

Right from the get go it was difficult to pin down the facts of Edward Nailor's life. Some sources listed his birth place as Ludlow, Vermont. Others said St. Albans. The two most commonly mentioned were Fairfax and Lowell, Vermont. Most documents in Edward's Compiled Service Record stated that his birthplace was Lowell, so that is the town this researcher settled on as being the best choice. Other areas of Edward's life were more difficult to precisely nail down. The most commonly repeated details were the ones selected to include in this biographical sketch. Any important deviations were noted as well.

Edward Nailor was born on November 28, 1845 in Lowell, Vermont. ^[1] He was the son of Francis Nailer (born about 1822) and Harriett Nailer (born about 1825). ^[2] Frank and Harriet may have immigrated into the United States from Canada and gone by the name of "Cloutier" there. ^[3] When I first came across the suggestion by another researcher that Nailor was originally Cloutier, I was skeptical. Then I asked a friend of mine, who was a Canadian and also an immigrant to this country, if there was any connection between the two names. He said "yes" there was. "Clou" in Candaian French means "nail" So "Cloutier" means one who nails in French. When Frank and Harriet came to the United States, they must have wanted to go by a name that sounded more Anglican than French Canadian, so they chose "Nailor", one who nails in English. So Edward's real name is Cloutier, but he nor anyone else in the family went by that name once they had come to Vermont.

Determining how many siblings Edward had was no easy task either. Three different sources had three different lists. Some of the differences might have occurred because they were recorded ten years apart (Federal Census). Some differences showed up in Family Trees posted on line by other amateur researchers. Presented as siblings of Edward are the names of those who are common to all three sources. Exceptions are noted but not necessarily explained:

- Fancis, born about 1841
- Joseph, born about 1843

- (Edward, born about 1845)
- Angeline, born about 1847 or 1848
- Harriet, born about 1852
- Seymour, born about 1854
- Louis, born about 1856
- Nelson, born about 1858 or 1859 ^[4]

There are two controversies in the list of siblings put forward by the 1850 and 1860 Federal Census and the Lemery Family Tree found on Ancestry.com. The first is "Nelson". The 1850 Census listed a Nelson, born about 1849 as a household member for the Nailor clan. The other two lists included a "Nelson" but put his birth date at 1858 or 1859. ^[5] Were there two different sons named "Nelson" who were born two years apart? The second discrepancy involved a child named "Esther" supposedly born around 1863 according to the Lemery Family Tree. No other source consulted mentioned an "Esther". Both of these cases remained un-resolved in this research project.

In the 1850 Federal Census, the Nailors lived in Fletcher, Vermont. Edward was five at that time. Besides his father, Francis, and his mother, Hariett, there were Francis, Joseph, Angeline and Nelson in the household. ^[6] According to one researcher, there was another child born to Francis and Hariett in 1858. His name was Narcisse Napoleon Cloutier. He only lived until the next year, 1859. ^[7] Throughout the decade of the 1850's, children kept being added to the Nailor household. Between 1852 and 1859, four more young ones were born under the Nailor roof. ^[8]

By 1860, Edward had reached the age of fourteen. He and his immediate family lived in Fairfax, Vermont. Edward is the oldest male child still at home. Francis and Joseph, his older siblings, are not listed in the household. All of the children were born in Vermont. Edward's father and mother are identified as having been born in Canada. No occupation was listed for anyone. ^[9] The outbreak of war in 1861 impacted whatever normalcy the Nailor's enjoyed. Edward, like most young men, could not wait to step up in front of a recruiter and sign his name to the roster. In fact, Edward was so enthusiastic about going off to war that he did it not just once, but twice.

