

Jenny Wade - The only Civilian killed in The Battle of Gettysburg.

Granddaughter of Samuel and Elizabeth (Degroff) Filby – Tree U08.

Elizabeth (Betsy) Maria /Degraff Degroff b: Abt. Mar 1788 in Washington DC., d: 05 Jan 1887 in Gettysburg, Adams County, Pa. USA married....John Samuel (Philby) Filby b: Abt. 1785, m: 07 Mar 1821 in Gettysburg, Pa. d: 12 Aug 1873 in Gettysburg, Adams County, Pa. USA.

One of their daughters: Mary Ann Filby b: 1820 in York County (Adams County). Pa. USA., d: 14 Dec 1892 in Gettysburg, Adams County, Pa. USA. married.....James Wade b: 08 Aug 1814 in James City Co., Virginia. USA, m: 15 Apr 1840 in Gettysburg, Pa. USA., d: 10 Jul 1872 in Gettysburg, Pa. USA.

Their Children:

- i. Georgeana Wade b: 04 Apr 1841 in Gettysburg, Adams Co., married Mr. McClellan.
- ii. **Mary Virginia (Jenny) Wade b: 21 May 1843 in Gettysburg, Adams County, Pa d: 03 Jul 1863 in Gettysburg, Pa. USA.**
- iii. John 'Jack' James Wade b: 13 Mar 1846 in Gettysburg, Adams County, Pa. USA.
- iv. Martha Margaret Wade b: 09 May 1849 in Gettysburg, Adams County, Pa. USA., d: 16 Sep 1849 in Gettysburg, Adams County, Pa. USA.
- v. Samuel Swan Wade b: 06 Aug 1851 in Gettysburg, Adams County, Pa. USA.
- vi. Harry Marion Wade b: 04 Feb 1855 in Gettysburg, Adams County, Pa. USA.

Jennie Wade – A Tragic Story

In the year 1863 Mary Virginia "Jennie" Wade was a 20-year-old resident of Gettysburg, York County, PA., and engaged to be married to Corp. Johnston H. Skelly of the 87th Pennsylvania. She worked as a seamstress with her mother, Mary Ann (Filby) Wade, in their home on Breckenridge Street. Her father, James Wade, was in a mental institute so to make ends meet they also took care of a 6-year-old boarder named Isaac.

For safety during the first day's battle, Jennie and her family moved to the home of Jennie's sister, Georgia Wade McClellan on Baltimore Street. Her sister had given birth with great difficulty around 2:15 P.M., one hour before the Confederates rode into Gettysburg, and Jennie was caring for her. The McClellan side of the house on Baltimore Street, less than 50 yards north of Cemetery Hill, thus housed Mrs. Wade, Jennie, her brother Harry, her young boarder Isaac, her sister Georgia, and the new born son.



There was no heavy fighting in the area but a Federal picket line did run behind the little brick house, there was intermittent skirmishing between it and Confederate outposts in the Town proper. Protected by the sturdy brick walls of the house, they lived for three days in the midst of the greatest battle ever seen in this hemisphere. Jennie spent most of July 1

distributing bread to Union soldiers and filling their canteens with water. By late afternoon on July 2, the diminishing supply of bread made it apparent that more bread would be needed the next day. Jennie and her mother left the yeast to rise until the morning of the 3rd.

At about 7 A.M. on the morning of July 3, the Confederate sharpshooters began firing at the north windows of the house. The prep work to bake biscuits was begun at 8 A.M. At about 8:30 A.M. while Jennie stood in the kitchen kneading dough, a Confederate musket ball smashed through a door on the north side of the house, pierced another into the kitchen, and struck Jennie in the back beneath her left shoulder blade embedding itself in her corset, killing her instantly. The cries of her sister and mother attracted Federal soldiers who carried her body to the cellar. In the early afternoon of July 4, Jennie's mother baked 15 loaves of bread from the dough which Jennie had kneaded.

Jennie Wade was the only civilian casualty of the Battle of Gettysburg. Nor was the tragedy complete, for unbeknownst to Jennie, her fiancé Corp. Johnston Hastings 'Jack' Skelly Jr. had been wounded and taken prisoner at Winchester on May 13. Transferred to Virginia, he died in a hospital on July 12. News that he had died in Confederate hands came several days after the Southern Army had withdrawn from Gettysburg. Later she was buried near to Jack Skelly in Evergreen Cemetery, in a coffin some Confederate soldiers had fashioned for an officer.



Johnston Hastings Skelly, Jr. In April of 1861 he was mustered into Co. E, 2nd PA Volunteer Infantry.

Extract from the book "The Jennie Wade Story" A true and complete account of the only civilian killed during the Battle of Gettysburg, by Cindy L. Small