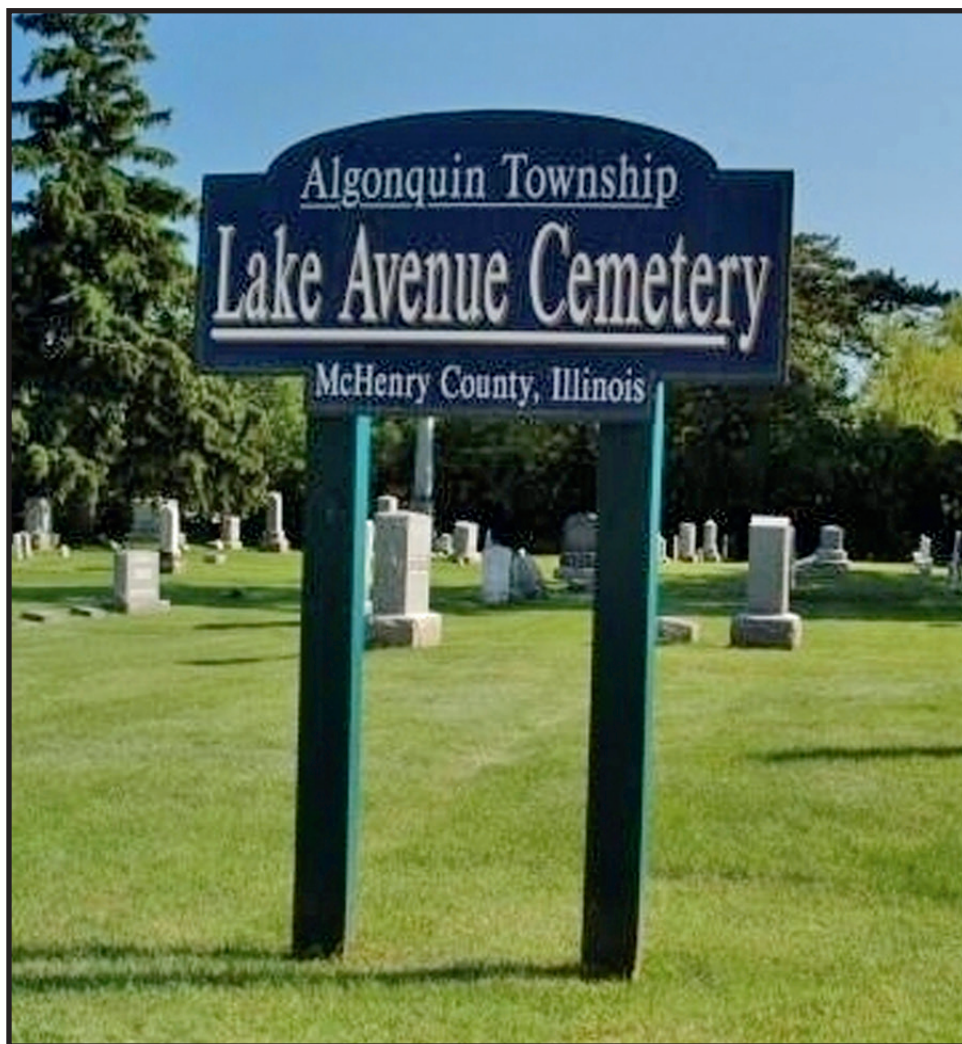


**Crystal Lake Cemetery  
Lake Avenue  
Crystal Lake, Illinois**



**War Veteran's Biographies**



## **Najah Beardsley**

**July 20, 1776 – October 6, 1844**

Benajah “Najah” Beardsley was born in Stratford, Connecticut just 16 days after the American Declaration of Independence was signed. He married Rachel Worden April 11, 1796 in New Fairfield Connecticut. The couple had eight children: Abner, Rachael, Ziba, Gerta, Hannah, Fanny, Cynthia, and Hannah Celinda. About 1810, the Beardsley’s moved their family westward, settling in Genessee County, New York. At the time, this area of New York was considered “untamed wilderness”, mostly occupied by Native Americans.