The first time was on July 22, 1862, four months shy of his seventeenth birthday. Edward was not the first, nor would he be the last recruit, to lie about his age so that he could enlist. It was a very common practice at the time. He signed up as a Private in Company I of the Tenth Vermont Regiment. He claimed to be eighteen and must have looked it for he was accepted without question. He was actually only sixteen. He stood five feet three and one half inches tall with a dark complexion, black eyes and brown hair. He stated he was born in Lowell, Vermont and that his occupation was that of a farmer. His enlistment occurred in Sheldon, Vermont. ^[10] Private Nailor along with the rest of the Tenth Vermont were mustered-in at Brattleboro, Vermont on September 1, 1862. Private Nailor was paid a bounty of \$25.00 and a Premium of \$2.00 was paid to the recruiter. ^[11]

The Tenth Vermont Infantry Regiment was recruited from all parts of the State. Colonel A. B. Jewett commanded. The Regiment was mustered into service September 1, 1862 at Brattleboro, Vermont. It left there on September 6 for Washington, D. C. arriving there on September 8. The Tenth went into quarters at Camp Chase near Arlington Heights the next day. On the 17th, the Regiment was posted along the Potomac River in Maryland and ordered to guard the river fords from Muddy Branch to Edward's Ferry.

By the middle of October, 1862, the Regiment was ordered to the vicinity of the mouth of Seneca Creek, a six mile stream in Montgomery County, Maryland roughly sixteen miles northwest of Washington, D. C. It drains into the Potomac River. The Vermonters were brigaded with the 39th Massachusetts, 14th New Hampshire, 23rd Maine, 10th Massachusetts Battery and the 6th Michigan Cavalry. Due to the swampy environment, camp fever and death swept through the men. During their nine month stay, the Tenth did light picket and guard duty at the various river fords along the Potomac. The Regiment had no contact with the enemy during this period.

On June 22, 1863, the Tenth received orders to march for Harper's Ferry where it was incorporated into the Third Corps, First Brigade, Third Division. It participated in all the battles and marches of that Corps and the Army of the Potomac up to July 6, 1864. At the

time the Potomac Army was reorganized, the Tenth became part of the First Brigade, Third Division of the Sixth Corps.

The first engagement with the enemy significant enough to be called a battle was the action at Locust, or Orange, Grove, Virginia on November 27, 1863. In that action, the Tenth was ordered to take an enemy position on the crest of a hill. Although never under heavy fire before, they behaved with determined bravery and the steadiness of veterans.

At the Battle of The Wilderness on May 5-7, 1864, the Regiment was fortunate to stay out of the heavy fighting of the first day. They were repositioned the second day when at about sunset they were faced with a crisis. The enemy had pushed the advanced Federal troops back and had flanked them. The Tenth Vermont and the 106th New York changed fronts, kneeled and fixed bayonets to form a welcoming committee for the swarming Rebels. The barrier checked the enemy's rush and forced them to retire.

In the twelve days' operations at Cold Harbor June 1-12, 1864, the Vermonters of the Tenth suffered more casualties than it had in all of its previous engagements. Several contacts with the enemy from June 1 to June 12 reduced its numbers to twelve officers and three hundred fifty-two enlisted men.

After a brief detour to assist General Butler at Bermuda Hundred, the Tenth was ordered to Harper's Ferry on July 6, 1864. On the way, they were stopped by General Lew Wallace at Frederick City. A Rebel force of fifteen thousand under General Jubal Early lay nearby. General Wallace posted his force of five thousand troops three miles above the city so as to place it between the Confederates and Washington, D.C. Outnumbered and out gunned, Wallace's mix of regulars and raw militia were overwhelmed by the three to one odds the next day, July 9, 1864 at the Battle of Monocacy. Despite a stubborn resistance of nine hours duration, the Federals were defeated. However, the delaying action fought by Wallace's troops allowed reinforcements to be brought up to eventually halt General Early's attempt to capture Washington, D.C.

For the next month, the Vermonters were involved in marching - to Berryville on the Shenandoah River, crossing at Ball's Bluff, back to Washington through Snicker's Gap, on to Harper's Ferry, down to Frederick and Monocacy, again to Harper's Ferry where the Tenth became attached to Sheridan's "Middle Military Department". The Regiment then became part of all of Sheridan's campaign up and down the Shenandoah Valley.

The Regiment went on to take part in the engagements at Winchester (September 19, 1864; Fisher's Hill (September 22, 1864); and Cedar Creek (October 19, 1864). The Tenth remained in the vicinity of Cedar Creek for three weeks. On December 3, 1864, it was ordered back to Petersburg where it arrived on December 5. The Vermonters were actively engaged in the contests of Hatcher's Run and Weldon Railroad. On December 23, 1864 the Regiment went into winter quarters until March 29, 1865. During that time the Tenth did little except picket duty until the 25th of March, 1865 when General Lee made his famous demonstration on Forts Stedman and Haskell. The Tenth captured one hundred sixty prisoners in that action.

