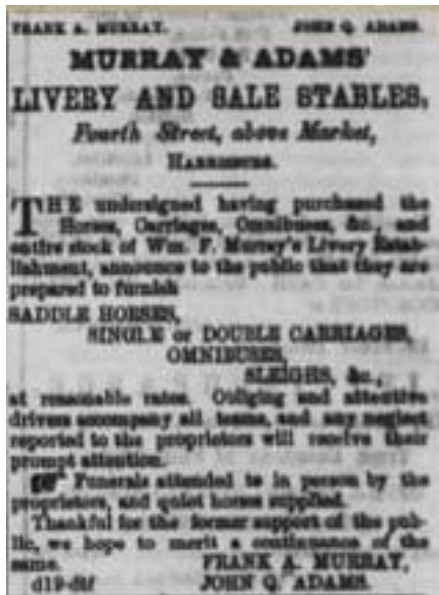




Picture of a Typical Union Cavalryman of The Period



Captain Frank A. Murray, Captain of the “Curtin Guards”

Captain Frank A. Murray rose to the call during the Confederate Invasion when Pennsylvania Governor Andrew Gregg Curtin reached out to him to lead the “Curtin Guards,” the 1863 Militia Cavalry (Murray's Independent Company, Pennsylvania Cavalry, Emergency, 1863). This unit would play a crucial role in protecting Harrisburg from the Confederate Invasion. Murray was the son of a William Murray, a Harrisburg judge and business owner from Middletown. Frank was born in 1837 and would learn how to manage businesses from his father. He would open horse stables in the 1850s that supported carriages, funeral service and general transportation. Therefore, Governor Curtin knew just who to call on due to Murray's reputation for managing horses and livery in the city.

Murray and his cavalry were instantly dispatched into the Cumberland Valley as an arm to help the 1st New York Lincoln Cavalry, Company C, under Captain Frank Boyd. Murray and his men served with distinction as is captured in the letter from Murray to his father stating the commendation by Boyd: “I am under captain Boyd, he being my senior officer. We are after the rebs night and day. On the 2nd of this month, we captured 45 of them, and yesterday - the glorious 4th of July - we celebrated by riding 45 miles and capturing 8 wagons, 1 carriage, 32 mules, 34 horses, and 75 prisoners. Captain Boyd spoke very highly of my men. We are all well.”
The Harrisburg Patriot-News, July 13th, 1863.

Captain Murray met with Confederate Brigadier General Albert Gallatin Jenkins on the western edge of Mechanicsburg, in a cordial meeting on Sunday morning, June 28th. After that brief meeting, Murray immediately went into action to defend Mechanicsburg. Murray met at the telegraph office in Mechanicsburg and got word off to commanding Union Brigadier General William “Baldy” Smith after which he packed up the telegraph along with its two operators and transported the telegraph by a hand-operated railcar to Major General Darius Couch, commander of the Department of the Susquehanna, in Harrisburg. The following says it best about the service of Captain Murray and his Curtin Guards: “Among the numerous cavalry attached to this command none have seen more severe service, and rendered themselves more important, than your own Harrisburg boys, under Captain Frank Murray. Harrisburg may well be proud of the noble boys she has sent out in this emergency, despite the jeers and taunts of the few New York militia; and none are more entitled to the highest need of praise than those who were so gallantly led by Captain Frank Murray.” The Harrisburg Patriot, Thursday, July 23rd, 1863.