On June 18, 1812 the United States Congress declared war on Great Britain. There was much tension along the New York/Canadian border. All able-bodied men were summoned to fight and join the militia, leaving only a few behind to manage the crops. Najah Beardsley answered the call, and served his country during the War of 1812.

In the early 1830s, the Beardsley family decided to move west to Illinois. They arrived on the shores of our spring-fed lake, with Najah’s son Ziba Beardsley declaring, “The water is as clear as crystal”, thus giving our lake the name, Crystal Lake. The Beardsley family travelled on to Naperville, but came back the next year. By that time, the Beman Crandall family had already established themselves as the first settlers of Crystal Lake. The Beardsleys became the second family to settle here.

Najah Beardsley’s headstone indicates his death was October 6, 1845. Other records, including his will and county probate records indicate his death was October 6, 1844. Mistakes on headstones are rare, but not unheard of. After the estate was settled, his widow Rachel returned to Genessee County, New York, where she passed away in 1849.

# Henry Ford

February 28, 1825 – December 4, 1897

Henry Ford was born in Sussex County, England. He first appears in the 1860 McHenry County census, living with the M.A. Smith family. His occupation is listed as “wheelwright” (a person who makes or repairs wooden wheels). In later censuses he is shown as a wagon maker.\*

On August 8, 1861, Henry Ford joined Company A of the 36th Illinois Volunteer Infantry in Elgin. Ford fought at Pea Ridge and at Perryville. His regiment lost more men than any other regiment in the war except one. Henry was one of the lucky ones. He escaped the war relatively unharmed. His eulogy, given at his memorial service by fellow comrades, F.E. Cox and C.F. Dike, described one time when Henry’s blanket was pierced with 18 bullet holes, with none striking Henry.

Henry served two terms in the service, finally mustering out in October 1865 as a corporal. After the war, he returned to his profession of wagon maker.

Henry Ford married Mary Jane Smith on December 20, 1871 in McHenry County. The couple had no children. Land records indicate their home was at the northeast corner of Park Street (now Pierson Street) and West Street (now Lake Shore Drive). The Fords were members of Congregational Church.

When age and ill health forced Henry to retire from his trade, he picked up extra work as a janitor/handyman at the Congregational Church. Henry was also the sexton (caretaker) at the Crystal Lake Cemetery.

Henry died at his home from consumption (tuberculosis). The funeral service was held at the Congregational Church and then the mourners walked to the Crystal Lake Cemetery. The drummer at his funeral was the same drummer he served with in the war.



*Courtesy of M. E. J. Smith*



*Courtesy of M. E. J. Smith*

## SIDE NOTE

Henry Ford’s occupation as a wagon maker is rather ironic as the “other” (more famous Henry Ford) is best known for making automobiles!

# Julius C. Harback

(1832-1861)



Civil War veteran Julius C. Harback died on December 23, 1861 at Silver Lake. According to the book, McHenry County Illinois Cemeteries (Vol 4, Southeast Cemeteries), Julius' death was caused by the "effects of disease contracted in army camp."

Julius was first buried at the Silver Lake Cemetery, also known as the Grimes Burying Ground, in Nunda Twp. On May 19, 1887, Julius' body was moved to the Lake Ave. Cemetery in Crystal Lake. Most of the graves in the Silver Lake Cemetery were moved to the Prairie Grove Cemetery beginning in 1862.

Julius Harback was mustered into the 15th Illinois Infantry, Company F at Freeport, Ill. on May 24, 1861. He is listed as a "Musician" in the muster roll. Julius enlisted in the Union Army. The 15th consisted of men from McHenry County and was one of the first regiments sworn in for three years of service.

The regiment first proceeded to Alton, Illinois for six weeks of training. The 15th was involved in the capture of 1,300 rebels near Sedalia, Missouri in late 1861. The regiment then marched to Otterville, Missouri and went into winter quarters on December 26, 1861. According to the Adjutant General's Report, "The winter was cold and the snow deep, and the first winter's experience in tents was a severe one."