On April 2, 1865, the Tenth was in front of the Confederate Fort Welch, part of the defenses around Petersburg. Lieutenant-Colonel Danson of the Tenth claimed his command was first of the Division to plant its colors inside the enemy's lines. On the third, the Tenth entered Petersburg at the head of the victorious Federals. The Regiment was afterwards occupied in the pursuit of the enemy right up to June 9, 1865.

June 22, 1865 saw fourteen officers and one hundred thirty-six men transferred to the Fifth Vermont. At Burlington, Vermont on the 27th of June the remaining thirteen officers and four hundred fifty-one men were mustered-out. ^[12]

Private Nailor had no negative experiences as a member of Company I, Tenth Vermont Infantry Regiments from the time of his enlistment until about October, 1863. That month he contracted chronic diarrhea. Around November of 1863, he was admitted to the hospital in Culpeper, Virginia for his disease. On the Roll of Officers and Enlisted Men...that are unfit for active field service, on account of wounds or disease contracted

in line of duty, but that are fit for duty in the Invalid Corps, it was noted that Private Nailor had spent two months in the hospital and had been disabled for three months with his disability from chronic diarrhea. ^[13] By January 16, 1864, Private Nailor was given the chance to serve out the remainder of his enlistments in the Veteran's Reserve Corps (Invalid Corps) The status of Private Nailor dragged on until March of 1864 when he was examined by J.C. Rutherford, Assist. Surgeon in charge of the Tenth VT Vols. who did confirm that Private Nailor was suffering from "chronic diarrhea and constitutional debility" that he had contracted in the line of duty. But the astute surgeon also discovered during his examination of Private Nailor that "...it appears from the soldiers statements and appearance that he is but sixteen years old, hence, improper enlistment." ^[14] Edward became a civilian again on March 22, 1864 having received his discharge at Brandy Station by order of Maj. Genl French, commanding 3 AC (Third Army Corps). ^[15] So the war was over for Mr. Nailor. Not only was he too sick to carry out the duties of a soldier, he was too young to be one. He had pulled off his deception for a long time, but now was sent home as an undesirable volunteer.

For the next six months, Edward recuperated at home in Vermont. But as soon as he turned eighteen, he enlisted again. This time in the First Vermont Cavalry. It seemed that Edward had developed an aversion to marching during his initial hitch with the Army. It also appeared that he had not idled away his time while recuperating at home for he enlisted in the First Vermont Cavalry as a bugler.

On August 20, 1864 in Fairfield, Vermont, farmer Nailor became Private Nailor again. His term of service this time was one year. ^[16] He was mustered-in at Burlington, Vermont on the 24th of August and paid one third of his \$100 bounty. ^[17] By August 31, 1864, Edward was in New Haven, Connecticut with recruits from other Vermont regiments at the U.S. Draft rendezvous. He was still there on September 9, 1864. ^[18] It appeared that Private Nailor of the First Vermont Cavalry did not actually report to the regiment until November 18, 1864 as a recruit near Newton, Virginia after the Battle of Cedar Creek. ^[19]

The First Cavalry was not active until the spring of 1862, when, with the forces of General Banks, it was engaged at Middletown, Winchester, and in the campaign which terminated in the second battle of Bull Run August 30, 1862. The loss in the summer campaigns was heavy, but the command was reinforced in the autumn by the addition of two new companies and many recruits. The Regiment was stationed in the vicinity of Washington on various details during the winter of 1862-63 and frequent skirmishes with Mosby's guerrillas prevented any monotony.

June 28, 1863, the First was assigned to the cavalry corps of the Army of the Potomac with which it served from that time on. In the Battle of Gettysburg, the Regiment won its laurels; was active in the subsequent pursuit of General Lee by harassing his rear guard. Finally, the unit halted for the winter at Stevensburg, Virginia.

