

# Charles Stacey and the Medal of Honor

**Charles Stacey was a private in Company D, 55th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. He received the Medal of Honor for his actions of July 2, 1863 at the Battle of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Below you will find photographs of Charles Stacey as a young soldier and as an old veteran. There are also copies of his citation and a typescript copy of a letter that he sent to his grandson in 1918 explaining what he did to receive the Medal of Honor. To see a larger view of any image just click on the image.**



**Charles Stacey. Age 17. E. S. 13 Sept. '61. 3 years; Private Co. D; captured 2 July '63, at battle of Gettysburg, Pa. (received Medal of Honor from War Department for meritorious service there); M. O. 19 Oct. '64, on expiration of term of service.**



## Copy of The Citation

**(click on image for a large version)**

*The following is a typescript of a letter from Charles Stacey written in 1918 to his grandson Ford L. Stacey.*

To Ford L. Stacey Norwalk, Ohio, April 13, 1918

My Dear Grandson,

You are the first one that I have ever written to in regard to my own services in the Civil War. In regard to incidents at Gettysburg, on July 1, 1863, we arrived at Cemetery Hill at 2:00PM and formed our battle line behind a stone fence along the Emmettsburg road. After we had been in line for awhile, two Germans from a Regt. on our right who had been back over the hill to make coffee, were coming down the hill with the coffee in a camp kettle swinging on a pole. When the Rebel sharpshooters began firing at them, they began to go faster, and finally were running and had got back close to their line when one of them stubbed his toe and fell and the coffee was spilled. Our boys were all laughing at them to see them run. Sometime after our boys wanted some water, and I took all the canteens I could carry and went to get some. When I was going back the sharpshooters began to fire at me. There was an old orchard on the side of the hill and if I happened to be close to one of them I would hear the bullets chug into the tree, and I could feel my hair fairly raise as they would go past me. Now I wanted to run just as bad as those Pennsylvania Germans did , but I did not, because of the way they laughed at them. Now this was not true courage because the most sensible thing I could have done would have been to run and get out of it as soon as possible. I spoke to the Colonel about it once and he said it was nothing but pride.

On the second day the company on the skirmish line was driven in by Sharpshooters. Our Company was ordered out to take their place. I volunteered to go outside the lines and locate the sharpshooters. I went out in advance and soon discovered two of them across a narrow wheat field who were doing the most damage. They saw me at the same time but I was quicker than they were, and I guess I disabled one of them the first shot as only one shot came from there and then I disabled the other as no more shots came from that point after I had fired four shots. In the meantime however a line of battle in the old Railroad Cut further away had located me and every time I would locate a Sharpshooter and fire at him, this whole line would fire on me but I would drop down and although the splinters from the top of the fence would fly all over me, the wheat would protect me lower down. To show you how severe this fire was, [Sg. L. B. Mesnard](#) of our Company, started to join me on the hill, and he got about ten yards from the place where I was just as I fired at a Sharpshooter and dropped down to escape the return volley. He was not aware of the return fire and his face was filled with splinters from the fence. He was wounded in the right wrist and his gun stock split by that one return volley.

I fired 23 shots in the four hours I was alone and during that time my company did not have a man touched during the time I was out and I destroyed the Sharpshooters. I don't believe any man ever had a line of battle fire at him as many times as I was fired at and live to tell of it. It was for this service that Congress gave me the Medal of Honor, the highest military honor in the country and your old Granddad was the only man in Northern Ohio to get one.

I was taken prisoner at night on July 2nd and on the 11th this was written in my

diary. "Fall in at 6 A. M. March 6 miles and halt to get something to eat. The last they gave us was on the 7th and then we only got  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup of flour." We would take a spoonful of this and put it in a tin can and boil it but you see that while it would fill you up some, the only substance was the flour.

The first Colonel of the Regt. Was Lee and the Lt. Col. was Safford. Lt. Col. Safford resigned and Stevens took his place. Col. Lee's horse was killed under him at the battle of Chancellorsville, and Lieut. Col. Stevens was hit seven times. A piece of shell passed over my right arm and under my left arm and hit the stock of my gun, A bullet hit a fence rail and passed under my chin and killed the man next to me, the bullet passing through his heart. Our next Colonel was Colonel Gambee and Major Robbins were both killed at the Battle of Resacca, Ga. The Company I belonged to lost 57 men (killed, wounded and died of disease) of the 91 who crossed the Ohio River. Today (1918) only one Commissioned Officer, one Corporal and 15 men are living.

Well I guess I have written enough so you can find something to interest you from this and don't forget THESE ARE FACTS,

Your Grandfather  
Charles Stacey



**The Photos and copies of the documents on this page were provided by**

**Libbie Romigh**

## **Great Granddaughter of Charles Stacey**

***For Luther B. Mesnard's account of this action please click here***

**[The account of Luther Mesnard](#)**



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