

QUERIES

10,696. KNOX, McCALL.

Seek the parents and siblings of James Donald Knox, born circa 1809 in Kentucky. James Donald Knox married Clarissa McCall, born circa 1819, Kentucky. On 1850 census, Millersburg, Bourbon County, Kentucky. Children: Amanda W., Mary Ellen, Corrosso, Thomas Chandler (born 29 Jan. 1839). Thomas C. married Matilda Phillips, 1860, Warsaw, Illinois; died Independence County, Arkansas. Clarissa McCall Knox was in Missouri after 1900. Any help appreciated.

Ellis L. McIntosh, 209 So. Reno, Russellville, AR 72801

10,697. GOFF, COLTER, BRITTON, INGRAM.

Seek the parents of James Goff, born 1819, and also the parents of his wife, Eliza J. (last name unknown)--Washington County, Kentucky. Seek the parents of Harrison Colter, born in 1812, and also the parents of his wife, Sarah, born 1828--Washington County, Kentucky. Seek information on Lewis Allen Britton, born ?, and Elizabeth Ingram, born ?--Anderson County, Kentucky.

James R. Goff, 1233 Crossroads Ct., Norman, OK 73072-3330

10,698. MOBERLY, HENDERSON, PATTERSON, MERCER.

Seek information about Drury Moberly and Elizabeth Henderson who were married in Madison County, Kentucky, in 1804. Also need help with William Patterson, who lived in Jessamine County, Kentucky, 1790s-1800s; wife, Mary Mercer Patterson.

Gladys Carlson, 8604 Belle Meadow Blvd., Pensacola, FL 32514

10,699. BRITE, GRIGSBY.

Seek the parents of Nancy Brite, wife of Hopkins Brite; they possibly married in South Carolina in the late 1700s, and moved to Shelby County, Kentucky, circa 1790-1800. Hopkins Brite died in October 1825 in Meade Co., Ky., and left a will. Nancy married Benjamin Grigsby in Shelby Co., Ky., 4/17/1830. I have no record or clue of Nancy's date of birth, date of death, or marriage to Hopkins Brite. Hopkins Brite was in Revolutionary War in South Carolina, as was his father, Albertus Brite.

Mrs. M. B. Morgan, Box 416, Danville, KY 40422

Isaiah Coalter Was An Effective Guerrilla In Ky.

Morgan Coalter Cemetery Discovered In Anderson County

Author's note: Isaiah Coalter's name has been spelled Colter, Coulter, Coalter, and as Collier. Names were often incorrectly spelled because some didn't always know the correct spelling, and census takers sometimes wrote names phonetically as they had heard them pronounced. Therefore, Sinclair might become St. Claire; Bryant, Bryan; and Goins, Gowens, thus the probable variation in Coalter. Spelling as it appears on the tombstones found in the Morgan / Coalter Cemetery is Coalter. Hard evidence favors the Coalter spelling despite previously-written history generally spelling the name Coulter. In chronicling Isaiah Coalter's exploits, things are also complicated because his given name is as inconsistently spelled as his surname. The initials Z. A. and the names Zay, Saiah, Isaiah, Isaac, and Josiah also appear.

By Gerald W. Fischer - 2016

Isaiah Coalter was the fifth child of Sabra and Rowan Coalter. Rowan was born January 18, 1808, and died September 15, 1858. Isaiah's wife, Sabra Morgan, was born April 17, 1821, thirteen years his junior, and died November 5, 1857. They had seven children: Josephine, Rosa Jane, Sabra H., John, Isaiah, Thomas, and Elizabeth Ann. Isaiah, commonly known as Zay, was born March 31, 1843, and died at the age of 21 on February 6, 1865. Because of his height, Isaiah Coalter's sobriquet was "Big Zay." He stood six feet, six inches in his stocking feet, with the physique of an athlete. Sporting a coal-black beard and hair, with sparkling black eyes, he was described as handsome, and was known to treat children kindly, sitting them on his knee. All of the Morgan and Coalter families were Confederate, residing in western Anderson County, Ken-

