

The following is a transcript of the Military and Civil Record written by Samuel Russell Blair in the year 1907. The record includes information on his Civil War service and family history. It focuses heavily on the death of his wife and his heartfelt feelings about her loss. Samuel died soon after putting this record to paper. In the transcript I have taken the liberty of correcting spelling errors and adding some punctuation to make it easier to read. I was unsure of the words placed in red. I thank D. Cameron Findlay III for sharing this record with its glimpse into the life and mind of his Gr. Gr. Grandfather.

**Soldiers' and Citizens' Album of Military and Civil Record,**  
Including a  
**Chronological and Statistical History of the Civil War**  
Chicago: Grand Army Publishing Co. 1891

**Page 1:**

Biographical Military Record of: Samuel R. Blair

I enlisted at Mt. Morris, Illinois on the 28 day of April, 1864 for \_\_\_\_ years, and went to rendezvous at Dixon, Illinois: I was mustered on the 16th day of June, 1864, at Camp Butler, Illinois., in Company I, , Captain James H. Cartwright; 140 Regiment, Illinois Infantry Volunteers, Colonel Whitney; Lieutenant Colonel Smith; Major \_\_\_\_; I was mustered as Private and left the State for Memphis Tennessee on the 22nd day of June, 1864, and was first in camp at Memphis;

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.... (some blank spaces); during the course of my service my regiment was transferred as follows: From Memphis to Lafayette, Tennessee; **Grissom Creek**; Memphis, Tennessee; Cairo, Illinois; Chicago, Illinois; St. Louis, Missouri. ....

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...(more blank spaces) I was on special service, as follows: Carried the mail from Grissom Lafayette, Tennessee. I was sick with the following diseases: Diarrhea and Neuralgia while coming up the Mississippi to Cairo, Illinois by rail to Chicago.

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(Blank spaces) I received Oct. 20 furloughs for 15 days in which I passed at my home in Mt. Morris was treated by Dr. R. L. Stevens while at home.

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(blank spaces) and rejoined my regiment at Camp Fry, Chicago on the 29th day of Oct. 1864. I was mustered out of the US service on the 3rd day of November, 1864 and went to Chicago, to be discharged from State service, on the 4th day of November 1864. During my period of

service I estimate that I marched 1000 miles, and in the following States, Illinois, Tennessee, Mississippi, Kentucky, and Arkansas. I arrived home on the 5th day of November 1864. My health was impaired in the following manner and from the following causes: While on boat was taken with diarrhea and on reaching Chicago was taken with neuralgia.

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I joined G. A. R. Post Oregon, No. 116 at Oregon, Illinois, on the 8th day of July, 1889, and was elected to the following offices, on the following dates: Was Honorable Discharged from Post No. 116 on the 22nd day of June, 1891 and became a Charter Member of the J. W. Smith Post No. 720, organized at Mt. Morris, Illinois on 4th day August 1891.

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Civil Record

I was born on the 1st day of July 1845 Maryland Township county of Ogle, State of Illinois and am the son of William S. and Jenette Blair; my father was born on the 31st day of May 1816, at Crawford Co. Pa and was of \_\_\_\_\_ nationality; my mother was born on the 27 day of September, 1818 at Raloo Co. Antrim and was of Ireland nationality; their marriage took place on the 27th day of September 1838 and they had 9 children born on the following dates and named as follows:

Mercy A., born June 11, 1840

Mattie J. Born

Samuel R., born July 1, 1845

Mary H. Born Nov. 28, 1848

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Following are the dates and places of the respective deaths of my father and mother:-

Mother at Omaha, Nebraska, December 14, 1885

Father at Omaha, Nebraska, July 7, 1890

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(More Blank spaces)

I was married on the 1st day of July 1867 at Mount Carroll, Illinois to Carrie V. Fish, daughter of William and Mary by **Thare** Union. Her father was born on the 27th day of October, 1813.

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her mother was born 27th day of February, 1823 and was of \_\_\_\_ nationality; she was born on the 15th day of October, 1841, and had 3 brothers and 2 sisters. Born in the following order and on the following dates:

Emely E. Born April 14, 1839 at Maryland

John L. Born August 30 1844 Maryland

Mary W. Oct. 7, 1848, Maryland

Charles W., born July 6, 1858, Illinois

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To me and my wife the following children have been born on the following dates and at the following places:

Willie M. Blair born August 3, 1868 at Mt. Morris, Ogle County, Illinois

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I belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church. My wife, Mrs. S. R. Blair is a member of the M. E. Church and belongs to the following societies: M. E. **La Schoole**, M. E. **Mile So**.

