

If James F. Lillie (Lilly) was not so concerned about looking American he probably would have been wearing a kilt when he went off to war. Who can be sure he wasn't when he appeared before the recruiter to join the Union so he could help preserve the country he called home for the last thirteen years. Unlike most of his native born contemporaries, James was fighting to be accepted in his newly adopted country. He was putting his life in jeopardy, not for any political, social or state issues, but so that he would be considered a patriot in his latest homeland.

James F. Lillie (Lilly) was born in Bunkle & Preston, Berwickshire, Scotland on May 30, 1835. <sup>[1]</sup> His father, David Lillie, was also born in Scotland in 1799. His mother, Elizabeth Betty Fraser (Frazier) was a native of Scotland as well and was born in 1800. In fact, all of James' brothers and sisters, of which there were eight of them, were born in Berwickshire County, Scotland. In 1848, when the Lillie family emigrated from their native Scotland, the following siblings were aboard the ship that carried them to America: Walter, age 25, born May 16, 1823; William, age 22, born March 11, 1825; Jane (Jean), age 20, born February 4, 1827; Isabella, age 19, born April 9, 1829; Mary, age 17, born May 17, 1832; Catherine, age 11, born March 12, 1838; Eliza, age 9, born September 14, 1840; and David, age 7, born 1842. James was age 13, born May 30, 1835. <sup>[2]</sup> These fortunate immigrants escaped the economic downturn in Scotland when a policy of forced evictions of tenant farmers began in the 1840's. Despite increased industrialization, there were too few jobs to absorb the unemployed who could no longer survive by subsistence farming. The entire Lillie family left Glasgow, Scotland for the United States on June 1, 1848 aboard the ship Madawaska. They arrived in New York City on July 10, 1848. <sup>[3]</sup> They were in Orwell, Vermont by August when the first American tragedy struck the newly arrived immigrants - Isabella, James' nineteen year old sister, died on August 8, 1848 in the small, rural town in the Green Mountains. <sup>[4]</sup>

By 1850, David and Elizabeth had established themselves in a home in Sudbury, Vermont. David was fifty-three and his wife was forty-nine. David and his son, Walter, made a living by blacksmithing. David's total worth was placed at \$600. His daughter, Isabella, of course, had died in 1848. Walter, Jane, Catherine and Eliza all still lived at

home along with fifteen year old James. David, born in 1842, died in May of 1850, the second child in the family to pass since they arrived in 1848. Mary, who would have been eighteen in 1850, was absent from the household. Even at fifteen, James was doing whatever he could to help support the family by working as a laborer. <sup>[5]</sup> David, James' father, began the formal process of becoming a naturalized citizen on September 14, 1850 when he appeared before the County Court in Rutland to declare his intention to become a citizen. <sup>[6]</sup> After meeting all of the requirements demanded by the Government, David went back to the County Court on September 25, 1853 to take the oath of allegiance and officially become a naturalized citizen. At the time, David and his family resided in Sudbury <sup>[7]</sup>

Unbeknownst to James, 1857 was an important year for his future. That was the year Mary E. Rustedt, his future first wife, arrived in the United States from England. She arrived on November 16, 1857. She had left England from the port of Liverpool and arrived in the port of New York City aboard the ship City of Washington. She came with her mother and five siblings. Apparently her father, Henry F. Rustedt was already in the U.S. waiting for them. His wife, Mary A. Rustedt, forty-eight, landed safely with all six of her children in tow. According to the Passenger List for the City of Washington, they included: Mary E., age 17, spinster; Hannah, age 15, spinster; Eliza, age 13, spinster; Henry, age 9, child; Frederick, age 7, child; and George, age 6, child. <sup>[8]</sup> Mary E. and James would not marry until after his discharge from the service in 1865.