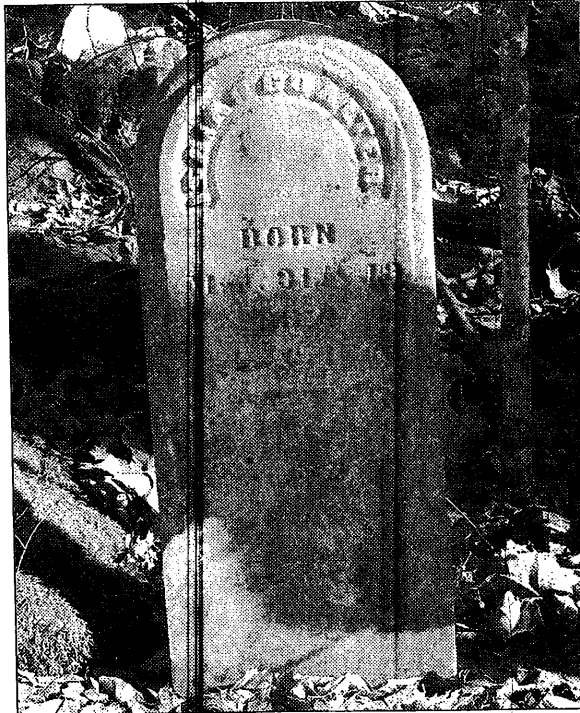
tucky, a few miles east of the Spencer County line along the south side of Salt River.

There are two fords of the Salt River, within 200 yards and a quarter-mile east of its confluence with Raccoon Creek. The eastern most of these is Coalter's Ford. These fords are in the shallows of Salt River and the headwaters of Taylorsville Lake. This hardwood-forested Kentucky land is lush with under-canopy growth, shrub, and ground cover. The flood plain has pockets of wetlands and wild game is abundant. Near the ford are signs of former dwellings built against the north and east slopes of forested hills on the south side of the river. It is a beautiful but desolate place, void of human life but for hunters, forays of forest rangers, and a rare December visit by a group of genealogists and historians. This is the area in which the secluded Morgan/Coalter Cemetery is located, and the place Isaiah Coalter sought refuge after being shot through the chest. He rode ten miles to an aunt's house where he could hide and recover. He died there ten days later, and there he was buried.

The Coalter-Prather Feud

Isaiah Coalter was 17 years old when the Civil War began, and at that tender age, he had been on the periphery or perhaps participated in a family feud between his twin cousins the Prather brothers and his Coalter cousins. The Prathers were Unionists and the Coalters were Confederates. Harvey Prather was a large man and the twin

brother of William Prather. Harvey and his cousin, Levi Coalter, also cousin to Zay, were dating the same girl. Harvey married the young lady. Levi came to the wedding and all went well, until after the banquet when Harvey and Levi got into a fight. Levi shot and killed Harvey. A few days



Isaiah Coalter was born March 31, 1843, and died at the age of 21 on February 6, 1865. He is buried in the secluded Morgan Coalter Cemetery in Anderson County, Kentucky. (Photo courtesy of Gerald Fischer)

later, Levi, expecting retribution for the killing, shot and killed William Prather as he rode toward Willisburg. The feud picked up when Levi and his father, Tom Coalter, were working in their field and a posse of Prather men took them prisoners. Tom and Levi surrendered peacefully, because the two had left their revolvers on a stump they couldn't reach before being overtaken. Concluding they would be taken to jail for trial, they submitted. When they were taken deeper into some dense thickets, the two prisoners sensing they were mistaken, jumped from their horses and ran off. Tom was shot numerous times, but Levi got away. Left for dead, Tom was found and taken to Springfield for treatment. Upon hearing this, the Prathers rode to Springfield, retaking Tom prisoner. He was tied to a tree and shot to pieces. Levi Coalter fled the area, and with the killing of Tom the feud abated.