The following blank space is left for additional matter regarding family history:

Samuel Blair the Great Grandfather of my Father W. S. Blair was born in Scotland about 1695 Emigrated to Ireland in 1710 had three sons Samuel, Daniel and Patrick.

Samuel Blair the Grandfather of my Father W. S. Blair was born in Ireland 1738 and Emigrated to US of America 1760 settled in Northumberland County Pennsylvania from there to Crawford County Pennsylvania 1795 where he lived until he died at the age of 82.

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His death occurred August 7th 1820 was in the war of 1776 and fought for Independence, had 2 sons and 4 daughters, Samuel and John. Samuel Blair the father of my father W. S. Blair was born in Pennsylvania February 13, 1783 and was married to Mercy Chidester October 24, 1811, came to Ogle County., Illinois 1837 and settled in Maryland Township where his son John F. still resides, was in the war of 1812, was Captain of Co. H. under Col. Conrad Perry, had 7 children, 4 sons 3 daughters, William S., Samuel W., Silas J., John F., Nancie, Jane, Sally. Silas J. Blair was killed at the Battle of Shiloh April 7, 1862 was Sergeant of Co. H. 34th Regiment of Illinois Infantry.

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William S. Blair my father and the oldest son of the fourth generation was born May 31st, 1816, in Crawford County Pennsylvania. Came to Illinois in 1837, returned to Pennsylvania in the Fall of 1838 and was married to Jennett Blair September 27<sup>th</sup> 1838. Came back to Illinois in the spring of 1839, his wife came with him they erected a log cabin near his father's commencing the occupation of farmer which was very labor some in those times as they had very few conveniences and had to haul all their produce to Chicago requiring 6 to 10 days to make the trip. At his first coming to Ogle County, in

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1837 there was but one log cabin within 3 miles of Mt. Morris. In 1847 moved to Mt. Morris where he engaged in storekeeping livery and hotel business he built the Blair Hotel in 1851 hauled the most of the lumber from Chicago. W. S. Blair died at Omaha, Nebraska, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1890 in his 73<sup>rd</sup> year. Mrs. Jennett Blair, wife of William S. Blair was born on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 1818 in the Parish of Raloo Co. Antrim Ireland and with her father's family came to America in 1835. Died in Omaha Nebraska Dec. 14, 1885. aged 67 years 2 months 17 days. Jennett Blair was a daughter of Patrick Blair a cousin of

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Samuel Blair the Father of William S. Blair. By the union of W. S. Blair and Jennett Blair 9 children was born 4 died in childhood, 4 daughters and 1 son Samuel R. Blair, the writer who is the 5<sup>th</sup> Samuel of the 5th generation. I was married to Carrie V. Fish July 1, 1867, and by our union one son was born Willie M. Blair born August 3rd, 1868.

After a wedded life of nearly 40 years we laid her to rest she was a true and faithful help mate a devoted mother and one that could master anything

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in the way of work that she undertook. Was never idle those blessed hands were ever busy making something to beautify her home or give some of her chosen friends something that she made herself and where often the receiver of the gift did not consider the amount of time and labor the article represented. But those blessed hands are at rest and can **sew no more for** some who has **shameful used** her may God forgive them and help me too is my prayer. Carrie had herself been with an incurable disease for better than 3 years was twice given treatment Rockford hospital the last time came home

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considerable benefited but grew worse had several strokes of paralysis and on Sunday June the 9<sup>th</sup> 1907 a severe one rendered her helpless and unconscious. The WRC gave us great assistance in caring for her God Bless them all for the kindness. She quietly went in to her last sleep Thursday at 4:30 pm and was buried in a concrete vault in old cemetery had G. A. R. Comrades for bearers and the Relief Corps was in attendance Comrade Dr. J. H. More of Polo conducted the service. God bless all who gave us there help and their kind sympathy in this bereavement for no one knows but those who has been through it what it is to lose ones companion.