Julius was already ill and had returned to his brother's farm in Silver Lake, where he died on December 23, 1861.

Julius Harback was the son of Henry (1793-1832) and Orilla (Bartlett) Harback (1797-1858). He was born in Perry, New York, which is near Nunda, New York, the place where many Crystal Lake settlers came from. The Harback Family came to McHenry County from New York state in 1842 and lived east and south of Silver Lake in northern Algonquin Twp., just south of the Nunda Twp. line. Julius is listed as a "farmer" in the 1850 census. The 1850 Census lists the Harback farm as being worth \$600.

Besides Julius (age 18) also listed in the Harback family in the 1850 census are Julius's mother Orilla, age 53; Norman, age 33, Dexter, age 32; William, age 22; Marilla, age 23; and Francis, age one.

Julius was married to Julia Harris, and they had a daughter, Jessie Fremont Harback, who was around five years old in February of 1862 when her father died. Jessie's mother had apparently died in the late 1850's Julius Harback's brother Dexter applied to the court in Woodstock for guardianship of the girl.

Julius's brother Dexter also filed a request for a U.S. Civil War Pension in 1863, listing himself as the guardian.

Julius's daughter, Jessie Fremont Harback, arrived in Washington state in 1876. She married E.C. Davies in 1890. They had two children and lived in Spokane. Jessie Fremont Harback Davies died in 1926.

# Charles E. Owels

February 29, 1836 – December 12, 1864

Charles E. Owels was born in Jefferson County, New York. At a young age, Owels traveled west with family members and settled into a life of farming in northern Illinois.

On September 12, 1858, Charles married Lavilla Northrup Jackman, a widow. Mrs. Jackman had two young children, Encey and William from her first marriage. The 1860 census shows Charles, Lavilla and the children living on a farm in Algonquin Township. Charles and Lavilla later had two children of their own. A son (first name unknown) and young William Jackman both died in April, 1861 and are buried side-by-side at the Crystal Lake (Lake Avenue) Cemetery. Charles and Lavilla had a second son, Charles Jr. who was born April 2, 1862. Charles Jr. and Encey lived to adulthood.

According to the 1885 McHenry County History book, Charles and Lavilla Owels were members of the original Free Methodist Church Congregation of Crystal Lake. The church held services in the Brick Block (corner of today's Route 14 and Florence) until they purchased a building of their own.

In August, 1861 Charles Owels enlisted for service with the 36th Regiment Illinois Volunteer Infantry, Company H. This regiment saw much action during the Civil War. The regiment fought at the battles of Pea Ridge, Perryville, Stones River, Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, Resaca, Kennessaw Mountain, and Atlanta. Charles was wounded in the foot at Pea Ridge (1862), but remained in service until August 2, 1864 when he was discharged for disability.

The extent of Charles' disability is unknown, but he died four months later on December 12, 1864 at his home in McHenry County. His widow buried him near their two young sons at the Crystal Lake (Lake Avenue) Cemetery.





## **Orlando Wells Nash**

**October 22, 1839 – December 31, 1862**

Orlando Wells Nash was born October 22, 1839 in Ohio. He was the son of Enos B. and Catherine Keller Nash. The family moved to Illinois in the 1840's, and eventually settled in Crystal Lake, Algonquin Township.

In September, 1861, at the age of 22, Orlando left his family farm and enlisted for a three-year term in the Illinois 36th Infantry Regiment, Company H at the rank of Private. Company H was commonly known as "The Woodstock Rifles." The 36th Infantry Regiment wintered in Missouri, and proceeded into Arkansas to fight at the Battle of Pea Ridge in March, 1862. The Regiment then moved on to

Kentucky and was involved in several skirmishes, including the Battle of Perryville. On November 14, 1862, Orlando was promoted to the rank of Corporal.

By December, 1862, the 36th Infantry Regiment had moved to Murfreesboro, TN. And on December 26th became engaged in the Battle of Stones River. On December 31, 1862, Orlando Wells Nash was killed at the Battle of Stones River. Several weeks later, a small group of local citizens, led by Mr. John Brink, traveled to Tennessee to claim the body of Orlando Nash and bring him back to Crystal Lake for burial.