Coalter and the Civil War

A lasting effect Gen. John Hunt Morgan had on the Civil War, other than his "Great Raid," was providing a training ground for the most effective guerrillas in Kentucky. It was while riding with him the guerrillas served their apprenticeship. Jerome Clarke (better known as "Sue Mundy") Capt. Bill Marion, the Berrys, Dupoyster, Johnson, Magruder, Hines, Bryant, the Taylors, and Isaiah Coalter rode at one time with John Morgan. As they escaped prison or capture, making their way back to Kentucky in 1863 and 1864, and with the break-up of Morgan's forces after Cynthiana, they became a full-blown army totaling more than 800 men in small bands numbering six to 25. The guerrillas were at their zenith during the summer of 1864. Partisans of Bill Davison, a Union Captain turned rebel; George Jesse and his troops; Lee Sypert, to whom Davison was attached; Walker Taylor's partisans, coupled with incursions into Kentucky by Generals Hylon Lyons and Nathan Forest became a military force, likely extending the Civil War for a year. In early January of 1865, this eclectic group of well-trained, battle-hardened veterans was augmented by William Clarke Quantrill's 47-man force of Missouri fighters.

Isaiah Coulter is referenced belonging to Co. F Fifth Kentucky Cavalry, CSA. That unit was under Basil Duke's brigade in Morgan's Cavalry. The Fifth Kentucky crossed the Ohio River at Brandenburg, Kentucky, with John Morgan on July 6, 1865, into Indiana. The Fifth Kentucky Cavalry fought in the battle of Corydon, Indiana, attacking the center of the Indiana defensive line with the Eighth Cavalry. They engaged the Sixth Indiana Legion and a group of volunteers. When Morgan surrendered at Buffington Island, a Josiah Coulter of Co. H, Fifth Kentucky Cavalry was taken prisoner and sent to Camp Douglas prison camp in August of 1863. The name Josiah was another variation on Coalter's given name that was either misunderstood or misspelled. Likely Coalter escaped imprisonment or was exchanged sometime between late July of 1863 and August of 1864. In late August he was riding as a guerrilla with another Anderson County partisan, Captain Foreman.

The first mention of Coalter in the newspapers is a

Louisville Daily Journal story dated September 1, 1864, reporting on an August 30th incident when a party of 25 guerrillas surrounded three members of the 11th Kentucky Cavalry. Captain Foreman of Anderson County was leading the guerrillas when a Mr. Gritten recognized two of his band, a man named Maddox and Z. A. Collier (the name Collier is a misspelling of Coalter, and Z. A. is the assumed name of Zay). They captured the three men to exchange them for two of Foreman's men being held in the Taylorsville jail. On October 21, 1864, the *Louisville Daily Journal* reported that on Thursday the 13th, two black boys were taken captive by a guerrilla band headed by Captain Coulter and Lieutenant Brown. According to a 1910 newspaper, an article, written by Freda Davison, stated in late October that Bill Davison was joined by Isaac Colter. On November 15, 1864, the *Louisville Daily Journal* reported that on the morning of Sunday the 13th, a Captain Colter rode through Shelbyville with five men. The report stated that the Captain had a large body of men, of which he could call together in one day's time, riding through the country in small detachments. On December 3rd, the *Louisville Daily Journal* reported that "Big Saiah" Coulter and Dick Mitchell, leading 25 guerrillas, entered Washington County on the turnpike between Springfield and Bloomfield. They robbed the tollgate keeper and several citizens and killed three Union or former Union soldiers, likely in reprisal for General Stephen Burbridge's infamous order No. 59.

Note: Order No. 59 mandated executions of four guerrillas for every soldier or citizen that was killed by a guerrilla. It may not have had such a polarizing effect against the Union, if it had been confined to the executions of guerrillas for those citizens or soldiers murdered by guerrillas. After all, that course of action seems imminently fair. Burbridge decided instead, likely for reasons of convenience due to the fact the guerrillas were hard to catch, to execute Confederate prisoners of war innocent of the crimes. Ill conceived, his order and heavy-handed overreach into Kentucky's war-time economy led to his removal and to the disdain in which he was held by the state long after the war ended.

In response to Order No. 59, the guerrillas seemed to kill as many Union soldiers as possible. It mattered not if they were discharged, home on furlough, armed, or unarmed. Negro soldiers were especially targeted. After the Emancipation Proclamation the guerrillas seemed to blame the war on the Negroes. Bill Davison resigned from the Union Army after the proclamation saying he didn't join the army to free Negroes. On December 21st some 34 guerrillas commanded by Bill Davison and Big Zay Coalter boarded the steamboat *Morning Star*, robbed the safe, and killed a Union soldier found on board. Freda Davison states Coalter and Davison killed six more Union soldiers found in their room. Coalter asked one if he was discharged, and the soldier answered he was on furlough. Coalter then told him he had a discharge for him, as he discharged his revolver into the soldier killing him. The guerrillas took the Union combatant's blue overcoats. The *Morning Star*, steamed to

Hawesville, Hancock County, where Confederate Major Walker Taylor was in command of the town. He nearly fired on Davison and Coalter's men who were dressed in the Union overcoats; however, he recognized Davison's voice when he called out to his men, "Ride up my hyenas," thus averting a friendly fire event.

