

William H. Horine (1840-1907)

William (Bill) Horine was born to Adam and Sallie (Mason) Horine on March 3, 1840 in Jessamine County, Kentucky. He had seven siblings: Adam, Sarah, Anderson, Woodson, George, Hulda, and Martha. Unfortunately we have little information about William's life before the Civil War. What we do know is that shortly after his birth, the Horine family left the "Bluegrass State" of Kentucky to live in Illinois, where they settled on a farm in Bloomington Township in McLean County. This was William's home off and on for most of his life.

William joined the Union Army on August 10, 1862, enlisting in Company K of the 94th Illinois Volunteer Infantry. The 94th was known as the "McLean County Regiment" because it was comprised entirely of men from McLean County. Organized in the summer of 1862 in response to the President's call for an additional 600,000 men, this regiment contained some of the most respected and influential men of the county.¹ Being from the same county, many of the men in the 94th knew each other, were friends, or even relatives. Horine's own cousin, George W. Howser, also served in the 94th in Company B. Howser wrote letters to his cousin Woodson (Horine's brother), including some colorfully worded letters regarding rebels stealing mail.² In both the North and South, volunteer regiments had close ties to their states. Companies and even entire regiments often consisted of recruits from a single township, city, or county.³

During his 2 years in the Civil War, Horine wrote many colorful letters home to his family, especially to his brother Woodson. He often wrote about where his unit was stationed, troop movements, camp life, weather, food, women, his duties as a soldier, battles and skirmishes they were involved in, and requests for items to be sent to him. Horine was especially vocal about the lack of news from home complaining that friends and family neither wrote enough nor sent him any newspapers. In many letters he comically signed himself as "Dr. Ha Ha, W. H. Horine," "Brigadier General," "Professor," or "Major General."

Horine was first stationed at Camp Benton, Missouri (located 4 miles northwest of St. Louis, MO). While stationed there, he described his regiment's day to day activities in letters he wrote home. On September 1, 1862 he wrote that: "Each day roll call is at 5 o'clock, Co. [Company] drill half an hour, breakfast at six, squad drill from seven till nine, dinner at twelve, squad drill from half past four till half past five, supper at six, Co. [Company] drill from seven till eight, roll call at half past eight, lights out and everything quiet at nine."⁴ He reported having plenty of "swill and slop" to eat and drink, having "coffee, bread and meat for breakfast, and bread, water and meat for dinner. We've got a little of everything for supper." He also stated that he was having a "bully" time of it and that the camp grounds & barracks area were a "darned nice place to." However, after writing multiple letters for two weeks while training at Camp

¹ *Transactions of the McLean County Historical Society, Volume 1.* (Bloomington, Illinois: Pantagraph Printing and Stationary Co., 1899) p. 109.

² Geo. W. Howser to Woodson, January 8, 1863. (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection, Bloomington, Illinois)

³ McPherson, James M. *Battle Cry of Freedom- The Civil War Era.* (Oxford University Press, 1988) p.326.

⁴ W. H. Horine to Woodson, September 1, 1862. (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

Benton, Horine wrote to his brother in frustration about the lack of news and letters from home: “I aint going to write any more before somebody else does that’s certain,”⁵

In September of 1862, the 94th Infantry moved further south to Camp McLean, in Rolla, Missouri and soon thereafter made their way to Springfield, Missouri. In a letter to Woodson, Horine expressed that during that march he was feeling tired and “pretty near give out” until he received Woodson’s letter. “Lord I jumped up like a snake had have bit me. I stuck it in my pocket and marched eight more miles and didn’t get tired a bit.” The boost of morale from the letter he received was important because by the time they arrived in Springfield, they had marched approximately 200 miles in 13 days. Word from home helped him endure those seemingly endless days of marching, especially when they would go for days without seeing any other people, houses, or “any live thing at all.”⁶

In Springfield, the still relatively new 94th infantry was occupied in fortifying Springfield and taking lessons in battalion drill.⁷ Horine was able to read the local Missouri newspapers, but complained of wanting to read *The Pantagraph*. He also mentioned the number of “devilish good looking” women there and went on to say “I bet they are all Secesh, though.”⁸ Horine often used the term “Secesh” to describe Confederate supporters or soldiers who had seceded from the Union. While in Springfield, Horine spent a lot of time on guard duty. He was responsible for guarding some 2-300 prisoners, including Secesh and “Union men who have been playing Hell.”⁹ It was also in Springfield where his regiment got new guns, Enfield Rifles. Upon receiving his new gun, he wrote to Woodson that they were “bully guns I tell you. They aint near as heavy as the others, a little longer and a good deal easier to handle, and are finished off nice, and will kill a Secesh one thousand yards away every crack. No other Co. gets them but ours, and I tell you what, they don’t like it much that’s certain.”¹⁰ The Enfield rifle, the second most widely used weapon in the Civil War, was imported from England by both the North and South in numbers exceeding 800,000.¹¹