The First Vermont shared in the raid on Richmond in 1864 under General Kilpatrick. Then the spring campaign opened in 1864. In the Battle of the Wilderness, the First lost many brave officers and men. It was active in the battles which followed at Yellow Tavern and Meadow Bridge, during Sheridan's Raid on Richmond, and was also at Hanover Court House, Ashland, Haw's Shop, Bottom's Ridge, White Oak Swamp, Riddle's Shop and Malvern Hill. The Regiment was ordered to join the expedition of destruction of the Weldon and South Side Railroads, in which skirmishes and engagements resulted at Ream's Station, Nottoway Court House, Roanoke Station and Stony Creek. In August it was ordered to join Sheridan who was confronting General Early in the Shenandoah Valley and arrived at Winchester on August 17 in time to participate in the engagements at Winchester, Charlestown, Summit Point, Kearneysville, the Opequan, New Market and Cedar Creek. The original members, who had not reenlisted, were mustered-out on November 18, 1864.

On February 27, 1865, Sheridan's cavalry commenced the return to Petersburg where it arrived after a journey of three weeks. In the cavalry fight at Five Forks, the First Vermont had a share and continued in the advance of the column through several minor

affairs until the corps reached Appomattox Court House where General Lee surrendered. The Regiment participated in the Grand Review of the armies at Washington and returned to Vermont early in June. The men whose term of service would expire prior to October 1 were mustered-out at Burlington. The remainder were consolidated into a battalion of six companies which served in Vermont and upper New York until August 9, 1865 as border guards following the St Albans Raid by Confederates.

The First Vermont was mentioned by Colonel Fox as one of the "three hundred fighting regiments" and also listed it fifth in an enumeration of nine regiments who lost over one hundred nineteen men. It was, however, second to none in the number of captures it made. At the Battle of Cedar Creek, it won three of the eight medals awarded to the army for colors captured. The First Vermont Cavalry fought in seventy-six separate engagements with the enemy over its three year existence. The total aggregate strength of the Regiment was 2,304 officers and enlisted men. One hundred twelve of those were killed or died of their wounds. One hundred fourteen died of diseases and seven of accidents. One hundred fifty-nine died as prisoners in Confederate prisons.

Many believe that cavalymen enjoyed a cushier and more glamorous duty of the fighting units employed during the War of the Rebellion. Not true. Men and horses were repeatedly subject to enormous and often prolonged stresses. Challenged beyond normal endurance, many troopers and their mounts fell victim not only to battle injuries but also non-combatant assaults on their health and well being. For example, on the Kilpatrick-Dahlgren raid, one trooper reported: "...rode all day and all of the night in the rain pouring all the time....and we hadn't had a wink of sleep, only what we got on our horses in that time.... (Collea, *The First Vermont Cavalry*, p.215)". Another member of the First commented - "...three days frequently pass without unsaddling the horses, and the backs of the poor emaciated brutes are first sore, then burst rotten.... (Collea, *The First Vermont Cavalry*, p. 87)". A third trooper of the First noted "...sadly the route of march became easy to follow by the trail of expired horses by the roadside....(Collea, *The First Vermont Cavalry*, p. 156)." At Gettysburg it was estimated that between three and four thousand horses were killed in that one, three day battle.

One heartwarming story about the horses of the First Vermont Cavalry appeared in Joseph D. Collea, Jr's book The First Vermont Cavalry in the Civil War: "...Abe, aka 'The First Vermont Straggler'....Shot in the neck. the horse had to be left behind by his rider, Bugler Joe Allen, because he (the horse) could not rise from weakness due to loss of blood at 4 am when soldiers began their march. From that day on, soldiers could be heard cheering and shouting when Abe (now Old Abe) would straggle into their latest camp a day late as he made his way alone to rejoin his comrades. Ultimately, when stronger, he and Bugler Allen rode together again until the end of the war in 1865.... (p.180)" I hope that when Bugler Allen was discharged from the service that he was able to take Old Abe with him.

