

## William Ira Noel

William Ira Noel was born on September 24, 1845. He enlisted at the age of 18. He was enrolled by William Bowers at Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin. He joined his regiment, the First Wisconsin Calvary, Company E, at Cleveland, Tennessee. He was on Sherman's March to the Sea and left on the March to Atlanta about the last of April - 1864. William Noel was taken prisoner on a skirmish line near Dalton, Georgia on May 10, 1864. He was taken to

Atlanta, Georgia. Then, on the 12th of May he was taken to Andersonville prison. He was in this prison all summer. In July, one man died every 20 minutes. Noel was one of the first to drink out of Providence Spring. This spring bubbled forth after a heavy rain and was called by that name because it seemed to come in answer to the great cry and prayers for pure water. This spring is still bubbling away. When Noel entered the prison there were 35,000 prisoners. Noel is the only

one living of his company today. William Noel was taken, in the late fall of 1864, to the prison at Florence, S.C. This prison was a stockade much like Andersonville. About 15,000 men had no covering to protect them from the cold, damp winter. Food was corn meal once a day. William Noel was here until the close of the war.

*From the pen of Della Noel Hibbard, daughter of William H. Noel - Date unknown. Original in front of the book, "History of Prison Life in the South". Noel Wilkie's library. Jean Steven's-calligrapher.*