

Partee Boliek
4000 Sweet Air Rd
Phoenix, MD 21131

Governor Beverly Perdue
Office of Governor
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699 -0301

Dear Governor Perdue

January 4, 2012

My name is Partee Boliek. I grew up in North Carolina. I graduated from Lenoir Rhyne College in 1948, the Evangelical Seminary in Columbus and served St. Johns Lutheran church for 40 years and will celebrate my 60th anniversary in the ministry on July 6th of this year.

One of my special interests has been the history of the family. One of the points of interest has been the execution of Elkana & Jacob Lanier. Both were soldiers in the confederate army. After the battle of Gettysburg the army settled down near the court house in Orange County Virginia. The Lanier brothers along with two other soldiers were searching for food. Five letters from the brothers to their family have been preserved stating that there was not enough food to go around. They were searching for green corn & apples. Unfortunately they had not obtained a pass. They were arrested and accused of desertion, and executed.

Since the five letters were sent to your office previously, I will not duplicate them, but make reference to them. The Lanier brothers were both members of the 18th regiment, Jacob in Company A. and Elkana in Company C. of the North Carolina troops. Their letters seemed to be more concerned about their parents and families than they did about facing the firing squads.

Elkana wrote to his wife, Elizabeth, after he had explained their plight saying "I am sorry to say to you, I cannot you and my children in this world again, I will pray that God will help you raise those little children. I feel satisfied that I am going to heaven and want to meet you and the children there. God be with you forever, Amen."

In another letter he said, "I still think about you and the little children, but must leave them with you and God, hoping you will raise them right and try to give them an education so they can read the word of God. I want you to remember this as long as you live and tell my children about me when they get old enough to understand." This hardly sounds as one who considers himself as a deserter.

Jacob who was on 18 when he entered the service said, "he and his brother and two other men left camp on a foraging expedition and unfortunately was arrested by a guard detailed for the arrest of deserters, and were kept under guard for five days from our command. I have no idea what the results may be, although I don't think they can hurt one much. We left camp entirely to get some apples and green corn, etc. for we don't get more than half enough eat. I am tolerably well satisfied. I hope we will soon be free from this war." They were tried and condemned to die by the firing squad.

Jacob further wrote, "**Now there is only one chance, for me to escape, that is to be reprieved by the Governor of North Carolina.** I feel that my Company officers will do what they can." In another letter he stated, "It goes hard for me to write so solemn a doom, but **there is not a man in the regiment that will say that we got justice,** but the officers have determined to have a better disciplined army than heretofore, and so **it must need be that they make an example of some to check the remainder, it has fell on our unhappy lot to be an example.** It's hard but we have to bear it. I know we will get justice in heavens judgment."

Elkana summed it up in these words to his wife, "Elizabeth, to his father Edmund, to his mother and brothers & sisters, relations and friends, Farwell, **I am going home to die no more. Glory be to God for a world better than this.**"

I assume he included me for I am a relative. The Lanier Brothers were grandson of Abraham Boliek. I am a great great grandson. Abraham had 19 either direct descendants or by marriage in the war. Four of them were my great grandfathers. Two returned home, two didn't. David Starnes was captured and dies in prison in Elmira, New York. Joshua Bowman was wounded and captured in Gettysburg, was transferred to a hospital in NY city, recovered and was exchanged at City Point in Virginia. He went back on the battle field and was shot down April 2nd, the day Petersburg fell. A week later on April 9th, General Lee surrendered. Three days later, Stoneman's raids took his wife's' good horse and left a worn-out horse that died the next day. Scars were many after the war.

Alexander Boliek almost died in the battle of the Wilderness. He was wounded in the thigh and no doubt would have been consumed by the fire that swept the battlefield, except for younger brother Anderson. Though wounded himself he helped his brother off the field. Joshua Bowman was voted the honor roll for his actions in Gettysburg and Alexander Boliek received a like honor at the battle at Weldon Railroad.

All of them now have military tombstones in the old Pisgah & Shiloh Cemetery near by. The Lanier boys will have stones placed in their honor on July 1st in the family cemetery in Catawba County.

We ask your honor to consider a posthumous pardon for Elkana & Jacob Lanier, and perhaps fulfill the prophecy that young Jacob made before he faced the firing squad, "only the governor can spare us."

Thanking you in advance I am.

Sincerely Yours,
Rev. Partee Boliek
Rev. Partee Boliek