While in Springfield in October of that year, Horine asked Woodson to send him “any counterfeit money, broken banks, or anything of that kind.” He went on to say “Here is the place to pass all such furniture. The secesh brings wagon loads of things, pies, canes, cider, apples, peaches, chickens, turkeys, milk... and they will take anything that looks like money. Some of the boys passed four or five dollars of that kind of stuff.” In a later letter, he asked Wood to send all the Confederate script he could lay his hands on because the further south they went, the more he could sell it for. “Fives and Tens will sell best, they sell quicker and for more than any other kind.” During the Civil War, one-third to one-half of the currency in circulation was

⁵ W.H. Horine to Woodson, August 8, 1862 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

⁶ W.H. Horine to Woodson, October 18, 1862 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

⁷ *Transactions of the McLean County Historical Society, Volume 1*, p. 111

⁸ W.H. Horine to Woodson, October 18, 1862 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

⁹ W.H. Horine to Woodson, October 14, 1862 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

¹⁰ W.H. Horine to Woodson, October 26, 1862 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

¹¹ “The Civil War Soldier” by Bertram Barnett <http://www.nps.gov/archive/gett/soldierlife/webguns.htm>

counterfeit. At that time, approximately 1,600 state banks designed and printed their own bills so it was nearly impossible to distinguish real money from counterfeit.¹²

On November 12th 1862, Horine wrote to Woodson that the 94th was going to be heading further south. “We are going to leave here in about an hour, and can’t write much. We are going to Little Creek, Ark., about three hundred miles over the Boston Mountains [southwestern part of the Ozarks], a road that no troops has ever traveled yet.” They marched for days in the rain over bumpy, and muddy roads. Some of the roads were so bad that the wagons got stuck and the soldiers marched on to camp without their belongings. That night they had to do without tents, blankets, food and everything else. They built huge fires, slept, smoked and chewed “terbacca” that night.¹³ That November, the 94th combined with other combat battalions and regiments from Missouri and Kansas to form the Second Brigade of the Third Division of the “Army of the Frontier,” under the command of General Francis J. Herron. This brigade was formed to stay near Springfield, while the other under the command of General James G. Blunt was assigned the task of probing northwest Arkansas.

On December 7, the 94th was involved in their first major battle, The Battle of Prairie Grove in northwestern Arkansas. The Union claimed victory even though the Confederates outnumbered the Union soldiers and tactically, the battle was a stalemate. In the end, the Union army was able to secure northwest Arkansas. Horine recalled the infantry sat around for about an hour while the artillery was at work. Once Colonel John McNulta, (commander of the 94th) came around and hollered “Fall in!,” Horine described his experience as: “the first round or two I felt like dodging a little but after firing several times I didn’t think anything more about it. I loaded and fired deliberately as if I was shooting hogs.” The next day, Horine came within five yards of Confederate General John S. Marmaduke during a skirmish. Horine bragged that if Marmaduke didn’t have a flag of truce with him, he would have shot him.¹⁴ The Battle of Prairie Grove was a momentous battle for the 94th. With the loss of a Wisconsin and an Iowa regiment, the 94th found themselves cut off from their fellow Union soldiers on the battlefield. Even so, the 94th held their ground, formed an irregular line taking advantage of every tree stump and fence post, and with their relentless gunfire, prevented a counter charge by the rebels. Colonel McNulta rode on his horse back and forth amid a hurricane of bullets, calling on his regiment to stand their ground. After some time, Colonel Blunt, commander of the other division of the brigade, arrived with more regiments. This decided the battle and the rebels retreated that evening.¹⁵ The Battle of Prairie Grove appeared to have eliminated any shyness Horine had of combat. In a letter dated March 15, 1863, Horine wrote “I haven’t shot anybody in so long I think I could shoot about four hundred of them with great satisfaction.”

Writing from “Nowhere,” MO, and Mountain Grove, MO in early spring of 1863, Horine described some of his regiment’s mischievous activities. Lawless marauding, or “jayhawking” as it was called, was common and the 94th acquired many things in this manner on their journey.

¹² U.S. Secret Service website: <http://www.secretservice.gov/criminal.shtml>

¹³ W.H. Horine to Woodson, November 21, 1862 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

¹⁴ W.H. Horine to Woodson, January 25, 1863 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

¹⁵ *Transactions of the McLean County Historical Society, Volume I*, p. 114

In one letter, Horine wrote that he “went out jayhawking yesterday and got a canteen of molasses, a Ham of meat and Beeves and we went out again today... got two more canteens of molasses and as many apples as we wanted, and didn’t get bushwacked either.”¹⁶ Jayhawkers had to anticipate attacks from rebel guerilla soldiers, whom they called bushwackers. Guerilla soldiers were relatively small groups of armed citizens who used unusual battle tactics such as ambushes, raids and the element of surprise. These soldiers could harass army regiments due to their extraordinary mobility and were able to retreat quickly due to their familiarity of the land.