Just prior to the shelling of Fort Sumter in 1861, James, along with all of his brothers, disappeared from the Lillie household. The 1860 census for David and Elizabeth only listed three daughters still living at home: Mary, twenty-eight; Catherine, twenty-two; and Eliza, nineteen. Mary was a domestic servant. Catherine was "at home". Eliza was a school teacher. David was farming in Sudbury. His personal worth was only \$100, but his farm's value was \$1,000. <sup>[9]</sup> David was not much better off, financially, than he was when he arrived in the United States. Although his family size was shrinking, his net worth was not increasing very rapidly. Perhaps not having any sons at home and his farm being too small to yield much of a profit limited his ability to grow financially.

When the United States became the North and the South in April, 1861, James, like thousands of other young, ambitious boys, saw an opportunity for adventure too good to pass up. Three months after the Confederates lit up the Charleston sky with hot shot aimed at the Blue Bellies hiding in Fort Sumter, the eager lad proudly stood before recruiting officer William Cronin in Brandon, Vermont and signed his enlistment papers with his own hand. The twenty-four year old blacksmith promised to spend the next three years of his life in the service of his adopted country. He must have felt a little taller than his normal five feet nine and one half inches when he put on that blue wool uniform he was handed. He couldn't see it yet, but his dark complexion, dark eyes and dark hair were a perfect match for what lay in his immediate future in Company H of the Fifth Vermont Infantry. <sup>[10]</sup> Twelve days later, in St. Albans, Vermont, he and the other members of the Fifth were officially mustered-in as soldiers in the Union Army. He was a delighted Private in Captain Seager's Company. <sup>[11]</sup>

The Fifth was organized in St. Albans, Vermont. Its companies were raised in various towns throughout the State. Company B, for example, was comprised of only men from Middlebury; Company E was from Manchester; Company H, from Brandon; Company F, from Cornwall; and so on. The Regiment was mustered-in on September 16, 1861 at St. Albans. It was immediately sent to Washington, D.C. and joined the other Vermont troops already at Camp Advance (Griffin) near the Chain Bridge in Virginia where it was assigned to the Vermont Brigade with which it served during the rest of the war. Throughout the fall of 1861, and the first few months of 1862, it was on duty in the defenses surrounding Washington.

March 10, 1862 the Fifth moved to Alexandria, Virginia. Two weeks later, the Regiment boarded transport ships for the Virginia Peninsula landing at Fort Monroe and moving to Newport News on the twenty-third and twenty-fourth of March, 1862. By April 16, 1862, the Regiment was at Lee's Mills with the Vermont Brigade. On June 29, the Fifth brought four hundred men to the action at Savage's Station. In one half hour of fighting, it lost one hundred eighty-eight of them on the field. Company E of Manchester suffered the

heaviest losses of any company from Vermont. Company E went into the engagement with fifty-nine muskets. In that one half hour of fierce conflict, it lost forty-four of the fifty-nine; twenty-five were killed and nineteen were wounded. Five Cummings brothers and one cousin from the company were among those killed or wounded. Only one of the six recovered from his wounds. The Regiment as a whole suffered the heaviest loss in killed and wounded at the Battle of Savage's Station, Virginia on June 29, 1862 of any Union regiment in a single action of the entire war. In the following few days, the Fifth along with the rest of the Vermont Brigade, went on to be involved in more fighting at White Oak Swamp and Malvern Hill as the Federals retreated from General Lee towards Harrison's Landing.

On August 16 - 24, 1862, the Regiment returned to Fort Monroe and reached the Bull Run battlefield by August 30, just missing the fighting there. During the Maryland Campaign of 1862, the Fifth took part in Crampton's Gap (South Mountain) and Antietam. It ended 1862 engaged in the Battle of Fredericksburg. In January (23-24) of 1863, it joined Burnside's "Mud March" on its way to Marye's Heights and Salem Church. It celebrated the Fourth of July at Gettysburg. The Fifth took a break August 14 through September 16, 1863 and relaxed in New York during the draft riots there. The Regiment rejoined the Army of the Potomac at Culpeper Court House in Virginia on September 23. It went into winter quarters at Brandy Station where the veterans of the Regiment re-enlisted on December 15, 1863 and was the first Regiment granted a veteran's furlough for a month's duration.

