

Mathew McClurken Biography (1822 - 1908)

The following biography is from the periodical, "Trails" June 2005, Volume 15, Issue 2. It was obtained from the Allen County Public Library Foundation through their Periodical Source Index (PERSI) service.

INTERESTING NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

John R. ALLEN Mayor of Sparta, Ill 1892

Enlisted in army May 1861 known as the "Union Guards" of Sparta, Ill, organized and commanded by Captain John E Detrich

Went with Company to Belleville, Ill and served as a Private with it.

On June 11, 1861 he was sworn into service of the United States for '3 years or during the war". He became a corporal in 1862 under Captain Milton A French.

He was in the Battle of Chickamauga September 19, 1863 where a musket ball shattered his leg and was amputated.

Mr. Allen, Lieut. W F Wilson, James Brown and Capt. French, all Sparta boys lay within a few yards of one another, mortally wounded. Mr. Allen captured at Crawford Springs, Georgia with other union prisoners. He was taken to Chattanooga.

He shared long marches, skirmishes and hard battles through which his regiment passed, Round Prairie, Sikestown, Charleston, New Madrid, Island No. 10, Farmington, Seize of Corinth, Stone River, Resaca and Chickamauga.

Mathew MC CLURKEN was the first child born within the 1908 city limits of Sparta, Ill. His father was James McClurken. He was born in a log cabin on August 26, 1822. The log cabin was torn down and a new structure built, on the same site 'in town'. The first school Mr McClurken attended was taught by David Brown one and a half miles south of his home. He then attended school at Eden, Ill where Adam Wylie taught and the town schools taught by Benjamin Wham, Dr Beggs, Dr Petton and B G Roots. For some time he was engaged in the mercantile business in St. Louis, Missouri, with his brothers. Returning to Sparta, Ill in 1850 he entered the Sparta Flour Milling Co., where he was a wheat buyer for six years while cultivating a farm from 1856 to 1860. He then engaged for thirty-six years in the manufacture of woolen goods, 'McClurken's Woolen Mills'. He served on the city Council.

*The following article was pasted to the above:

"The first mill in Illinois was established at what is known as Riley's Mill near Fort Gage. Kaskaskia was incorporated in 1725 and in 1820 had a population of over 7,000; was the state capital from 1809 to 1818; the first constitutional convention was held there; the first paper was published there in 1809, and it was the county seat of Randolph county until 1848. The St. Louis merchants in early days received their supplies from the wholesale houses in Kaskaskia."

"An American settlement was founded in 1780, about where the town of Ellis-grove now stands, and an Irish Settlement in 1802, northeast of Baldwin-principally from South Carolina. It was from Kaskaskia the French names now prevailing in the southwest part of the county was derived. From Ellis-grove came the Montgomeries, McDonoughs, Pillers, Hughes, Reynolds, Roberts, Barbers, Bilderbacks, etc., and from the Irish Settlement came the Pattersons, McClintons, Hills, Adams, Andersons, McBrides, Thompsons, Wilsons, Cox, etc."

"Sparta and Chester, the two principal towns in the county, date their advent on the scene of action about the same time, in 1829, and it will be observed that the names above, with a few additions, have figured prominently in the development of these cities, as well as most all prominent points in the county."