

Private Joseph Strickler Coffman
Company D 'Bridgewater Grays' - 10th Virginia Infantry

Joseph was born January 19, 1831 in Keezletown, Virginia. He was the son of Joseph Coffman and Abigail Lincoln Coffman. His grandfather Jacob was a brother to Abraham Lincoln's grandfather Abraham. Sometimes it can be a very small world.

He enlisted as a private on June 25, 1861 at Winchester, Virginia. He is 30 years of age. Joseph stands 5' 11", has blue eyes, ruddy complexion and dark hair.

He is shown present for duty and pay in the August, October and December, 1861 muster reports. Joseph is present for the February and April muster reports in 1862. On April 18, 1862, in Harrisonburg, Virginia, he re-enlists for 3 years.

He is present on all muster rolls from June, 1862 through February, 1864.

In July, 1863 he is assigned duty as a teamster with the ordnance train for the 10th Virginia Infantry. In August, 1863 he is shown as a blacksmith for the brigade and then future reports from Major Tanner, AQM for the 10th Virginia and reports by Brigadier General Stewart show Joseph as a teamster in the Ordnance Train.

The final muster roll [included in his military record] from October, 1864 to January, 1865 shows him present and a teamster with the 'Reserve' Ordnance Train. This would mean a 'reserve' train for either the brigade or the division.

Joseph is captured sometime after January of 1865 and sent to Fort Delaware Prison. He was told [oral family history] that if he would admit to being the cousin of President Lincoln, he would be released. He refused and was confined in Fort Delaware for some five months. Joseph is released after signing the Oath of Allegiance on June 15, 1865.

Postwar he suffered crippling arthritic maladies and was confined to a wheelchair for a significant portion of his later life due to the malnutrition and brutal living conditions he endured at Fort Delaware.

Joseph was married to Hannah Francis Coffman and they had 10 children. One died at 8 years of age but the others survived to adulthood. Their daughter Sophia is David Ware's grandmother on his mother's side.

Joseph died January 17, 1904 being 2 days short of 73 years of age. He is buried in the Keezletown Cemetery in Rockingham County, Virginia. Hannah passed away on February 6, 1917 and is buried beside him.

(ed: Compiled Service Records – Confederate, United Daughters of the Confederacy Library, Richmond, Virginia. Copy file #324, Micro Roll # 490. *The 10th Virginia Infantry*, Terrance Murphy, 1989 , Lynchburg, p. 145; oral family history provided by David Ware and Mac Coffman; U. S. Census reports from Ancestry.com, Provo, Utah.)

Census Recap:

Name	1860	1870	1880	1900	Occupation
Joseph	67	77			Farmer
Abigail	59	69	86		
Jacob	40				Farmer
Joseph *	29	39	50	69	Farmer
Hannah F.		25	36	56	
Franklin		4	13	33	
Nannie		2	11	31	Teacher
Elizabeth		3/12	9 **		
Abigail			6 **		
Lucy			4	24	Teacher
Mary			2	22	
Sarah				20	Teacher
Sophia				18	
Clara				16	
Samuel				14	Farm Labor
Clara Parrott		53	65		B Domestic
Jacob Funkhouser		21	32		Farm Labor

* This Joseph is our soldier.

** Both Elizabeth and Abigail do not appear on the 1900 census. If we assume that the oral family history is correct then Abigail passed away about 1882. We would then have to assume that Elizabeth has married. However it is very clear that Joseph and Hannah had 10 children which are two more than the oral family history.

Note: The 1870 census noted that the real property (land and buildings) were valued at \$13,500 and the personal property at \$1000.

Note: Franklin inherits the farm and he is shown in the 1910 census as ‘Head of Household’ with a wife and two children. None of the other siblings are shown on the farm but the youngest, Samuel, would have been 24 in 1910.

Note: Clara Parrott (1870) or Parriet (1880) was a black domestic worker who was employed by the family for perhaps 20-30 years. Jacob Funkhouser (white) was also a decades long laborer on the farm.