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I received letters kind **sympathy** from sisters Mattie and Mary, Mrs. George **Yeak** Of Rockford, Mrs. **Irean Michles** of Dubuque, Iowa, Mrs. Sherman of Portland Oregon. The **Mile** Society of the M. E. Church sent a handsome design of flowers. The W. R. C. did the same. Mrs. Lillie Miller a handsome wreath. Willie ordered a pillow from Polo with the word Mother on it and cluster of carnations from Chicago & many others contributed flowers which were very handsomely by Mrs. Mary McCoy, Mrs. Holley Clark, Miss Emily Smith and Mrs. Ed McCradey. We had a picture made of the flowers and casket. Mrs. **Ger** gave

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me good and kind help all through Carrie's sickness and after was a true neighbor and friend God bless her.

Uncle Frank Blair his three sons and two daughters with their families attended the funeral. Charles Fish the only surviving member of the Fish with his wife, was at funeral I returned with them to there home in Chicago with them and spent 10 days there it was good help for me and they did everything they could to make it pleasant for me while I was there.

Carrie born October 15, 1841 in Washington County, Maryland and came to Illinois in the year 1856.

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She became a self supporting girl on making her teens, her first labors was in the old **Sandstone** dining room and kitchen where she received 35 cents per week for washing dishes and waiting

tables her next place was with Mrs. Starchman in her milliner shop there at Polo she worked for Mrs. Atkins a number of seasons she worked a number of years in tailor shops for a Mr. Farmboy then A. G. Atten Routzen and for Specher and Clevidence at the last named firm her labors in that line ended and she became my wife and she was so well fitted to take up the duties as faithful helpmate.

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But death has come and snatched her my faithful companion for nearly 40 years and my sky is hung with a black and clouded curtain my vision overcast with gloom and sorrow and every sound that strikes my ear has in it a cadence of despair without the presence of that one who has gone before the world seems empty and cheerless to me and in my heart there is a dreary dismal aching. The only consolation is that it is sweet to realize that she is at peace and is now in that land where the weary are at rest and as I bent over her open coffin for the last time and looked at those folded

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hands, those blessed hands I know they would do no more for us again in this world and those closed eyes will never look into mine. I realized that my companionship with her was forever at an end and her poor worn frame will never more be racked with agonies of pain and her suffering is at an end but it will only be a little while until we to will have to cross the dark river and join our loved companions on the other shore may I and those who read lines be ever ready and waiting when the summons comes is the prayer of my heart and that I can truly forgive those who shamefully wronged her.

**Page 24:**

Omaha, June 15<sup>th</sup>, My Dear Brother. It is half past two and I have just received your telegram. I am very sorry for you in this grate affliction and know something of what it means and I can only assure you of my love and sympathy each one has to bear this sorrow alone yet it helps a little sometimes to know that our friends are thinking of us and remembering our sorrow. I hope she quietly went to sleep but I know how hard and lonely it will be for you may God bless you and help you to bear your sorrow. I have thought so much about you and wondered what you will

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conclude to do you have such a dear little home everything so comfortable about you. I dread to think of you giving it up or making a change. When one has had their own quiet home all to themselves as you and Carrie had so long it means much to go into a home of someone else's and believe you will be better contented in your own little home with all the sweet associations than to break up and scatter the dear things that you have used and enjoyed and that has helped to make the home what it was to you of course it will be very lonely but it will be lonely wherever you go, lonely for the dear one who

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cannot return to you and only time can ease loneliness. Think it over well before you make a change. I am yours, Sister Mattie.

Cumberland Md. August 4, 1907

Mr. S. R. Blair

Dear Cousin,

Mama received your letter a few weeks ago telling her the sad news of the death of her cousin. She certainly was surprised to hear of her death as she had not heard from her for sometime. She didn't know what had become of you all. You certainly have our hearts felt sympathy for we have felt

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the sting of death ourselves. This past June one year ago we buried my dear father it was a hard blow and one we will never get over. He died suddenly, it is certainly hard to part with our loved ones but we have one comfort to know that we can meet them in heaven and oh how sweet it will be to meet, to part no more. May God bless you and your family and comfort you is our prayer.

Your cousin

Ada E. Welty

78 North Center St.

Cumberland, Maryland

P. S. above is a part of her letter copy by Rus.

**Page 28:**

Rockford, June 16, 1907

Mr. S. R. Blair

Dear Friend

I was surprised to receive your telegram of Carrie's death. When I saw her last I realized she never would all together regain her health but hoped she would be spared to her family longer. I assure you we all sympathize deeply with you. You have indeed lost a loving wife and your dear boy a good mother, our loss is her gain and we may be comforted with the thought that her suffering is ended she was always good and a true friend and I feel she is safe at home. It is a blessed privilege to be prepared for this change. **Georgia or Georgie**