

## Company K, 120<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry



Photo Credit: Galeen Irvin Chain at [Find a Grave](#)

GUNWELL, Cyrus 18 Oct 1862 GURWELL  
Private Gunwell was age 32 when he entered service. He was captured 3 May 1864 near Snaggy Point, on the Red River, Louisiana; mustered out 7 July 1865 at Camp Chase, Ohio. [Also listed in Co G, 114th Ohio Inf.]

Father: ?Nathan GURWELL  
Mother: Sarah  
Birth: 5 Apr 1830 OH  
Marriage: Margaret Jane SKELLY, 21 Sep 1854, Holmes Co OH.  
Death: 7 Jan 1908???  
Cemetery: Lone Wolf Cemetery, Lone Wolf, Kiowa Co, OK

Pension Card: Cyrus GURWELL, Co K 120th OH Inf., Co G 114th Invalid filed 23 July 1890 and 21 Feb 1907, Application 811240, Certificate 573599. Cyrus died Jan 1908.

1850 Census, Salt Creek, Holmes Co OH, Dwelling 2147, Family 2188: Nathan GURWELL, age 47 PA, wheelwright; Sara, age 43 PA; Cyrus, age 20 OH, laborer; Belinda, age 17 OH; Jonas, age 14 OH; Hannah, age 8 OH; Jacob WOLF, age 20 OH, wheelwright.

1860 Census, Salt Crk Twp, Holmes County, OH, page 432-433: Cyrus GORWELL, age 29 OH, day laborer; Margaret J?, age 29 PA; William D, age 5 OH, Jonaz, age 1 OH. [Nathan, age 57 PA, and Sarah, age 53 PA are also living in Salt Creek Twp, Holmes Co OH with Harriett, age 17, Elisabeth SPEALMAN, age 10 and John SPEALMAN, age 7.]

1870 Census, Upper Loutre, Montgomery County, MO, page 127: Cyrus GURWELL, age 42 OH, farmer; Margaret, age 40 PA; William, age 14 OH; Jones, age 11 OH; John, age 9 OH; Joseph, age 4 OH; Samuel, age 1 OH.

1880 Census, Upper Loutre Twp, Montgomery County, MO, page 173.1000: Cyrus GIRWELL, age 48 OH, farmer, father born NY, mother born PA; Margaret, age 47 PA, wife; Jonas, son, age 21 OH, farm laborer; Frank, son, age 19 OH, laborer; Joseph, son, age 13 OH, farm laborer; Samuel, son, age 7 MO, farm laborer; Sarah GIRWELL, mother, age 73 PA, parents born PA.

Not on 1890 Veterans Schedule.

Lived some of this time at Soldiers Home, Leavenworth KS.

National Military Home, Leavenworth, KS:

Cyrus GURWELL, admitted 17 Feb 1892. Married. Next of kin, Mrs. M. J. GURWELL of Wellsville MO. Farmer. Age 62. Height 5 ft, 9 in. Dark complexion. Discharged 10 July 1905 at own request. Readmitted 24 Jan 1907. Discharged 20 Mar 1908, dropped.

1900 Census, Upper Loutre Twp, Montgomery County, MO, page 10B: Margaret GREWELL, age 68 PA, born Sep 1831, married 46 yrs, 6 children/5 still living, parents born PA; Frank, son, age 38 OH, single, born Oct 1861, father born OH, mother born PA; day laborer.

1900 Census, Upper Loutre Twp, Montgomery Co MO, Dwelling 70, Family 72: Samuel GURWELL, age 30 MO, born May 1870, married 6 yrs, farmer, parents born OH; Mollie, wife, age 25 MO, married 6 yrs, 3 children/3 still living, father born VA, mother born TN; Emmett E, son, age 4 MO, born Oct 1895; Dottie, daughter, age 2 MO, born Dec 1897; no name, son, age 11 months MO, born July 1899; Cyrus, father, age 70 OH, born Apr 1830, married unknown number of years, parents born OH.