Big Zay stayed in Hancock County until mid-January of 1865, and on January 11th, he took a fancy to Emma Fulkerson, the wife of a Union gunboat captain. Coalter decided to marry her, though she was still married to her husband. He had the Hancock County Clerk issue a license at gunpoint. Bill Davison held the gun and paid the \$100 marriage bond. The clerk wrote, "This bond and license was obtained by force of arms." The happy couple likely stayed together two to five days and Coalter gave her \$500 in gold and left her at her parents' house. The statement that Zay never married is debatable, but to say he never legally married is likely.

By the middle of January, Big Zay and Davison moved east to the Salt River country near Spencer, Nelson, and Shelby counties. In December of 1864, a former Confederate soldier and deserter named Edwin Terrell was hired as a leader of independent scouts to hunt down and kill or capture Confederate guerrillas. Ed Terrell was as dastardly in deed as the worst guerrillas he hunted, but his ability and determination as a fearless fighter was beyond dispute. He was good at his business and operated with his 16 to 35 Union scouts in the same areas of Big Zay and his guerrilla elite.

On January 23, 1865, just north of Simpsonville, Shelby County, 80 black soldiers with white officers were driving a herd of cattle from Fort Nelson to Louisville, Jefferson County, for slaughter. About evenly divided into an advance and rear guard, their cattle drive extended over a mile. A number of guerrillas were in the vicinity: Captain Marion, Coalter, Davison, Berry, Magruder, Turner, and nine others. Although he was accused of being there, Jerome Clarke had been shot a week earlier in a raid on Bardstown, Nelson County, and was recovering from a wound to his hand. He had the general shape, shoulder-length black hair, a handsome clean-shaven face, and the look of Bill Davison who could have been mistaken for Clarke. It was a very cold day in the teens, and at a general store the cattle drive had earlier passed, someone yelled, "Here comes Coalter and his guerrillas." Firing re-

volved the 15 guerrillas charged into the rear guard, killing 22 and wounding 18. Many of the soldiers threw down their rifles and were killed. One hid under a wagon and was saved, another found safety at a farm. There is no evidence of the advance guard coming to the relief of their comrades, and after the rout, the guerrillas took time to gather up the firearms of the soldiers. This has been called the Simpsonville slaughter or Simpsonville massacre. It was neither. It was just a lopsided victory for Coalter and his men. Had the Union soldiers been better directed, they would have proven a defeat for the partisans.

Five days later, south of Taylorsville, on January 28th, Jerome Clarke and Henry Magruder were opening a farm gate, when Ed Terrell and 19 or 20 scouts charged them firing their weapons. Magruder returned fire when Dick Mitchell and two other guerrillas joined them. Outnumbered and the fight going badly, miraculously Big Zay and ten of his men came in to view cresting a hill, riding to their rescue. The five guerrillas cheered and joined Big Zay in charging Terrell. Terrell retreated to a barn on the May place and thence to the more sheltered barn of Squire Heady. There the battle continued with little advantage to either side, although the guerrillas did manage to shoot some of the scouts' horses. Big Zay rode up to the barn to get better aim, and Ed Terrell shot him through the chest. In those days it was thought that silk would stop bleeding. Zay took his silk bandanna, and with his ramrod pushed the cloth through the wound, tracking the path of the bullet,



In search of the Morgan Coalter Cemetery, (l-r) Dr. Harold Peach (Jr.), Perry A. Brantley, Gerry Fischer, David Singel, and Dr. Kate Jacques gathered at the Taylorsville Lake Wildlife Management Area in Anderson County, Kentucky, on December 17, 2015.