In the three years that the First Vermont Cavalry was in the service of the United States Army, it took part in seventy-six engagements from Mount Jackson on April 16, 1862 to Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865, including the 1862 and 1864 Shenandoah Valley campaigns, the Gettysburg Campaign, the Overland Campaign and the Siege of Petersburg. The Regiment's most notable action was the cavalry charge led by Brigadier General Elon Farnsworth with Major William Wells by his side against the Confederate's right flank on the third day of the Battle of Gettysburg. The First's heritage continued to be celebrated to this day with a state legislative decree naming the Corps of Cadets at Norwich University as members of the Regiment who wear the crossed sabers on all of their uniforms and their insignia. ^[20]

By March, 1865, Private Nailor had been promoted to Corporal. He was reported as absent from the Remount Camp. ^[21] On May 1, 1865, Corporal Nailor got another promotion to Sergeant of Company E. He was mustered-out of the service at Burlington, Vermont on June 21, 1865. ^[22] At muster-out, Sergeant Nailor, Company B, First Regiment Vermont Cavalry was last paid on December 31, 1864. His clothing account was last settled on August 20, 1864 (the day he enlisted in the cavalry). The amount for clothing in kind or money advanced amounted to \$103.15. He had been paid \$33.33

(second installment) and was due the last third of \$33.33. ^[23] Altogether, Edward left the Army with a fistful of cash.

Soon after his March 22, 1864 discharge, Edward found a young woman that he wanted to marry. Her name was Theresa E. Blodgett. She was the daughter of Augustus and Sophia Blodgett. ^[24] Theresa was born in Goshen around 1851 and was only about fourteen when she was married on May 7, 1866 in St. Albans, Vermont. ^[25] Edward was about twenty-one. The newly wedded couple saw their first child, Charles E., arrive on February 12, 1867. ^[26] Again, the historical record provided variations on the number of children born to Edward and Theresa over the year. By Theresa's own count, she bore twelve offspring during her lifetime. Only five remained alive in 1900. ^[27]

It was very difficult to find an accurate and complete list of children born to Edward and Theresa. 18th century vital records were often lacking entirely because they were only casually kept, usually by the local clergyman. There were no government requirements for keeping vital records. Even when they were systematically recorded, they were often inaccurate due to carelessness, bias, indifference or the level of education of the recorder. Census records were taken only every ten years which means a lot could have happened in the interim that went unrecorded. Often young males went missing early in life due to their leaving the homestead to strike out on their own. Females married and took the names of their new husbands. Children were often boarded out in the 1800's to families other than their own. Sometimes researchers inaccurately recorded data they thought they had found on their subject only to discover (by subsequent researchers) that they had the wrong person. This researcher has taken extreme caution to be accurate in presenting his findings, but can not claim infallibility.

In the case of Edward and Theresa's children, given all the checking and cross-checking one person could think of, I was only able to come up with nine children total, four of whom died at very young ages (before 1900), not the twelve that Theresa claimed she had given birth to. These children are:

- Charles E. 1867-1874
- Francis 1869-1870
- Cora E. 1871-1872
- John Adelburt 1873-1881
- Franklin Augustus 1875-1954
- Jennie Almah 1879-1966
- Clyde Walter 1884-1968
- Lealy Bell Theresa 1892-1920
- Earl Edward 1892-1980 ^[28]

Even this scrupulously prepared list is questionable for a number of reasons. First, the last two children were born in the year following their father's death. Some sources had them born the same year (1892), some had them born in different years (1891 and 1892). Since Edward, their father, died the end of 1891, these two had to be born twins in the same year. Only the 1900 Federal Census listed an "Earl" as an offspring of Edward and Theresa. Some sources did not list a "Francis" and some did not list a "Charles". Other sources mentioned a "Leafy" but not an "Earl". Three missing babies might be explained by stillbirths, infant deaths occurring so soon after birth that the baby wasn't even given a name or just not recorded (or recorded, but lost).