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From Debbie Ferdetta, National Archives Pension papers:

Marriage of Cyrus GURWELL and Margaret Jane SKELLY, 21 Sep 1854, Holmes Co OH. This evidence was sent directly from Holmes co OH Probate Court dated 9 April 1900.

[0886] This letter was written in support of Gurwell's wife so that she could get some of his pension money.

Attorney and Notary  
Wellsville, MO 7-28 1899

Honored Sir. Referring to your letter herewith in the matter of Cyrus Gurwell of Co. K 120<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry, I wish to say that this old lady is a very deserving one, that members of the G.S.R. Post here and officials have requested me to try [to] help her. I do not think there are two citizens in Wellsville nor any members of the

G. A. R. but would get up at night to assist her in getting a share of his pension. She is aged and feeble and her claim is righteous. Mrs. Gurwell is a client of mine yet I do not feel that I am betraying a client by speaking thus truthfully as I cannot honorably do otherwise knowing him and his wife as well as I do. Respectfully L. L. Kirk? The number of his pension certificate 766747.

[0902] Gurwell entered the National Military Home at Leavenworth Co KS, 17 Feb 1892.

[0827] Dated 6 Nov 1899, Soldier living at Wellsville, Montgomery, MO, age 69: "I have not been an inmate of the National Military home at Leavenworth Kansas since April 14th last [1899]....."My wife the claimant Margaret J. Gurwell scolded and fussed so much at home that it was impossible for me to live with her, and we have been separated ever since the fall of 1890, but I have never applied for divorce because with my experience I did not want another wife and not wishing to marry did not need a a divorce. She left me and moved to town, she said because I would not accept her religion. I did not leave her nor drive her off."

[0829] Dated 18 Dec 1899, John H. Smith, Henry Whitehead, and James H Whitehead testified for Cyrus.

They were all of Wellsville, Montgomery MO: "In about September 1885 Cyrus Gurwell had a quarrel with his son Frank, after which Frank and his mother had Mr. Gurwell arrested, and he was find \$20, Thinking this was wrong, myself, J. H. Whitehead and Ben Lewis paid his fine and got him out of jail. but he said his family made life such a burden that he would not go home again and stayed with me for about a year, and so far as I know has never lived at home since. I felt that the boy was of age and should leave home instead of the father, and that the family was more to blame than the old man." [all three agreed to this testimony]

[0831]Dated 6 April 1899, John A. BLACKWELL and Mrs. G. M STAUBE testified that Cyrus had abandoned his wife and was living at the Soldiers Home at Leavenworth.

[0833] Dated 8 Mar 1890, A. KEMPINSKY, age 61, of Wellsville, Montgomery, MO, testified: "That he has been well and intimately acquainted with Cyrus Gurwell and his wife Margaret J. Gurwell ever since their arrival in Montgomery County Mo. in 18\_\_\_. I know Mrs. Gurwell is a lady of unblemished reputation and excellent character and has been ever since our first acquaintance. I know that she is in very needy circumstances though highly esteemed by her neighbors. I know that her husband deserted her and has for many years left her to support herself as best she could. He is of unpleasant overbearing disposition. I know that he is a member of National Military Home but is staying away on furlough." Kapinsky was wife's attorney

[0836] Dated 2 Aug 1902, Ellen LEWIS, age 46. and Mrs. Mary E JOHNSON, age 51, of Wellsville, Montgomery County Mo. testified: We and each of us are married women and resident housekeepers of Wellsville Mo, and each of us are well and personally acquainted with Mrs. Margaret J. Gurwell and know her to be a worthy good woman. We also know that she is old infirm and in very poor circumstances, that she has been deserted by her husband and in our judgment without any cause except his own moral depravity and failure to recognize or discharge his duty as a husband. In our judgment Margaret I. sure is entitled to, and ought to have all the pension that is paid on account of Cyrus Gurwell on his service in the late War, for a period of at least 13 years to come and one half the same thereafter. She needs it and in our judgment ought to have it and if not helped by the Government, or some outside source, she will become a charge to her neighbors and friends."

