

Pvt. John Shepard, Company "G"

Private John Shepard was born in England about 1836 and before the Civil War immigrated to the United States. By 1862 he was working as a miner in Maryland when he enlisted in Company G of the 7th Maryland on August 21, 1862, in Middletown. John was 5' 8" tall with fair complexion, auburn eyes and brown hair.

He and the 7th Maryland began training at Camp Harford in Baltimore. Less than a month later the Battle of Antietam (or Sharpsburg) was fought on September 17. Within two days of the battle the 7th Maryland moved by train to Hagerstown before marching to Williamsport. Its mission was to help guard the fords of the Potomac River. On October 10, 1862, Confederate cavalry commander Major General

JEB Stuart crossed the Potomac at McCoy's Ferry to raid Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, before returning to Virginia two days later. The Army of the Potomac finally crossed the river into Virginia in pursuit of

the Confederates on October 26.

Left behind on detached duty, the 7th Maryland was assigned to guard a five-mile stretch of the Potomac west of Williamsport between Dam #5 and McCoy's Ferry, with regimental headquarters at Four Locks. Over the next six weeks while guarding the Potomac the 7th Maryland apparently focused on target practice, with 1500 rounds expended in November alone.

Sadly, Private John Shepard was accidentally shot and killed on November 26, 1862, possibly during one of the target practices. Buried in Clear Spring (not far from Four Locks), John's remains were moved to Antietam National Cemetery after the war. He rests not far from Private Henry Dove of Company B, who died of smallpox in a Hagerstown hospital on January 25, 1863,

