

GASCONADE VALLEY COUSINS

Isaac Poe

Born into a turbulent time in our country's history in Osage County, Missouri on February 7, 1844 the life of Isaac Poe, son of Barnabas Madison and Eliza Backues Poe was short and tragic. Barely two years old when his father died in 1846; Isaac was raised by his uncle Isaac Backues and his wife Susan. He is found in their home at the age of six in the 1850 Federal Census of Osage County, Missouri under the name Isaac Poe. In the 1860 Federal Census of Osage County, he is listed just as Isaac and consequently some could assume that his surname is Backues rather than Poe. In that census he is 16 and listed as a "domestic", probably working as a general helper for his aunt and uncle and their daughters at the home and on the farm.

Many of the families of Osage and Maries Counties in Missouri were divided over the political issues that generated the Civil War and the Poe's were no exception. Great-grandfather William Poe was a "union man", and served in the local union militia. Isaac, on the other hand, served the Confederate rebellion. In his grief over losing his brother, William blamed the Backues family for indoctrinating Isaac in the merits of the rebel cause.

Isaac enlisted as a private in Company "E" of Steen's Regiment, Missouri Infantry on August 8, 1862, later designated as The 10th Missouri Confederate Infantry". In "Men of the Tenth" by Wayne H. Schnetzer we find "A third individual involved with the 10th, was Col. J. M. Johnson (or Johnston). In late July into early August (1862, WLS), Johnson recruited men for a cavalry unit from the north part of Missouri's Ozarks. His command would also be dismounted at Pocahontas (Arkansas, WLS) and formed into companies E, H and K." Our Isaac Poe was one of those recruited.

We find further in "Men of the Tenth": "The 10th would be involved in four battles during the war. The first was at Prairie Grove, Ark. on Dec. 7, 1862. The regiment led a charge by Parson's Brigade during the late hours of the battle against Blunt's division. Col. Steen and Lt. Col. Chappell, along with 13 others were killed, 78 wounded and 3 missing." Our Isaac was one of those wounded.

The copies of the muster rolls acquired from the office of the Missouri Adjutant General leave us with a multiple choice regarding the details of the ultimate fate of Isaac. After the battle at Prairie Grove the archivist at the battlefield memorial states that the wounded were first tended in a Methodist church just a block or two away and then transferred to a hospital in Fayetteville, AR. One muster roll states that he was "left wounded at Cane Hill Hospital, Dec. 7", four muster rolls state that he was left wounded or in the hospital at Prairie Grove on Dec. 7, 1862, and the one dated August 31, 1863 states that he "died of wounds received at battle of Prairie Grove, Dec. 7, 1862." The muster roll for April 1, 1863 records that he was last paid by Maj. Monroe to February 28, 1863. So apparently Isaac was hospitalized for some period of time, continued to be paid as a soldier of the confederacy and died sometime between April 1 and August 31, 1863. No burial record or gravesite has been found. He was 19 years old.