mothers side was named Isaiah Clifton a preacher of the Christian Church and was well thought of as a man and preacher. His wife before marriage was Sophia Canady, sister to old Uncle Robert Canady one of the first settlers of this Gentry County Missouri over by Albany Mo. They had two boys and four girls Aunt Patsey being the oldest child. She married William Huff and moved to Morgan County, this state along about 1842 and lived close to Syracuse, Mo. where Uncle Will died and Aunt Patsey lives down there 2 now if alive. Next Aunt Polly who married A. Thomas first -- had four children boys and 2 girls. He died. Then last man a Cravens. Uncle Liberty Clifton next oldest married a Northrip [NOTE 3] and moved to Laclede County this state close to Lebanon Mo. Then the next oldest my mother and the next Aunt Lizzie who married George W. Riggins, Crit and Billie's father. Then the next and baby was Uncle Isaiah who lives at this time if alive in some county made from Laclede and some other county in Missouri. [NOTE 4] He used to live about five or ten miles from Lebanon, Mo.

[Editor's Note 3: Liberty married Mary Shelton. It was his brother, Isaiah, who married (first) Drusilla Northrip]

[Editor's Note 4: Isaiah was in Laclede Co. MO by 1860 and lived there until he died in 1912.]

My grandparents on my mother's side came from Virginia. Old Job Clifton came to Kentucky from Virginia when Kentucky was a territory and settled on the South fork of Green River. [NOTE 5] He (Job) was my grandfather's father (Isaiah Clifton's father). Also the Canadys came from Virginia - my grandmother's maiden name was Canady. There is kinfolk by the name of Shearers in Virginia - - my great grandmother's name was Shearers -- Old great great grandfather Shearers was immensely ritch in negroes but my grandmother's mother and her father ran off to Kentucky and married [NOTE 6]and never went back after any estate -- lived and died never heard from them.

[Editor's Note 5: Job Clifton was in Surry Co. NC at the time of the 1790 Census. He owned land in Lincoln Co, (which became Casey Co), KY by 1802.]

[Editor's Note 6: John Canady and Mary Shearer married in 1787 in Campbell Co VA. They later moved to KY]

Now my grandfather had a brother named Thomas Chilton a great Babtist preacher, and his children are scattered. He lived in mercer County Kentucky and I think moved to Missouri in his old age in Johnson or Jackson County, Missouri. This is all I know of father's uncles -- and mothers uncle Josey Clifton was a preacher in the Christian Church. moved to Illinois in ? county when it first came into U.S. and her uncle John Clifton went to Arizona along in the 40's --I just cant recollect about it now -- this is about all I can recollect about my ancestors.[NOTE 7]

[Editor's Note 7: Josey moved from KY > IL > IA > TX. John moved from KY > IL > AR.]

To begin with me, as I said before, I was raised on a farm and worked there till I was about 19, going to school some in the fall. We only had 3 months school, and I would have to stay home about half that time to help pitch fodder, cut up corn or something else -- so at about 19 I told father I intended to go to school so I went with John C. Osborn, Sally Liggett's brother to Bradfordsville in Marion County Kentucky to James Burditte and Stephen A. Colier to school one school year and part of another an by this time I was so I could teach school so I taught our District School for \$25.00 per month and boarded at home then that winter -- taught a subscription school -- by spring I had about \$150.00 so I made a crop that summer and sold it to father for a horse and sold the horse for \$40.00. That made me nearly \$200.00 so I thought I could put my designs into effect -- that was to study medicine.

So I told father what I intended to do. He tried to persuade me out of it, but no -- be a doctor I must so I made the arrangement with Dr. J. W. McGowin of Mintonville, Casey County Kentucky. So I went there in the fall of 1860 and studied that fall and winter, also that spring and summer -- so that summer the war broke out and all the young men went to the war and I must go also. So first of November 1861 I enlisted at Camp Dick Robinson in Lincoln County Kentucky -- then served in U.S. Army until January, 1863 when discharged reason of disability at Nashville, Tennessee. While in the army I was in four battles. Came very near to being in the Shilough fight -- we did not get there on account of skirmish duty we had to do in Kentucky we got in 20 miles of it could hear of them. We was ordered to patrol the country for stragglers and hold all we caught on both sides.