(Photo courtesy of Gerald Fischer)

Cumberland Gap was the chief passageway through the Appalachian Mountains in Ky.'s early history.

and out his back. One of his men knotted it in the rear and Zay knotted it in the front. He rode off not to be seen or heard from again. It was believed he made his way to an aunt's house, dying January 30, 1865, two days later. Isaiah Coalter a guerrilla fighter unafraid of any danger had disappeared.

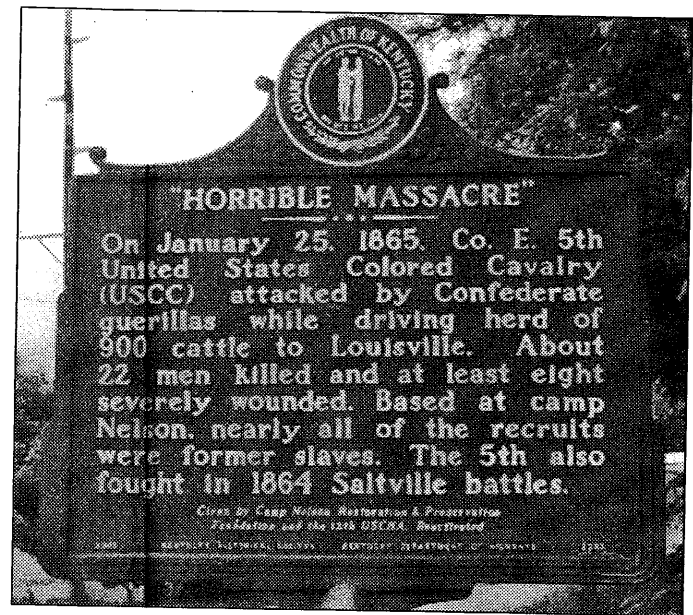
On December 17, 2015, five genealogists and historians, guided by two forest rangers, located and photographed the grave of Isaiah Coalter, his parents Rowan and Sabra, and Aunt Jane and Uncle John Morgan. Arriving from Glasgow, Payneville, Georgetown, and other areas of Kentucky were Dr. Harold Peach, PhD, of Georgetown University; Dr. Kate Jacques, PhD, of Alltech; genealogist and researcher David Sengel; Perry Brantley, co-author (with Thomas Shelby Watson), of *Confederate Guerrilla Sue Mundy*; and me, author of *Guerrilla Warfare In Civil War Kentucky*. We were guided by Forest Rangers Lisa Freeman.

At 10:00 a.m. the expedition drove on a river access road in Taylorsville Lake State Park to Coalter's Ford and forded the river. After the crossing, a hike of a half mile or less was made to the Morgan Coalter Cemetery. For the first time in many years, the actual location and tombstone of Isaiah Coalter, his mother, father, aunt, and uncle were found. If Isaiah died at his Aunt Jane Morgan's house someone other than his aunt and uncle were living there because they predeceased him in 1857 and 1858. Interestingly, one of the bordering land grants to the Coalter tract belonged to the Hunt family. They were a prosperous Anderson County family as were the Morgans and the Coalters. Between the seven of us, the obvious possibility of a connection between the Hunts and Morgans of Anderson County and the Hunts and Morgans of Lexington was pondered. Research will determine if the families are related or the names coincidental. We found that Isaiah lived for ten days after being shot, and how his name was spelled. While there, Perry and I were smiling and telling stories about Isaiah, as we shook hands over his grave. I think Big Zay, if he was watching, also smiled.

Gerald W. Fischer, 560 Roach Road, Webster, KY 40176; fischer@bbtel.com, shares this article with our readers.

These grave stones are located at the site of the raid Isaiah Coalter, Henry Magruder, Bill Davison, Bill Marion, and 11 guerrillas made on the 40-man rear guard of a government cattle drive to Louisville. The Negro soldiers were buried in a mass grave beside the road, and a historic marker (shown above) commemorates the site. Known as a massacre, the 15 partisan rangers attacked a direct force of 40 men and killed or wounded over 30, while an additional 40 Union soldiers were a mile further north but are not recorded to have taken part in the battle.

(Photos courtesy of Gerald Fischer)



This Kentucky history marker, which stands at Simpsonville, in Shelby County, denotes the site of the mass grave of the 22 U. S. military troopers killed in 1856. The front side of the marker reads "Horrible Massacre" the back side reads "African-American Cemetery." (See photo below)