Over the next few months the 94th moved to Fayetteville, AK; Van Buren, AK; Prairie Grove, MO; Huntsville, AK; Carrollton, AK; Forsythe, MO; and Mountain Grove, MO. During the months of April and May, 1863, men of the 94th spent time recuperating at Spring Lake, Missouri where friends and family came to visit them. Woodson came to see William and had “a pretty good time.”¹⁷ Horine also drew his pay at that time and was able to send Woodson home with most of his \$52.

Come June, the 94th made their way by train to St. Louis and then by steamer, the *Minnehaha*, further south to Vicksburg, Mississippi. While in Vicksburg, the role of the 94th was to dig ditches, plant guns, make gabions (cylindrical baskets filled with earth or rocks used in building fieldworks), and capture rifle pits. Occasionally during local truces, Union and Confederate soldiers would exchange knives and pipes with the each other.¹⁸ The 94th had their fair share of danger and exposure but thanks to the care of General McNulta, only one man was killed and five others wounded during this battle. The men of the 94th were present on July 4, 1863 to see the Union flag raised at the Vicksburg courthouse. Horine wrote to Woodson on July 7 that “Old Vicksburg is ours. We marched into her on the Fourth of July at ten o’clock... It’s the darndest place you ever saw. If the rebels hadn’t run out of provision we would have had to dry them out.”

After the fall of Vicksburg, the 94th took part in an expedition to take possession of Yazoo City, Mississippi, then returned to Vicksburg, shipped out to Port Hudson, which turned out to be “a most miserable camping ground”¹⁹ and continued on to Carrollton, Arkansas. At this time Horine wrote that “...the 19th Iowa and five Cos. of our Regt. was on board and forty of fifty sick men. It was a very “unpleasant” trip” “cartin. [for certain]”²⁰ By then, the men had been exposed and fatigued for two months, and it started to wear on their health. The hospitals filled up quickly, and half of the men of the 94th were on the sick list.²¹ Leaving the sick men to recover in Carrollton, the rest of the regiments moved on to New Orleans.

In New Orleans, Horine was happy to receive two *Chicago Tribunes*’ in the mail. “We get plenty of New Orleans paper here but they don’t amount to anything.”²² Horine was in New

¹⁶ W.H. Horine to Woodson, February 20, 1863 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

¹⁷ W. H. Horine to Mother, April 19, 1863 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

¹⁸ *Transactions of the McLean County Historical Society, Volume I*, p. 116

¹⁹ *Transactions of the McLean County Historical Society*, p. 116

²⁰ W.H. Horine to Woodson, August 15, 1863 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

²¹ *Transactions of the McLean County Historical Society*, p. 116

²² W. H. Horine to Woodson, August 30, 1863 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

Orleans through Christmas where they got a big Christmas dinner of oysters, eggs, hard tack, butter, and other “divers” things.²³ After Christmas, Company K headed to Madisonville, Kentucky and then to Brownsville, Texas to take possession of it. Writing from Brownsville in March of 1864, Horine mentioned that he expected to be home to pick corn in the fall. “I think me and Lincoln will put down the rebellion by that time.”²⁴ At that time, he was a cook for his company.

It turned out that Horine would not be home in time to pick corn that year. In a letter to Woodson while stationed near Mobile, Alabama in October of 1864, Horine disclosed that many of the men in his regiment had scurvy. He had a touch of it at one point, but ate onions, potatoes, dried apples and pickles to get himself better. The lack of fresh fruits and vegetables in their diet made many of the soldiers Vitamin C deficient, which caused them to get scurvy. In the same letter, Horine shared his predictions for the war: “I think Grant and Sheridan will have Rebel Capitol before long now. But Old Abe’s election will help to put down the rebellion more than anything else, and of course He will be re elected.”²⁵ Horine also mentioned that he was having medical issues, specifically troubles with hearing loss. “I saw the Dr. and had him examine my ears to see if he could do ‘em any good or no... I presume he will finally give me my ‘walking papers,’ or, in other words, a discharge.”

William H. Horine’s hearing problems did result in him being discharged on December 1, 1864. He returned home to Bloomington, IL and continued to farm with his family. On August 21, 1871 he married Agnes Osborn, an Illinois native born in February of 1851. Horine and his wife lived off and on between 1114 S. Main Street, 217 S. Main Street, and the family farm located south of Bloomington. They had three children: Grace, Herman, & Mabel. Horine also ventured into the grocery business. In 1873, he owned “Horine Brothers Grocers” with his brother George. Then in 1891, he partnered with James L. Stone in another grocery store; “Horine & Stone.”

William Horine died on September 2, 1907. His funeral was held at his home and was largely attended, especially by men and women of the GAR. The Grand Army of the Republic, known as the GAR, was a fraternal organization for Union veterans of the Civil War. It is unknown if Horine was ever a member of the GAR. The pall bearers of his funeral were all veterans of the 94th who had served with Bill. He was buried in Evergreen Memorial Cemetery in Bloomington, Illinois

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²³ W.H. Horine to Woodson, December 27, 1863 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

²⁴ W.H. Horine to Woodson, March 26, 1864 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)

²⁵ W.H. Horine to Woodson, October 22, 1864 (McLean County Historical Society Archive Collection)