In February, 1863, church services for Orlando Nash were held at the First Congregational Church, and he was laid to rest at the Crystal Lake Cemetery (now known as Lake Avenue Cemetery).

In 2005 a group of volunteers with the Crystal Lake Historical Society arranged for a government-issued Civil War era headstone to mark the final resting place of this Civil War soldier, who died defending the Union.

# Nathaniel Hollis Robinson

April 1, 1814 – June 10, 1898

Civil War veteran Nathaniel Hollis Robinson joined the Union army in the town of Woodstock, Illinois and was mustered into the 153rd Illinois Infantry on February 4, 1865, where he served as a Private in Company K.

The 153rd Illinois Infantry Volunteers was organized at Camp Fry, Illinois by Colonel Stephen Bronson, and was mobilized in February 27th, 1865, for one year. On March 4, they moved by rail, via Louisville and Nashville to Tullahoma, reporting to Major General Millroy. The Regiment was assigned to the Second Brigade, Defenses of Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad, with Brevet Brigadier General Dudley commanding the Second Brigade.

In the latter part of March, Major Wilson, with three companies, went on a campaign into Alabama, and returned. On July 1st moved via Nashville and Louisville to Memphis, Tennessee and was assigned to the command of Brevet Major General A.L. Chetlain.

The 153rd Illinois Infantry was mustered out on September 15, 1865, and moved to Springfield, Illinois on September 21 where they received final pay and discharge.

The regiment suffered fatalities of 37 enlisted men – all who died from disease.

Nathaniel Hollis Robinson was born on April 1, 1814 in Pawlet, Vermont to David (1780-1828) and Mary (French) Robinson (1785-1828). He was one of 6 children: Abbott Robinson, Julia C. Loomis, George B. Robinson, Thomas C. Robinson and Denzil F Robinson.

Robinson was married to Alzina King on March, 17 1841. He had made his home in Algonquin, Illinois, and worked as a farmer according to the November 1, 1850 census. They had 4 children: Marson B. Robinson, Lozette Robinson, Ella Robinson and Emma Robinson.

Nathaniel Hollis Robinson died on June 10, 1898 and was buried in Lake Avenue Cemetery, Crystal Lake, Illinois.



*Courtesy of M. G. J. Subberg*

## SIDE NOTE

Robinson's son, Marson B. Robinson, who was born on December 17, 1840 is also buried at the Lake Avenue Cemetery. He passed away on April 30, 1845 when he was 4 years old.



*Courtesy of M. G. J. Subberg*

# Colonel Gustavus A. Palmer

April 15, 1805 - December 19, 1884

Colonel Gustavus A. Palmer and his wife Henrietta arrived in McHenry County from Nunda, Livingston County, New York by covered wagon ca1840. As early pioneers to the area, they purchased land from the Federal Government to start their homestead. The Colonel, as he was called by his neighbors, would eventually acquire over 300 acres of property.

The title, "Colonel" is one of respect and not a military ranking. However, it is believed Gustavus Palmer most likely served in a New York militia unit during the little known Patriots' War.

As a successful farmer in Illinois, the Colonel was able to have local stonemason Andrew Jackson Simons (another featured veteran) build his Greek Revival and Federalist-style brick home in 1858. The Colonel Palmer House boasts Simons' famous cobblestone foundation. The interior of the home has retained many of the original construction elements including plaster walls, a hand-carved walnut banister and southern pine floors.

Colonel Palmer was a founding member of the Nunda Masonic Lodge and meetings were held in his home. Colonel Palmer and his wife Henrietta lived in the Crystal Lake area for over forty years until their deaths in December, 1884. They both died within days of each other from Typhoid Pneumonia. According to their joint obituary, the funeral service was to be preached in the Baptist Church at Crystal Lake, but before the long procession of sleighs arrived the church was so full they had to move the services to the much larger Congregational Church. The Palmers are buried in the same grave at the Lake Avenue Cemetery in Crystal Lake.

