

Eley served in Capt. Francis M. Durrance's Company of Mounted Volunteers during the Seminole Indian Wars. He was mustered in August 22, 1856 at Fort Frazier, Florida and was described as 6' tall, with blue eyes, brown hair and light complexion. He was mustered out as a private December 21, 1856 at Fort Frazier. He was mustered in to the same company on December 22, 1856 at Fort Brooke. Others in the company included Bennett Whidden, Jr., James L. Whidden, John Whidden and Lott Whidden. The company was stationed at Fort Capron on January 13, 1857 and at Fort Drum on April 1857. Eley was mustered out as a bugler on June 22, 1857 at Fort Brooke.

The Whidden clan settled in the Fort Hartsuff area in Manatee (present day Hardee County) County in the mid-1850's. Eley's neighbors in the 1860 census included Lewis Jenkins, David Brannon, Maxfield Whidden, D. D. Crews and Ephraim Thompson.

Eli Whidden, age 41, was listed in Township 36 in the 1870 Manatee County census along with Mathew & Cuthbert Sellers, Edward Whidden, William Dias, Nancy Driggers, Isaac Williams, William Williams and Thomas Williams.

He was living in Precinct #12 in the 1880 Manatee County census. Marion, Edward and Dillon were living at home. Neighbors included William T. Bethea, William H. Daniels, William A. Williams, Morgan Carson, William Williams and David S. Lanier.

On October 12, 1885 Eley P. Whidden purchased 40 acres of land for \$100 from the Florida Land and Mortgage Company. It was located in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 36 in Township 34, Range 27. It is located between Zolfo Springs and Sebring.

On July 22, 1902 Eley Whidden, age 74 years, resident of Crewsville applied for a pension based on his Indian War service. He received \$8 per month. On June 30, 1903 Maxfield McClelland, age 64 of Zolfo, testified that he was a private in Capt. Durrance's Company with Eley.

Eley P. Whidden died July 27, 1908 and was buried in the Whidden Cemetery near Sebring, Florida.

Louvenia Whidden, age 84 & resident of Crewsville applied for a widow's pension on August 8, 1908. She received \$12 per month. On September 14, 1908 Maxfield and Mary McClelland of Zolfo Springs stated that they were present at Eley's wedding and they had known Louvenia before her marriage. They had lived near the Whiddens most of their life.

Louvenia (Platt) Whidden died December 19, 1916 and was buried in the Whidden Cemetery.

REFERENCES: G. L. Whidden, 410 NW 5th St., Okeechobee, Fl. 33472; Eley P. Whidden pension application & Louvenia Whidden widow's pension application, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Whidden Cemetery; Oak Creek Cemetery; Crewsville Cemetery; Manatee County marriage records; DeSoto County marriage records; Census: 1850 Hillsborough County, Fl., 1860, 1870, 1880 Manatee County, Fl.; Manatee County Deed Book H, page 329; "Maxfield Whidden" in South Florida Pioneers, #15/16.