

Paroled Union POW 3rd Indiana Cavalry

Masten Dashiel was 45 when he enlisted in Captain Graham's company, Indiana Mounted Volunteers on September 5, 1861. A resident of Johnson County Indiana, he furnished his own horse for the unit. This unit later became Company G 3rd Indiana Cavalry. On December 31, 1862 he was captured at Stone's River. His journey as a prisoner and parolee took him to Richmond, Virginia, Camp Parole in Annapolis Maryland, Camp Chase in Columbus, Ohio and ending at Camp Carrington in Indianapolis, Indiana. He rejoined his unit in June 1863. He served with the 3rd Indiana Cavalry until his mustering out on September 27, 1864. After his service with the 3rd Indiana Cavalry, Masten Dashiel enlisted in Company E 16th Indiana Infantry on December 21, 1864 in Indianapolis, Indiana. He mustered in with the regiment the next day. He served with that regiment until he was mustered out on June 25, 1865 at New Orleans. He died on May 17, 1903 in Indianapolis, Indiana. He is buried in Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis.

This letter appeared in the Indianapolis Daily Journal on February 14, 1863. The spelling and punctuation are unchanged from the original publication.

Military Items.

--The following letter is from Mr. Dashiel, of this city, formerly a carrier of the Journal. He was taken prisoner at Murfreesboro and paroled, and is now in the camp of paroled men at Annapolis, Md.:

Parole Camp, Annapolis, MD.,

February 8, 1863.

Editor Journal: After wandering over the bounds of this camp to the Bay Shore and back again this beautiful Sabbath day, to retire to my tent with my fellow comrades, I feel a degree of languor that almost subsides into a stupidity and carelessness which is not common but wrong for a soldier. How can we be composed, how can we divest ourselves of the great melancholy that pervades us.--The last day of the year 1862 hundreds of us were compelled to surrender as prisoners of war before Murfreesboro, Tenn. As fast as possible we were paroled, placed in cars upon the railroad for Chattanooga and informed by the Confederate officers having us in charge that our final destination was Vicksburg, Miss. The railroad communication was so damaged that our transportation was not only very expensive, but quite circuitous. Some of the points we made were Atlanta, Georgia, through North Carolina, Montgomery Alabama, to the State of

Florida, to a city wearing the name of Pollard. Here an officer in charge received a dispatch from the authorities to return to Richmond, Va., which was done, and in an almost starving and naked condition we were introduced to our lodgings in Richmond, to-wit: Castle Thunder, on the 18th of January. After two weeks of a stay and short rations of bread and soup we were stripped of the remnant of our little extras, placed on cars, taken to City Point on board the steamers New York and Express and, by way of Fortress Monroe, we arrived at this old city.

The weather has been very unfavorable for remaining without shelter. But so many of us have been thrown here at one time that we have been compelled to remain out of doors, exposed to snow storms, pelting rains, and piercing winds, without clothes to keep us warm; but it was a military necessity and was complied with. But fortune and the government have at last favored us. It is not only amusing but interesting to see the boys this warm, pleasant day passing about completely enveloped in new suits who, three days since, were passing around or shivering about the poor camp fires in tatters and rags dodging snow and rain.

Various are the private letters and petitions that have been directed to Governor Morton for his aid, assistance and influence for our removal to Camp Morton. We are all soldiers in the Army of the Cumberland. We have long undergone the privations incident to the army almost without a murmur. Unfortunately for a while we are compelled to lay down our arms, and why not let us be in our own State during the interval. We are ready and willing at any time for an exchange that will return us again to our regiments, but as with the voice of one man we cry for home (several hundred of us); if we fail in this, as we all now fully contemplate we will not, I fear it may result in a dissatisfaction among and with us. None doubt but that we will all soon see Indianapolis; all are loud in the praise of our noble Governor, who has already won our favor by his kindness manifested towards Indiana soldiers, and for his patriotism in the cause in which we are engaged and have left our homes and risked our lives to sustain.

There are thousands of troops here from every loyal or half loyal State in the Union; some very hard boys and some very good.—There is plenty of everything to sell to satisfy the cravings of appetite and clothing to decorate the bodies of us soldiers, and very cheap; but very unfortunately the boys are out of money, and we are enjoying ourselves entirely at Uncle Sam's expense. It is quite cheap living. We have some sickness among us, and rumors of smallpox among us brought from Richmond.

Yours truly, Masten Dashiel