Early in 1979, as part of an annexation agreement, five acres of land including the Colonel Palmer House and outbuildings were donated to the City of Crystal Lake. At that time, a group of dedicated citizens organized the Colonel Palmer House Restoration Association. This organization worked for many years to raise funds to help restore the Palmer House. The Colonel Gustavus A. Palmer House was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the State of Illinois and the United States Department of the Interior and National Park Service on May 24, 1985. Currently, it is the only structure in Crystal Lake to be listed on the National Register. In 1997, the Colonel Palmer House received the City of Crystal Lake's Landmark Designation.





# Andrew Jackson Simons

March 24, 1829 – February 10, 1892



Andrew came to McHenry County in 1848 with his parents, Platt & Lucinda Simons, and numerous other family members. The Simons family is shown living in Algonquin Township, McHenry County, Illinois in the 1850 census with son, "Jackson" Simons, age 21, listed with an occupation of "Stone Mason".

Andrew Jackson Simons married Charlotte Chittenden on November 4, 1856. Charlotte came to McHenry County in 1852 with her parents, Linus & Julia Chittenden. Charlotte Chittenden was born June 16, 1838 in Buffalo (Erie County) New York. The couple had four daughters: Emma, Jennie, Aggie, and (unknown). Emma and Aggie lived to adulthood.

During the Civil War, Private Andrew Simons served in the 36th Illinois Infantry, Company H. He served from 1861 to 1865. The 36th Illinois Infantry fought in the battles of Pea Ridge, Perryville, Stones River, Chickamauga, and Missionary Ridge (to name a few). After returning from the War, he would always suffer greatly from a rheumatism that would cause him to walk with a cane.

Before he left for the war, Simons purchased property and enough bricks to build a home for his family. But while he was away at battle, the bricks were stolen. Although there was a small portion of cobblestone on the east side of the house, it seems ironic that this expert stone mason lived in a wood, frame house. The home stood on the corner of Virginia Street (Route 14) and Crystal Lake Avenue for nearly 140 years before it was demolished.

Andrew Jackson Simons is credited with building four cobblestone houses in/near Crystal Lake: Wallace House, Walkup House, Pierson House (demolished) and Pingry House (demolished). He also built several brick homes which boast cobblestone foundations: Palmer House, Crystal Lake Academy-Gates House, McMillan House (demolished) and Ellsworth House. The structures listed were all built in the 1850s.

It is assumed Simons learned his trade in Western New York State and brought his skills to McHenry County. The cobblestones used to build the Crystal Lake structures were collected and transported from the shores of Lake Michigan. The stones used in building were about fist-sized and smooth, varying in color. The McHenry County Historical Society has possession of numerous items relating to the Simons family, including: A.J. Simons' trowel, Simons' war trunk, knapsack, canteen, lantern and double-bladed bayonet used during the Civil War.



Andrew Jackson Simons died on February 10, 1892 and was buried in Lake Avenue Cemetery in Crystal Lake, Illinois.

# Henry A. Stanard

circa 1847 – August 1, 1865

Henry A. Stanard was born and raised in Algonquin Township. His parents, Warren and Sarah Dunn Stanard came to Illinois in 1844. Warren Stanard operated a mercantile store in Crystal Lake. In later years, Warren became ordained as a Methodist minister. The Stanards had seven children, four of whom are buried in the Crystal Lake Cemetery, including their 17 year-old son, Henry.

In the Spring of 1865, Henry signed on with the 153rd Infantry Regiment of Illinois. This was a short-term (one year) enlistment. The regiment served to garrison the line of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad and later Memphis, Tennessee. Their unit mustered out September 15, 1865 (much sooner before the original one-year enlistments expired). Unfortunately, 37 enlisted men in the unit died of disease, including young Henry A. Stanard, who died August 1, 1865.

The August 16, 1865 Woodstock Sentinel reports, "DIED-In the Glayose (s/b Gayoso) Hospital at Memphis, Tenn., of typhoid fever, on Tuesday, Aug. 1st, 1865, HENRY A. STANARD of Co. K, 153d Regiment Illinois Volunteers, aged 17 years. So pass away the young and brave."





