

**Kay Donna Blackmer  
Clingman  
Cave City, Arkansas**

**Kay Donna's great  
Grandfather is**

**William Blackmer  
Co. H, 186<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry**



William was born in Jefferson County, New York on January 10, 1847 and is the son of Hazard and Polly (Pratt) Blackmer. His mother died when he was a very young child and he was taken in by a neighboring family, the Wright's with whom he lived for ten years.

Filled with patriotic pride, he enlisted as a private with the 186<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry, Co. H. His regiment joined the Army of the Potomac with his first engagement occurring at Hatchie's Run. Later he saw combat at the battle of Petersburg where he was wounded in the left side by a shell fragment and placed in the field hospital for two weeks. Recovering from his wound, he rejoined his regiment and continued in active service for the Union until his honorable discharge on June 14, 1865.

After the war, Blackmer returned to his home in Jefferson County where he remained two years before moving to Whiteside County in Illinois where he pursued farming. He was united in marriage in July of 1870 to Louisa France who was the daughter of Solomon and Margaret (Willtrout) France who were natives of Ohio. Solomon France was also a veteran of the Civil War. The Blackmer's had eight children who were all born on the family farm. In 1893 the family moved to Prophetstown, Illinois so that the children could attend the schools located there. In 1897 he returned to the family homestead where he had been a resident for 32 years.

William Blackmer had been a life-long and very staunch Republican. In the presidential election of 1868 he proudly cast his ballot for U.S. Grant. He never failed to vote in every election for the nominee of his party. Always taking an active interest in politics, his interest in promoting educational opportunities found him serving on the local school board for 25 years. The majority of that time was spent serving as the clerk of that board.

His patriotism also encouraged him to become a member of the Grand Army of the Republic, John A. Parrott Post #543 in Prophetstown, Illinois. He was accorded military honors by this fraternal group following his death which occurred on February 10, 1917 after a bout with pneumonia. William Blackmer is buried in Riverside Cemetery in Prophetstown, Illinois

