

45th U. S. Colored Infantry

JOSEPH LOWE

Marshall County Emancipated Slave in the Civil War
Company "E"

Researched and compiled by Linda Fluharty.
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Former slave, Joseph Lowe, 42, enlisted as a private on February 23, 1865 at Wheeling, (W) Virginia, to serve with Company "E" of the 45th U. S. Colored Troops. He mustered in on February 28, 1865 at Wheeling. The 45th was assigned to duty with the West Virginia regiments, and the State of West Virginia awarded these soldiers the same postwar service medal that West Virginia troops received.

Private Joseph Low died on April 22, 1866, months after the end of the Civil War. The discharge from his company is dated November 4, 1865 at Brownsville, Texas, but the men were taken to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where they were actually discharged. By the time he returned home, it was December 1865. He died as a result of disease contracted while in service, as stated in several affidavits in his widow's application for a government pension. Only one affidavit is presented here.

Sworn Affidavit of David Copeland, "a Private in Co "E" 45th Regiment United States Colored Troops in the war of 1861. That he is well acquainted with Mary A. Lowe widow of Joseph Lowe decd. who was a Private in the same Company and Regiment with him. That while their Regiment was stationed at Edinburg, Texas the said Joseph Lowe being then there with his Company was taken sick sometime in the month of July 1865, that he got no better from then until he was discharged at Philadelphia, Pa., that he came home sick in December 1865 and continued to grow worse until April 22nd 1866 where he died at Moundsville, Marshall Co., W.Va. of pulmonary disease, a disease which he believes was contracted while in the service of the United States at Edinburg, Texas in the summer and fall of 1865 from exposure incident to the country and climate. That previous to enlisting in the army said Joseph Lowe was a strong vigorous and apparently healthy man, that he had been acquainted with him for five years previous thereto..."

Born in Marshall County, West Virginia, Joseph Low was not named in the 1850 census, but he had been a slave at that time, the property of [Nancy Ramsey](#). On November 22, 1853, she signed a deed of Emancipation, freeing Joseph:

"Whereas Nancy Ramsey in her lifetime executed to her slave Joseph Low, then thirty three years and some months old, a deed of Emancipation dated the 22nd day of

November 1853 by which she disposed of her rights to his future servitude. And whereas William T. Price and William Shaw/Show the husbands of the two daughters of said Mrs. Ramsey & the only heirs, are desirous of confirming the act of said Nancy Ramsey and perfecting the Emancipation of said Joseph. Now knows all men by these presents that we William T. Price and William Shaw/Show for sundry good consideration (as well as the considerations above specified), as thereunto moving have and by these presents do Emancipate and set free and him discharge from our and each of our service. The said negro man Joseph Low aged about thirty six years and we declare him to be by us Emancipated and Manumitted and entirely liberated from slavery and entitled to all the rights and privileges of a free person with which it is in our power to vest him. Said Joseph is fully described in the Deed of Emancipation executed by Nancy Ramsey above referred to, and to which reference can be had in the clerk's office of Marshall County where the same is on record for a more particular description. But let it be understood that in manumitting said Joseph they said William T. Price and William Show/Shaw only intend to do so, so far as they have rights to do so, and that they do not by this act intend to part with or impair or injure the rights of any other person or persons. Witness the following signature and seal this 22nd day of April 1856 -- William T. Price - Wm. Shaw

Upon becoming a free man on November 22, 1853, Joseph Low got married a few weeks later. He married Mary Ann Grimes, born in Ohio County, on December 15, 1853 in Wheeling, Ohio County. The information in the marriage record gives both of their ages as 23, but Joseph was about 10 years older. Her parents were Ignatius and Elizabeth Grimes, Mulattos, found in the 1850 census of Ohio County. Mary Ann's siblings were Sabra, Elizabeth J., and Julia Ann. The marriage record specifically states that Joseph was born on Fish Creek, Marshall County, the son of Joseph and Violet Low. At the time of the 1860 census of Marshall County, Joseph Lowe, 40, and Mary A. Lowe, 30, were the parents of Sarah Lowe, 4, Elisabeth Lowe, 3, and Andrew Lowe, one month.

The death of Joseph Lowe occurred on April 22, 1866, four months after he arrived home from military service. In a file of tombstone orders for military veterans, there is a card for Joseph Lowe, Company "I" 45th Ohio Infantry. The gravestone was sent to Village Cemetery in Moundsville, which is known to be the First Street Cemetery. The contract for this stone was dated November 29, 1879 and the date of death was stated as April 21, 1865. When the stone was ordered, the person (or organization) was simply not clear on the particulars of his company and regiment, and may have been reading the info from a weathered stone. A review of the men in Company "I" of the 45th Ohio does NOT include a Joseph Lowe or a Joseph Low. - This is certainly Joseph Low(e) of Company "E" of the 45th Colored Infantry, a regiment that was unknown to many in West Virginia.

L. O. W. Joseph
 Pvt. Co. I, Regt. 45th
 Ohio Inf.
 Cemetery Villac
 City or Town Moundsville,
 County and State Marshall, W. Va.
 Grave —
 died April 21st 1865:
 Headstone supplied 18
 by S. G. Bridges.
 Contract dated Nov. 29th 1872.