# George M. Thompson

1794-1876

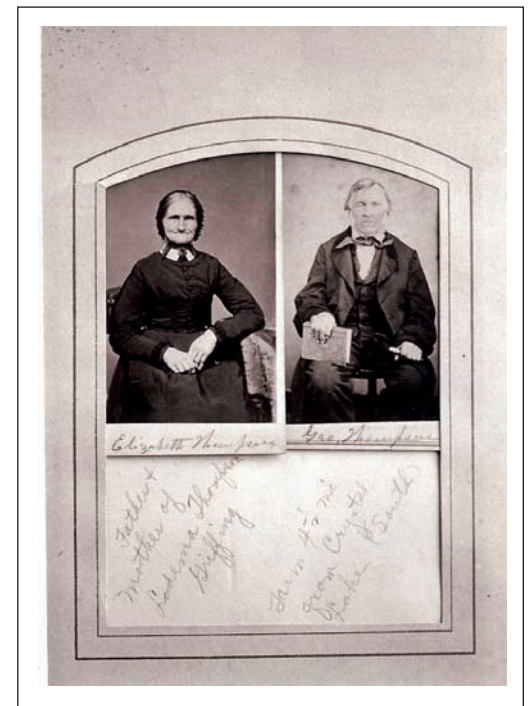
**Veteran of the War of 1812**

A veteran of the War of 1812 lies at rest in the Lake Ave. Cemetery (formerly the Crystal Lake Cemetery). He is George M. Thompson, who was born around 1794 in Vermont and died July 27, 1876 at his farm in Crystal Lake.

George served in the War of 1812. The U.S. Government in the New York Military Equipment Claims for the War of 1812 issued him \$13.00, but no date is given for that claim.

George and Elizabeth Thompson came to Crystal Lake in 1841. They emigrated from Crawford County Pennsylvania, settling on a farm four miles south of Crystal Lake.

Their son George W. Thompson fought in the Civil War.



# George W. Thompson

## 1832 -1903

Civil War veteran George W. Thompson was born on March 6, 1832 in Portage, New York and died at his farm four miles south of Crystal Lake on July 25, 1903. George was buried in the Crystal Lake Cemetery (now Lake Ave. Cemetery).

George was a veteran of the 15th Illinois Infantry, which fought in the Civil War. According to his obituary in the Nunda Herald, when President Lincoln's first call came in April of 1861, George was strongly inclined to enlist, but he had a wife and young family.

In the Sept. 30, 1930 issue of the Crystal Lake Herald, George's brother William Thompson recollected that George actually went to Elgin to be mustered into Co., F of the 15th Infantry in April, but when he got to Elgin either Sam or Jerome Shoemaker (William couldn't remember which) wanted to go in George's place.

George came back to Crystal Lake and put in his crops. When a call for more volunteers was made that fall, George enlisted. He reported to Rolla, Missouri, where the 15th Ill. Vol. infantry were stationed. George's date of enlistment is Sept. 14, 1861.

George served as a commissary sergeant for over a year. In the summer of 1862, he was taken sick and sent to a hospital in Evansville, Indiana.

After convalescing sufficiently at the hospital, George served as a nurse for the sick and wounded soldiers.

George returned to action and was engaged in the battle of Shiloh and the sieges of Corinth and Vicksburg, Mississippi. George W. Thompson was discharged from the 15th Ill. Vol. in July 20, 1864.

George returned to Nunda and was a member of Nunda Post 225 of the G.A. R. He served as commander and chaplain of the post.

George W. Thompson's father was a veteran of the War of 1812. The Thompsons arrived in Illinois in 1841, settling on their farm south of Crystal Lake.

George married Cynthia Maria Warren on October 26, 1853 at Crystal Lake. The couple had five children: Ernest M., Ida May, Bernice M. and Adoniram. Ida May died in 1862 at the age of two when George was in the Union Army.