The first fight was Mill Spring 19 day of January, 1862 on Sunday. but before that I had been in two or three skirmishes at Wildcat and Mount Acilla, Kentucky and two or three other picket fights. I did not have a very hard time after the first year in the

army for Dr. R.H. Weaver, surgeon of the 6th Ohio was in charge of a hospital at Tullahoma, Tennessee and he had found out I had studied medicine some. He had me detailed to help the Stewart. I soon got so I could fill them and he would not let me go and I was glad of it. Then we moved to Nashville, Tenn. and established Hospital No. 14 in the city so I had a nice time -- all I could eat and drink when we had it. But I got sick and had to go home to get well and aimed to go back to Dr. Weaver when I got well but things changed lots. Before I got back Weaver had been changed to the field and I did not care to be made a target of so I staid home and out of the Army.

During the winter of 1862, Captain Jenkins was killed and that threw my first Lieutenant Captain and second, first and the boys elected me second Lieutenant and sent in for me to come out and receive it, but I thought I would rather stay where I was and Dr. Weaver said for me not to go and he would keep me as long as he was in charge of a hospital. But after the Millspring fight the next was at Lebanon, Tennessee in May, 1862. Then the next was at Malvern, Tennessee for the number of men engaged there was as hard a battle as fought in the war. Now after going into the hospital service I was sent out with the ambulance corps that put me in the Stone River fight at Murphysborough, Tennessee -- that was a fight I will never forget as long as I retain my senses. This battle was fought -- that is the main fight in a cotton field just west of Murphysborough, Tennessee about two miles long by one wide. Stone River on the north and thick cedar bushes north of the river and a mountain on the south with an old mill at its west end and Murphysborough on the east and a big white farmhouse on the south on the mountain side that mill house and farmhouse and in Murphysborough we made preparation for the wounded -- and this field was strewn with dead, dying and wounded in all kinds of ways, from the old mill to the river.

Now the river made a bend here left the hill on the south running north and then bending back to the mountain having about four or five hundred acres and a nice field and up on the hill and over in the cedar thicket was such a good place for the enemy to hide. But there was lots of poor fellows killed there. That battle lasted seven days and was a running fight for four or five days from seven miles east of Nashville to Murphysborough. Some nights our men would camp on the ground they did the night before then they would gain some and be a little east of that morning until about the 5th day our men began to push and then gain a little every day until the seventh day. That was a hard day for both sides as the day was spent in this field and about 3:00 p.m. the rebels crossed little Stone River into Murphysborough then our men followed.

That night the rebels made a thorough retreat south toward Montgomery Alabama. Our men did not follow -- we were cut to pieces too much -- we had to bury the dead. That was a job to hunt them up all through the woods from seven miles east of Nashville to Murphysborough and dig a trench long enough to hold -- for it took a trench about one mile long for each side. Just thrown in like hogs and dirt thrown on them. Poor fellows died for their country and to be buried like a dog. But they did not stay there. They were taken to a nice semetery and put in there close to Nashville and nicely cared for. I know one man in Kentucky that lost three sons in that fight by the name of Dye. Some regiments went into that fight and lost every staff officer and about all the privates. One Kentucky regiment lost all but about 100 men on that battlefield.

I could hear after the battle was over the crys and curses and hollering of the men. Some praying some cursing, and some hollering for water. The awfulist noise I ever heard in my life. I never will forget one poor fellow had his under jaw shot off and could only make a kind of noise but pointed to the river. It was water he wanted but could not drink it after getting it. That was what war does for the enlisted men. God forbid there will ever be any more wars. And those that escaped with their life if they draw a little pension some people will try "breaking up the government". Who saved this government for them to enjoy. Those that went out and stood the camp life and those that was killed. I dont think that any living will get paid for what they went through with laying out in snow, rain, cold freezing to the ground, riding in the dust for 3 or 4 days and nights.