[0838] Dated 30 Nov 1899, Frank Gurwell, age 38, of Wellsville, Montomery Co MO: "I am the son of Cyrus Gurwell and Margaret J. Gurwell above named and have always lived at home as long as father and mother did. About fourteen or fifteen years ago, my father began to say he had a notion to leave, and would curse and swear when my mother asked him to buy provisions and became very loud and boisterous. He became very cross and quarrelsome toward the whole family and in October he left and has never lived at home since. I have had to support the family ever since with some little help from my younger brother Sam.

About twelve years ago my mother moved to Wellsville where I have supported her ever since. I do not think my father ever had any good reason to leave his family as my mother was always kind to him as it was possible for a wife to be."

[0842]Dated 5 Dec 1900, Margaret J. GURWELL testified that Cyrus had deserted her on or about October 1887 and "during the 13 years of his absence has only contributed sixteen dollars toward her support." That she was married at Millersburg OH, 21 Sep 1854....Margaret J. SKELLEY and Cyrus GURWELL.

[0844] Dated 18 Feb 1907, Cyrus GURWELL at National Military Home in Leavenworth KS: Stated that he was born 5 Apr 1830 at Holmes Co OH.

[0855] Dated 17 Oct 1905, letter concerning discontinuing the division of the pension because of the death of the wife.

[0856] wife died about 8 Aug 1905.

[0846] Illnesses of Cyrus: Chronic diarrhea, piles, kidney disease, rheumatism, varicose veins, scurvy ulcers on legs, general debility.

[0849] Death of Cyrus: 7 Jan 1908

[0866] In 1897 Cyrus wrote this letter to his wife. I have changed the spelling and punctuation, for easier reading:

Dec 25, 1897

Wife, received your letter. It found me well and hearty. I have no malaise toward you. I seen that I could not live in peace with you and Frank and if Frank would stay away from the saloons it would be more credit to him and work a little more. I worked hard to get grub for him and the rest to live on . He ought to make enough for him and you to live on. This is all for the time. C G to M J G. [He added "we have turkey for dinner today. and "you find \$2.00 for Christmas present.]

[0870-71] Part of the law of March 3, 1899, included "desertion" as a reason to give pension to wives of soldiers.

[0879]Margaret wrote again to the pension board on 6 July 1899.

[0873] Wellsville, Mo. April 23 1900

[To] Hon. H. Clay Evans, Washington D. C.

Dear Sir:

Enclosed you will find Mrs. Margaret Gurwell's marriage certificate. The lady above mentioned is ill and confined to her bed. If it was not for the kindness of her neighbors she could not exist - as she has nothing to live on. If there is any fee coming to me please turn it over to her as she is in need of it.

Yours very respt.

A. KEMPINSKY

[0888-90] An interesting letter about how some wives might obtain a part of their husband's pension. [PDF File](#)

[0906] Jan 13, 1908 Letter to Mr. Samuel Gurwell, at Lone Wolf, Oklahoma asking him to have his father's last physician to fill out an affidavit.

[0907] Verifies the soldier's birth date as 5 Apr 1830.

[0909] No military service previous to 17 Oct 1862 or after 7 July 1865.

[0932-33] Margaret J. Gurwell died 8 Aug 1905.

[0939] Official paper showing that Margaret was approved as deserted wife, dated 25 July 1905.

[0936] Son Frank hoped to get pension money owed to his mother to pay her final expenses and asked if he might qualify for help.

[0945] Dated 9 Oct 1900 Samuel S. Regner, age 69 of Wellsville, Montgomery Co MO, testified that "Margaret J. Gurwell continued to live with Cyrus Gurwell as his wife until she was abandoned by him. Said Margaret J. Gurwell is very poor is an invalid and has a hard time to procure the necessities of life, her husband dresses well, travels around and seems to have a good time. Said Margaret J. Gurwell has the sympathy and respect of her neighbors."

[0956-7] Date stamp 3 Jan 1900. Over 32 people signed a statement supporting Margaret.