On its return from furlough in Vermont, the Fifth continued as a veteran organization and participated in the bloody month with the Army of the Potomac from the Wilderness to Cold Harbor, and took an active part in the siege of Petersburg. The Regiment began the campaign with five hundred men. In one month, it lost three hundred forty-nine killed, wounded and missing, including thirteen officers. September 15, 1864, the term of service for original members who had not re-enlisted expired. They were mustered-out leaving present for duty one assistant surgeon, a quartermaster, three first lieutenants and three hundred enlisted personnel. After the October 19 Battle of Cedar Creek, the Fifth

moved to the Siege of Petersburg again and went into winter camp at Squirrel Level Road in December, 1864.

When Petersburg finally fell in April of 1865, the Fifth Vermont was the first Regiment to plant its colors on the Confederate defensive works. The unit was present at Appomattox Court House for the surrender of Robert E. Lee and his army. June 8, 1865 the Fifth marched in the Corps Review held at Washington, D.C. On June 29, the veterans were mustered-out. At its discharge, there were only twenty-four officers and two hundred eighty-eight men on its rolls - three hundred twelve total out of an original strength of 1,618 . For the last ten months of its service, the highest ranking officer in the Fifth present for duty was a captain; for more than three months of those last ten, the highest ranking officer present for duty was a lieutenant. Every officer present for the Grand Review went out as a private. <sup>[12]</sup>

Private Lillie (Lilly) served with the Fifth throughout its existence. He was wounded in the action at Savage's Station on June 29 and taken prisoner when the Confederates overtook the Union rear guard. He and the other 2, 500 casualties in the Fifth's Regimental field hospital were left to be captured when it was evacuated. <sup>[13]</sup> Private Lilly was sent to Richmond to be confined in a Confederate prison camp which he arrived at on July 13, 1862. He was paroled at Aiken's Landing on August 5, 1862. <sup>[14]</sup> Private Lilly spent August and September of 1862 recovering from his physical wounds received in combat and those inflicted by his prison wardens. He apparently never fully recovered from either as he was not returned to Company H for active duty after June 29, 1862. As of the first of October, 1862, he was assigned to detached duty as a nurse at the regimental hospital. He remained on that extra duty until the end of his term of service. On December 15, 1863 at Brandy Station, Virginia, Private Lilly was discharged from the service early (one year short of his original three year hitch) so that he could reenlist for another three year term as a Veteran (Veterans Reserve Corps?) under the terms of General Order No. 191 series of 1863 from the War Department. By doing so, that is being discharged then immediately reenlisting, Private Lilly earned the bounty offered by the Government. His actions did not impede his duty assignment in the least. He went on

acting as a hospital attendant in the regimental hospital as usual. In fact, he was promoted in December, 1864 to the Medical Department Divisional Hospital by order of the Commanding Officer of the Second Division - General Getty - Headquarters as of December 27, 1864. <sup>[15]</sup>

On June 29, 1865, Private Lilly became Mr. Lilly in Washington, D.C. As a veteran, he made out pretty well financially when he was mustered-out of the Fifth. He was due \$11.88 for clothing allowance plus he was paid \$210 bounty money at his release with another \$190 due to him at a later time. <sup>[16]</sup>

James must have known Mary E. Rustedt prior to enlisting into the military and going off to war in 1861. Only two months after his discharge in 1865, he was married to her. On September 5, 1865 in Sudbury, Vermont, James and Mary E. became husband and wife. Her father, Rev. Henry F. Rustedt conducted the ceremony. <sup>[17]</sup> She and her family, like James and his, were imports into this country - he from Scotland and she from England. Although their marriage was to be very brief (lasting only fifteen years), it produced seven children.