I rode three days and three nights once after Morgan on an old turnpike road where the lime was 2 inches deep. I could not see the man just before me -- only when the wind would blow the dust away. It was not so bad at night. I was in Co. H that threw me about the middle so imagine when we stopped for to eat some at night and feed our horses we had to use pond water almost thick with frog eggs and slime but it was good -- horses and men both used it. We eat raw bacon and crackers and washed it down with that water. Our horses eat oates that we preped from the farmers for them. Then mounted and rode all night until about 10:00 a.m. then dismounted to eat a snack, feed our horses what we had foraged for them.

Oh it was awful -- the last morning we came up with Morgan and whiped him in 2 brick buildings -- one to the right a schoolhouse and one to the left a courthouse at Lebanon Tenesee and there is where Col. Walford was wounded -- also Lieut. Jenkins that is Clint. We captured about 500 men and killed 300. Then we went to Murphysborough, Tenn. and recruited men. And there was the beginning of my hospital career. Lieut. Clint Jenkins had me detailed to nurse him and when he went

home I went to Shelbyville Tenn. into a hospital No. 2 and from there to Tulahoma, Tenn. and from there to Nashville Tenn. where discharged.

When we left Kentucky and marched to Nashville in the winter or spring of 1862 I had with three others to guard a wagonload of ammunition through at we crossed Cumberland River at Greensborough we had a skirmish with 4 or 5 rebels but we hit two and killed one. The others left on double quick so we expected reinforcements that night but we drove all night and not slow at that. About 2 or 3 a.m. we stopped to feed and rest and eat some but we was soon on the go. Two went before and two went behind the wagon and when we crossed the Baron's River the people told us we would never get no farther because the country was full of bushwhackers --but we had to go as long as we lived. We was scared. I pretty bad one evening we saw about two men riding towards us armed but when we stopped and prepared for battle when they got in about 100 yards we halted them and to our happy surprise they were Union soldiers on a scout so they gave us encouragement to push on. When we got to Ridgefield east of Nashville our troops were just driving the rebels out of Nashville and we crossed the river on a pontoon bridge then we rode safe.

Now I have been a little ahead in their history. In my school days after getting as much schooling as I could at the District School my father allowed me to go to select school provided I would pay my board by working of night and morning and Saturdays. I went up to Mintonville, Casey County Kentucky to O.D. Denhams. I went to him two winters working during crop times at home. I would feed and cut wood of nights and morning and at noon and cut hardwood of Saturdays for my board. In this way I got 2 or 3 winters schooling and I improved the time. Now after my school days and school teaching I went and read medicine some over a year and then I went into the army as I have said I have got to Nashville Tenn.

When I was discharged I went home got about well. I concluded to finish reading medicine. I read for two years steady and hard with Dr. Clel Pruet at Liberty the County seat of Casey Co. Kentucky. Then I went to Mintonville where I had read under Dr. McGowan. My old partner Dr J.W. Wesley who studied with me wanted to go to Louisville, Kentucky to attend lectures there one winter this was the winter of 1863. I'd taken his practice while he went so I practiced that winter and next summer there. Did not get enough out of it to pay board.

Hardily but left the old accts. for collection which was never done -- so that winter of 1864 Old Man Stewart, the man I boarded with for 4 or 5 years -- I had got to loving one of his girls M. A. Stewart.[NOTE 8] He sold out in Kentucky and was bent on moving to Mo. so I had to marry the girl or lose her and that I could not think

so we married on Dec 23, 1865 then after that the old folks began to persuade us to come with them to Mo. and finally we agreed to come. We left for Mo 6th day of March 1866 and landed at J.W. Stewarts of 20 of March 1865 at night in Andrew Co. Mo. After being there a few days I had no money and did not know what to do. I hated to hire out by the month and Dr. Saunders had just died at Whitesville Mo. and several persuaded me to go there and to into practice. How could I -- I had no money, no medicine, but I confided with my wife she suggested to borrow \$200.00 of father to get me a horse and few drugs to begin with so I named it to him. He loaned it to me. I went to St Jo bought horse, saddle, drugs and I located at Whitesville in a day or two had a call. [Editor's Note 8: Mary Ann]

