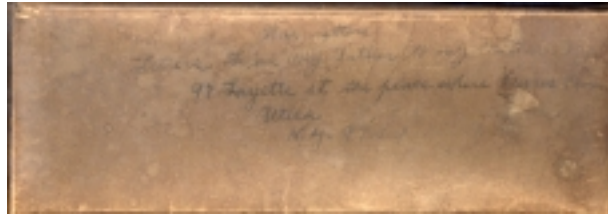


The Legacy of the Letters



I guess right up until I was 53 years old I thought most families had an old cardboard box of Civil War letters in their attic. As a child, my Grandma Bradley (my mother's mother) would show them to me along with an old Bible and pictures.



She said they were written by my Great-Great-Great Grandfather to my Great-Great-Great Grandmother while he was away fighting in the Civil War. Grandma died when I was a young teenager and I didn't remember much of what she told me. Her name was Ida, just like my mom's name and her mother's before her. My mom told me she broke the chain of "Ida's" by naming me Diana, which was the title of a popular song but I later realized also started with the same three letters.

After Grandma died, the box of letters sat in the attic and in various closets of my parent's farmhouse in Hillsdale NY.



I went off to college in Albany, NY, became a teacher, married the most wonderful man in the world, and eventually got a great job working for the State of NY.