

William L. McNeese

Jon

June 7, 2010

Jon Jarvis, Director
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Director Jarvis:

I write to ask your assistance in correcting an error that has endured for over 145 years. In Andersonville National Cemetery the marker for grave 9140 list the occupant as being "Sam'l McKeese Tenn". (See the attached photo) The marker should read "Sam'l McNeese Tenn". The descendants of Samuel McNeese pray that the National Park Service correct this mistake, so our ancestor can be properly recognized for his sacrifice to his country.

The attached evidence will prove the error:

1. Exhibit A – A page taken from the Andersonville records. Line 10 "12481 McNeese, S Private G Company 8th Tenn". If you look at the preceding line, it list Mulligan, T. W. The "g" in Mulligan extends down to the "N" below, and one could easily mistake it for a "K" thus "McKeese" instead of "McNeese".
2. Exhibit B - The Hospital Register of Andersonville for September 15-18. Samuel is listed on line 11 with T. W. Mulligan above. In this document, his death is reported. The document indicates he died on September 17; however, your database (Exhibit D) indicates he died on September 18. He could have died on the 17th and buried on the 18th.
3. Exhibit C – Another Hospital Register of Andersonville . Samuel is listed on line 7. T W Mulligan is listed 4 rows above him. This record clearly shows the last name as being McNeese. In all three, he is listed as a private in G Company 8th Tenn, and in Exhibit A and B, he is listed as number 12481.
4. Exhibit D – Andersonville Prisoner of War Database from your records.
5. Exhibit E – Photo of marker 9140.

In the books "Tennesseans in the Civil War", 1965, by the Tennessee Civil War Commission there were no McKeese's who fought for the Union or the South. In addition, I have reviewed all the U.S. Census records from 1830 to 1880 for all the counties in Tennessee from which G Company, 8th Tenn was formed. There are no McKeese's. However, there were a number McNeese's in these counties.

We know you will agree that the above evidence proves grave 9140 was for Samuel McNeese, and respectfully ask this error be corrected and the name on the marker be changed, and the records of the Prisoners of War that died in Andersonville be corrected.

Samuel McNeese was my great-great-grandfather. For 145 years, our family never knew how Samuel died or where he was buried. Family stories told of him being captured by the South and either killed or put in a prison camp. No one ever knew where. We can only imagine the horrors at Andersonville and his terrible death. Having his final resting place properly marked will give us closure.

Samuel W. McNeese was born in 1835 in northern Greene County, TN to Jonas McNeese and Ruth Babb. In 1859, he married Margaret Freeman. They had two boys who lived to adulthood, Francis Marion born in 1861, and my great grandfather Samuel Wiley born Jun 29 1864. The senior Samuel would never see his second son.

Samuel's father, Jonas, was a pioneer, who cleared and settled 400 acres in Greene County, TN in the early 1800's. Jonas fought with Andrew Jackson in the War of 1812. Samuel's widow, Margaret, farmed and raised her two young sons on this land until her death in 1911, never knowing the resting place of her husband.

Our family has had ancestors who served in every war the US has been involved in since the Revolutionary War, and we feel very strongly that Samuel's final resting place be properly marked.

Respectively submitted,

William L. McNeese
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P.S. Should you have any questions, I can be reached at bill@mcneese.com or [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] An acknowledgment the receipt of this correspondence would be appreciated.

cc: Andersonville National Historic Site