Most of the children were born in Goshen-Ripton area of Vermont between the years 1867 and 1892. That is the same place Edward spent his post-war years where he was a farmer. As the list of children above shows, and as Theresa herself said, the couple lost a number of their offspring before they reached puberty. Edward applied for an invalid pension on October 8, 1875 right after the birth of his son Franklin Augustus in July.^[29] In 1890, the Nailor's lived in Goshen.^[30] Edward was in Leicester on November 30, 1891 when he died of pneumonia and heart trouble. He was only forty-six years old.^[31] The following April (17) his last two children were born.^[32]

Theresa, forty-eight in 1900, lived in Brandon, Vermont with five of her children (Franklin, 24; Clyde, 15; Earl, 9; Lefy, 8; and Jennie A. Shoro, her married daughter of one year) and her father, Augustus Blodgett age seventy-two.^[33] She owned her home but it was still mortgaged. Her only visible means of support at this time appeared to be her widow's pension which she had applied for on December 22, 1891, a month after

Edward's death. ^[34] Theresa continued to live in Brandon until her death from pneumonia and measles on May 1, 1902. She was three months shy of her fifty-first birthday. ^[35] After her death, Joseph Blodgett, who had been appointed guardian of the minor children, applied for, and was granted, a pension payment for their support on January 2, 1903. ^[36]

NOTES

1. Vermont in the Civil War/Cemeteries/ Vermont/Orwell/Mountain View/Vitals/Nailor, Edward; Ancestry.com, Wheelin Family Tree for Edward Earl Nailor Aka Cloutier.
2. myheritage.com, 1850 U.S. Federal Census for Edward Nailor.
3. Ibid., Lemery Family Tree for Edward Nailor.
4. myheritage.com, 1850 U.S. Federal Census for Edward Nailor; Ancestry.com, 1860 U.S. Federal Census for Edward Nailor; Ibid., Lemery Family Tree for Edward Nailor.
5. Ibid.
6. myheritage.com, 1850 U.S. Federal Census for Edward Nailor.
7. Ancestry.com, Wheelin Family Tree for Edward Earl Nailor Aka Cloutier.
8. Ibid., 1860 U.S. Federal Census for Edward Nailor.
9. Ibid.
10. Fold3.com, Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Vermont, p. 3, image 311757702. Hereinafter referred to as Compiled Service Records.
11. Ibid., Compiled Service Records, p. 4, image 311757703.
12. Vermont in the Civil War/Units/Tenth Vermont Infantry. From Regimental History by Chaplain Edwin M. Haynes.
13. Fold3.com, Compiled Service Records, p. 13, image 311757712.
14. Ibid., Compiled Service Records, p. 19, image 311757718.
15. Ibid., Compiled Service Records, p. 16, image 311757715.
16. Ibid., Compiled Service Records, p. 2, image 308724108.
17. Ibid., Compiled Service Records, p. 3, image 308724110.
18. Ibid., Compiled Service Records, p. 4, image 308724112.
19. Ibid., Compiled Service Records, p. 10, image 308724127.
20. Vermont in the Civil War/Units/1st Vermont Cavalry/History; Ibid/Units/1st Vermont Cavalry/Introduction; The First Vermont Cavalry in the Civil War by Joseph D. Collea, Jr., McFarland & Company, Inc., Jefferson, North Carolina, 2010.
21. Fold3.com, Compiled Service Records, p. 10, image 308724127.
22. Vermont in the Civil War/1st Cavalry/roster.
24. Ancestry.com, Vermont, Vital Records (Death), 1720-1908 for Theresa Blodgett Naylor.
25. Ibid., NJVTZIENOWICZ Family Tree for Theresa Elizabeth Blodgett.
26. Ibid., Vermont, Vital Records for Theresa Blodgett Naylor.
27. Ibid., 1900 U.S. Federal Census for Theresa E. Blodgett.

28. Ibid., Wheelin Family Tree for Edward Earl Nailor Aka Cloutier.
29. Ibid.; Ibid., U.S., Civil War Pension Index: General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934 for Theresa E. Nailor.
30. Ibid., Special Schedule, Surviving Soldiers, Sailors, And Marines, And Widows, etc., June 1890.
31. Ibid., Vermont Vital Records, 1720-1908 for Edward Nailor and Francis Nailor.
32. Ibid., Vermont, Vital Records, 1720-1908 for Leafy T. Nailor and Earl E. Naylor.
33. Ibid., 1900 U.S. Federal Census for Theresa E. Naylor.
34. Ibid., U.S., Civil War Pension Index: General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934 for Theresa E. Nailor.
35. Ibid., Vermont, Vital Records, 1720-1908 for Theresa Blodgett Naylor.
36. Ibid., U.S., Civil War Pension Index for Theresa E. Nailor.