The newly weds lived in Orwell after their marriage. James farmed for a living. His net value was only \$1,000 in 1870. It did not take long for the couple to begin a family of their own. Henry Porter Lilly was born October 26, 1867 in Sudbury. Luthene Frazier Lillie came two years later on December 12, 1869. He was born in Orwell. <sup>[18]</sup> The next child to be born to James and Mary was a daughter, Irene R. Lilly. Then another daughter was born to the growing family. In 1874, Myrtle E. Lilly arrived. She was quickly followed by a sister - Berta B. Lilly born in 1876. Two years later, a third boy was born to James and Mary. His name was King Rustedt Lillie. <sup>[19]</sup> Amid the flurry of all these births, James found the time to apply for a pension for his service in the army. It was granted in 1875. <sup>[20]</sup> At the rate he was fathering children, he probably felt he needed the extra income!

1880 began on a very happy note. James and Mary added their last child together to the family in March of 1880. He was named Fritz Ernst Lillie. <sup>[21]</sup> Then "The Age of Abaddon" hit. In the span of three short years, three members of the Lilly clan died in rapid

succession. The first to go was Mary E., nine months after giving birth to her final child, Fritz. She died of a terrible accident. She was "thrown from carriage" according to her Death Certificate. <sup>[22]</sup> A year later, in 1881, James' mother died in an accident too, also in November. <sup>[23]</sup> Two years later, August of 1883, James' father, David, died in Orwell of old age. <sup>[24]</sup> At the beginning of 1889, the Lilly family had been a normal, happy clan with two healthy parents and seven content children ranging in ages from thirteen to one month. And they had grandparents alive and well and living in the same town not too far away. Then the lives of those who survived went very dark. The young mother was gone, quickly followed by the unexpected deaths of the grandparents. It must have been a very bleak time for James and his brood.

Having so many youngsters at home, James needed some female help to raise and care for them while he earned a living to feed and clothe the children and himself. To his credit, he was not so desperate as to immediately select a replacement for Mary. In fact, he waited for ten years after her death to remarry again. Around 1890, James married his second wife, Gretia Learn Pitts. She, too, had been previously married and brought to her second marriage a daughter named Vera. In 1880, when Mary had been killed in a tragic carriage accident, Gretia and her first husband, John T. Pitts, had been living with James' brother, Walter, and his family in Rutland. <sup>[25]</sup> Vera at the time was about one year old, having been born August 5, 1878 in New York. <sup>[26]</sup> John T. was the step-son of Walter and Gracie was his step-daughter. John, who made a living by being a steward in a hotel, was sick with diphtheria when the 1880 census was taken (noted on the census form) which may explain why Gracie became eligible for marriage to James in 1890. <sup>[27]</sup>

By 1900, James was still farming in Orwell at the age of sixty-three. He had been married to Gretia for ten years. His thirty year old son, Luthene, lived in the household. He was a miller by trade. That year, James stated to the census taker that he had come to the United States in 1850 and had lived here for the past fifty years. He claimed he was a naturalized citizen. His home was mortgaged. The family had a twenty-two year old single servant girl living with them. Vera, who was now twenty-one, and Luthene, now thirty, were married and had been for the last three years. They, too, lived in James' household. They

had no children. It was interesting to note that Vera, Gretia only child, was born the same year as James' son, King R. <sup>[28]</sup> This unique arrangement was disrupted when James died at sixty-six in Orwell on August 4, 1901 of "intestinal nephritis" or kidney failure. <sup>[29]</sup>

Before proceeding with the final stages of James F. Lilly's story, I wanted to clarify an issue surrounding his second wife's name. The reader may have noticed that in talking about her, several variations of her first name had been used. That was not by accident. The public documents record no less than five different variations of her first name: Gracie, Gracia, Gretia, Grace and Gratia. All the same person. Her name issue was further complicated by the fact that she was married three times, so, in addition to her maiden name which was Learn, she also had the surnames Lillie (Lilly), Pitts and Dalrymple, her third and final husband. Any combinations of these Christian and surnames really stands for the same woman - usually. Except, remember, just like we all have someone in the world who is our double in appearance, every Gracie A. Learn-Lillie-Pitts-Dalrymple in the world is not James F. Lillie's (Lilly's) second wife!