Had good luck like all fools do in a little over a year I sold out to Dr. Brown for \$500.00 I thought I was a rich man. I moved to Island City in three months I got tired of there. Some friends advised me to move to Mt. Pleasant Mo. I did so on 17 day of June 1866 on Sunday. I was not there long before I got a good practice. I staid there until 1879 in Sept. when I moved to Stanberry Mo. My dwelling was among the first built in the town. This involved me in debt and to help all out in a year we had spent all we had and lots more to supply our house. It caught fire and burned all we had up with my books and accts. --that is literary not my medical only some -- but my accts. book I got some those I recollect but I had the house insured for \$800.00. The Co. paid this and I gave this to have my present house to Pruden Bros. and Norton and they swindled me out of about \$500 of that and I had to pay about \$1300 for my house instead of \$800 as per contract and that is a sketch of my past life up to the present this April 17, 1894.

L. M. Chilton

P.S. More after this."

This account was retyped from a typed transcript on February 19, 1991 by J.L. McKenzie. Misspellings and grammatical errors were not corrected as it is not known if they were made by the author or the original typist. One long paragraph was broken into several smaller ones for ease of reading.

"Editor's Note:" indicates clarifying notes inserted by me, J.L. McKenzie. Liberty Madison was the nephew of, but was only three years younger than, my great grandfather, Isaiah Clifton.

Additional Notes on Liberty Chilton's Life

(Liberty Chilton)... "was one of the original five trustees when the village of Stanberry [in Gentry Co, MO] was organized in February, 1880."

Per Gentry & Worth County MO History P.162/5

"The Wabash Mineral spring, located within the [Stanberry] city limits, are likely to prove a strong factor in its future prosperity. They possess rare medicinal properties... are now owned by Levi Lawn, but have been leased for twenty years by L. M. Chilton and M. F. Brown, and will be improved with bath and boarding houses, walks, drives etc, and placed in charge of Dr. L. M. Chilton, a graduate of St. Louis Medical College and a physician of long and successful experience in the treatment of the prevailing diseases of this region. Dr. Chilton will spare no pains or expense in fitting up the springs and grounds for the reception of patients and pleasure seekers, and will be pleased to give any information desired concerning the value of these waters for the treatment of any or all diseases within the broad range of their curative influence."

Per Gentry & Worth County MO History P.168.

(Liberty Chilton), "one of the leading physicians of Gentry Co, is a native of Casey County, KY and was born on the 7th day of September, 1838. His parents were James M. and Rachel Clifton Chilton. L.M.'s early life was spent on a farm, and he received his education at Bradfordsville, KY. Having made choice of the practice of medicine as a life vocation, he commenced reading with Dr. J.W. McGowen of Mintonville, and afterwards with Dr. Prewet as preceptors. After practicing for some years, he attended lectures and was graduated from the St. Louis Medical College. In 1863 he settled in Morgan County and afterwards returned to KY, and in 1865 came to Andrew Co, MO remaining one year. Subsequently he settled in Island City, Gentry Co, and thence in 1866 to Mt. Pleasant, where he remained in the active practice of his profession until the town of Stanberry was laid out in 1879. Dr. Chilton built and finished the first residence in the town. Professionally, he is a man of recognized ability and experience. He is a man of kindly feelings, and his heart as well as his judgment and conscience, prompt him to be very attentive to the sick and afflicted. He was married to Miss Mary Stewart, who was born and reared in Casey County, KY. They have one son, Cleo Madison. The Dr. is interested in the mineral springs in this vicinity."

Per Gentry & Worth County MO History P.374.