The remains of Joseph Low, and other Civil War veterans, *might* have been moved to Mt. Rose Cemetery about 1899 or soon after. A newspaper article indicates the G.A.R. proposed that soldiers be moved to Mt. Rose but there is no proof that all were moved. Family members might have been opposed to the move, especially if the spouse remained at First Street Cemetery. His widow died in 1894 and she may be the Mary Low whose remains are still interred at First Street.

At the time of the 1870 census, Mary H. [error] Lowe, 40, a washerwoman, lived with three children, Sarah, 14, John, 8, and Mollie, 6. [The children, as named in the pension application: Sarah Louisa, John Walker, Eliza Rebecca and Mary. - Mary is also Mollie in pension record. The daughter, [Eliza] Rebecca, was deceased. Andrew from the 1850 census must have died, too.]

From the 1890 Census of Veterans and Widows: "LOWE, Mary A., widow of Joseph Lowe, Private, Company "E", 45th US Colored Vol. Address: Moundsville, WV."

Mary Ann Lowe's will, dated August 20, 1894, was presented to the Marshall County Court for admission to probate on October 2, 1894. Son, J. W. Lowe, of Greene County, Pa., and daughter, Sarah L. Powell, each received half of the estate. (Will book, v. 003 1887-1901)

NAME OF SOLDIER:					<i>Low, Joseph</i>				
SERVICE:					<i>Late rank, P Co. B, 45 Regt Ill. Inf</i>				
TERM OF SERVICE:					<i>Enlisted, 1 Discharged, 1</i>				
DATE OF FILING:	CLASS.	APPLICATION NO.	LAW.	CERTIFICATE NO.					
	<i>Invalid,</i>								
<i>1866 Oct 26</i>	<i>Widow,</i>	<i>136164</i>		<i>149171</i>					
	<i>Minor,</i>								
ADDITIONAL SERVICES:									
REMARKS:									

Pension Index Card

SOME FAMILY HISTORY

SOLDIER'S FATHER: Joseph Low, Senior, the father of Joseph, died in 1839. His history is unknown but he was apparently a free slave and owned property in Oregon. His will is found in Marshall County Will Book 1. - The older Joseph Low was black because he specified in his will that he wanted his property in Oregon to be sold and **"that the proceeds of such sale, it is my will and desire that my executor appropriate the same for the redemption from slavery of my children now in the possession of Mrs. Ann Ramsey named as follows to wit, Arabella, Thomas, Henry & Frank or such of them as can be redeemed by the proceeds of the sale as aforesaid, - and after such redemption it is my desire that the children be bound out to learn some suitable occupation until they arrive at age..."** - His wife and other children, including Joseph, are not mentioned. Everything he owned was to be sold in order to buy the freedom of his enslaved children owned by Ann Ramsey. She was Nancy Ann Ramsey, a Marshall County slave owner in 1840 and 1850.

SOLDIER'S MOTHER: Vilet Low, 53, married William Morris, 66, on May 22, 1862 in Marshall County. Both were widowed, and they are named in the 1860 and 1870 census records of Marshall County. Despite the stated age, she was likely the widow of Joseph Low, Sr., and the mother of Joseph. Second husband, William Morris, was a worker on the farm of the aforementioned Mrs. Ann Ramsey in 1850.

SOLDIER'S BROTHER: Amos Lowe, who gave an affidavit in support of Mary Lowe's pension, said he was the brother of Joseph.

SOLDIER'S BROTHER: Thomas Low, who married Mariah Bruce in Marshall County in 1866, was probably the brother of Joseph. The marriage record indicating his mother was Filet, spelled phonetically, should probably be Violet. - Joseph and Violet Low were the parents of both Joseph and Thomas. Thomas, 36, and Mariah/Maria are found in the 1870 census of Moundsville with children Bell and Frank, as well as a sister, SUSAN LOWE, a washwoman, age 40. In 1880, son, Frank, was in the home with Thomas and Maria, as well as Susan Lowe. The 1880 record indicates that Thomas' father was born in Maryland and his mother in West Virginia. In 1900, he and his wife had three children at home - Nicholas, Julia, and Ota/Ora. Nicholas was still at home in 1900. Thomas Lowe, colored male, 80, died on April 17, 1916 in Moundsville.

SOLDIER'S SON: John W. Lowe, 44, a barber, born in Moundsville, West Virginia, the son of Joseph Lowe and Mary Grimes, and a resident of Portsmouth, Ohio, married Florence D. Ellis, 28, a housekeeper born in Portsmouth.

SOLDIER'S DAUGHTER: Sarah Louise "Sally/Sallie" Lowe was born on April 26, 1856 in Moundsville, West Virginia. She died in Columbus, Ohio on March 17, 1907. Her husband was Moses Powell and they had daughter, Laura, married name, Taylor, born on December 3, 1876 in Moundsville. A son, James William, was born in Moundsville in 1887 or 1889. Sallie & Moses married in Franklin County, Ohio on October 14, 1898. Son, James, a cook in Columbus, died on July 18, 1944 of shock & burns after their room caught fire. Laura, a widow, was living with her brother and she died of burns the next day.