A year after James' death, Gretia remarried for the third time. Her new husband was a dentist from Massachusetts named Hartford Ayres Dalrymple. This was his second marriage, his first wife having died of consumption. Gretia and her new husband lived in Rutland for a time, then moved to Allegany, New York, the birthplace of Gretia (1858). Hartford died there in 1915. After her third husband's death, she moved to Olean City, Ward #4, New York City where she lived working as a seamstress. <sup>[30]</sup> For some reason, perhaps poor health, Gretia came back to Orwell where her daughter, Vera, lived. She spent four months in Orwell before dying on August 23, 1949 at ninety years of age from a "cerebral hemorrhage" after lingering for ten days. <sup>[31]</sup>

## NOTES

1. [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com), Memorial #46674563, comments added by Eva Myrick for James F. Lillie.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. [Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com), 1850 U.S. Federal Census for James Lillie.

6. Ibid., Vermont, State and Federal Naturalization Records, 1790-1954 for David Lillie.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., New York, Passenger Lists, 1820-1957 for M.H. Rustedt.
9. Ibid., 1860 U.S. Federal Census for David Lillie.
10. Fold3.com, Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Vermont, p. 3, image 311516936. Hereinafter referred to as Compiled Service Records...
11. Ibid., Compile Service Records..., p. 4, image 311516944.
12. Ancestry.com, U.S., American Civil War Regiments, 1861-1866; Vermont in the Civil War/Units/1st Brigade/Fifth Vermont Infantry; <http://civilwarintheeast.com/us-regiments-batteries-vermont/5th-vermont>.
13. <https://en.wikipedia.org>, Battle of Savage's Station.
14. Fold3.com, Compiled Service Records..., p. 40, image 311517202.
15. Ibid., Compiled Service Records..., pp. 32-33, images 311517144 and 311517150.
16. Ibid., Compiled Service Records..., p. 34, image 311517155.
17. Ancestry.com, Vermont, Vital Records, 1720-1908 for James F. Lillie.
18. Ibid., 1870 U.S. Federal Census for James F. Lilly; Ibid., Vermont, Vital Records, 1720-1908 for Henry F. Porter Lillie; Ibid., Vermont Death Records, 1909-2008 for Luthene Frazier Lillie.
19. Ibid., Ladan Family Tree for James F. Lillie.
20. Ibid., U.S. Civil War Pension Index: General Index to Pension Files, 1866-1934 for Gretia A. Lillie.
21. Ibid., Vermont, Death Records, 1909-2008 for Fritz Ernst Lillie.
22. Ibid., RClute Family Tree for James F. Lillie; Ibid., Vermont, Vital Records, 1720-1908 for Mary E. Lillie.
23. Ibid., Vermont, Vital Records, 1720-1908 for Elizabeth Lillie.
24. Ibid., for David Lillie; Ibid., RClute Family Tree for James F. Lillie.
25. Ibid., 1880 U.S. Federal Census for Gracie A. Pitts.
26. Ibid., Vermont, Death Records, 1909-2008 for Vera Pitts Lillie.
27. Ibid., 1880 U.S. Federal Census for Gracie A. Pitts.
28. Ibid., 1900 U.S. Federal Census for James F. Lillie.
29. Ibid., Vermont, Vital Records, 1720-1908 for James F. Lillie.
30. Ibid., 1910 U.S. Federal Census for Gracia Dalrymple; Ibid., U.S. City Directories.
31. Ibid., Vermont, Death Records, 1909-2008 for Gratia Learn Dalrymple.