



14.1993.1 Burial Site of Captain Eli McCarty
Daviess County
Marker Text Review Report
02/06/2012

Marker Text

Burial Site of Captain Eli McCarty. During the Civil War, on October 3, 1864, Daviess County draft officer Eli McCarty was murdered by antiwar draft protestors. Five men were convicted of his murder.¹ Reportedly, several other men involved fled west.²

Report

Current IHB guidelines require primary source documentation to support all information on a marker. This marker was placed under review because IHB had no sources on file. Further research confirms that the marker text is accurate (see notes). Some clarification is necessary, however.

The *Indianapolis Daily Journal*, May 20 and 30, 1865, contains accounts of the Daviess County Circuit Court proceedings. W. H. Terrell's 1869 *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana* gives a brief account of the incident and attributes the murder to the [Sons of Liberty](#) (also known as "Peace Democrats," or "Copperheads"). However, G. R. Tredway's 1973 *Democratic Opposition to the Lincoln Administration in Indiana* notes that Terrell made a "totally unsupported claim" that the Sons of Liberty were behind the murder.

McCarty's headstone states that he was murdered "by eight members of the Peace Democrat organization." However, the marker text attributes the attack to "antiwar draft protestors." No available primary source calls the attackers "Peace Democrats." Newspaper accounts of the trial agree that the military draft was the murder motive. The testimony of John McAvoy, printed in the *Indianapolis Daily Journal*, May 30, 1865, provides the following, "These men gave as a reason for killing McCarty that, if he was killed they would not then be drafted into the abolition army. There was no other reason for killing him."

Learn More

McCarty is buried at [Ebenezer Methodist Cemetery](#) and his headstone can be [viewed online](#).

More on [Hoosier Soldiers](#) on the IHB website.

¹ Several primary and secondary sources describe the men involved in the murder. John McAvoy pled guilty, and a jury convicted the other four: George Y. Scott, George W. Hedrick, William Whiteside[s], and Dan Scales. Secondary source, *The History of Knox and Daviess Counties Indiana* reads, "The Slicer boys and young Madden, who were equally guilty, managed to entirely escape [and] went West." An October 10, 1864 *Indiana Daily Journal* article, as well as McAvoy's testimony in the *Indianapolis Daily Journal* on May 30, 1865, confirm that others were involved who were not prosecuted.

² It is difficult to prove that other men involved in the murder fled west. We do know from McAvoy's testimony that he fled west before being apprehended in St. Joseph, Missouri. At least one of the men who escaped prosecution did flee west, Thornton A. Slicer, Jr. Listed as T. A. Slicer, Jr. in the 1860 census, he then appears in the 1870 and 1880 censuses for California and Missouri, respectively.