

THE
QUARTERLY

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Editor: *Richard L. Rummel*

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Cover: Simon Crowder, 20th New York Cavalry. Pride braces the old soldier.

From the Editor . . .

The history of war hostilities in St. Lawrence County goes back to as early as 1749 when Father Francois Picquet was commissioned by the French to establish a fort at the present site of Ogdensburg to hold the British in check on the St. Lawrence River. The fort, named Fort LaPresentation, had a stockade with five two-pounder cannons. The same year of the fort's construction a party of Mohawk Indians surprised the garrison and burned all the buildings except Father Picquet's house. During the French, Indian and English war of 1754-1760 several important engagements took place near Ogdensburg, the most noteworthy being was the French surrender to a superior British force at Isle Royal. This English victory resulted in the surrender of all French possessions east of the Mississippi River, opening the region to settlement by English speaking peoples.

Although very little hostile action took place in St. Lawrence County during the Revolutionary War, many of its residents answered the call to duty. On April 1, 1779 Lieutenants McClelland and Hardenburg of the Colonial army were sent from Fort Schuyler with a force of soldiers and Indians to capture Fort LaPresentation (by that time called Fort Oswegatchie). Their plan was to surprise the garrison, but before they could reach the fort a number of straggling Indians fired shots and aroused the British garrison. Failing to entice the enemy out of the fort, the American officers withdrew their party and returned to Fort Schuyer.

The war of 1812 resulted in many important events taking place in the county, particularly in and around Ogdensburg. In June, 1812 President Madison declared war against Great Britain. Six companies were drafted by General Brown in the Ogdensburg section. A battle which lasted three hours between the United States schooner Julia and the British vessel Earl of Moravia took place in July near Morristown. Little damage was done to either vessel, and after dark the British ship was taken to Brockville while the Julia proceeded to Ogdensburg. Then on October 2, 1812 forty British boats attacked Ogdensburg but were repulsed by the American forces. In February, 1813 a party of about two hundred Americans crossed the ice from Morristown to Brockville to free prisoners held captive there. The British were swift to retaliate. Eight hundred troops stormed Ogdensburg, driving away the inhabitants (many went to Depeyster) and ransacking the town. Shortly after this lesson-teaching foray the British

retired to Prescott, and the citizens of Ogdensburg returned to their homes.

Hopkinton was also the scene of British-American confrontation during the war of 1812. Although minor in comparison to the open hostilities in and around Ogdensburg (there was no actual warfare), the brave residents of Hopkinton nevertheless carried out their duty with equal spirit by hiding foodstuffs and other valuable material from the enemy as he passed through the area. The British, knowing of the supplies and intending to confiscate them, uncovered the plot but dealt leniently with the conspirators.

Hostilities flared anew in the county when in 1837 a band of American patriot sympathizers, many of them from Ogdensburg, sided with a disgruntled class of Canadian reformers in an attempt to wrestle Canada from British control. After nearly a week of fighting, known as the Battle of the Windmill, the patriots surrendered, with a loss of five killed and thirteen wounded, were court martialed and the leaders hung. Hostilities and ill-feeling did not subside until 1840.

When Fort Sumter was fired upon and civil war broke out St. Lawrence County residents were quick to answer the call. Meetings were held in Ogdensburg, Depeyster, Gouverneur, Potsdam, Canton and other towns for the purpose of raising volunteers. The first company formed was company A of the sixteenth N.Y. Volunteer Infantry. Other companies quickly followed: B and F at Potsdam, D at Gouverneur, G at Depeyster, and H at Stockholm. The 60th N.Y. Volunteer Regiment, whose company A was led by Colonel William Goodrich of Canton, was made up almost entirely of St. Lawrence County men. It was popularly known as the St. Lawrence County regiment. Other regiments that St. Lawrence County gave its young men were the 92nd N.Y. Volunteer Infantry, the 106th, and the 142nd. All in all about 500 men from St. Lawrence County enlisted or were drafted, many never to return.

The last call for military service in the 19th century came almost at its close when in 1898 the battleship Maine blew up in Havana harbor. The conflict with Spain that followed marked America as a growing power in the world. The war in Cuba, however, was of such short duration that St. Lawrence County was not called upon to any great extent. Meetings were held in several towns to raise volunteers, but very few of those who volunteered actually reached the scene of battle. The 40th Separate Company, comprising members of the National Guard got as far as Greenville, North Carolina when

the war ended.

The Spanish-American war signaled a new and much larger arena for American military involvement. Warfare on American soil had ended with the Civil War. The 20th century, with all its remarkable advances, would raise the horror of war to unspeakable levels. By 1917, with war three years old in Europe, an orderly kind of confusion reigned in the county. The National Guard was called and draft boards were set up in all the towns. The draft took men ages twenty-one to thirty-one, with 7,652 men registered in the county. At war's end on November 11th, 1918 one hundred and twenty-four St. Lawrence County men were listed among the dead.

America was only thinking about war in 1940 - but thinking of it seriously enough to choose St. Lawrence County as the site for the largest military maneuvers ever conducted in North America. Two armies, the Blue and the Black, staged a mock war over one of the rainiest and hot summers in county residents' memory. Thousands of soldiers, supplies, horses, tanks and artillery poured into St. Lawrence County but what was planned as a serious event but what in the soldier's mind was somewhat of a vacation. Little could they - or anyone else, for that matter - know what lay ahead a year and a half later at Pearl Harbor.

Given the actual length of time a nation's military is engaged in actual combat seems but a small part of the total experience of what is termed "the past." A perspective of this sort, of course, reduces and simplifies the larger question. The history of a nation's military involvements is really a history of the profoundest kind - a history of people's hopes, fears, its sense of right, morality, its ideals. In this light St. Lawrence County's part in America's existence and growth is certainly worthy of study and recognition. As this introduction, and the articles that follow, attest there can be no doubt that, for whatever reasons, St. Lawrence County people have willingly heeded the call to service in the country's cause. From the War of Independence to Vietnam, men and women of the north country have followed what they thought to be right. There is great history in that.

Richard Rummel, Editor



The St. Lawrence River and the American Revolution

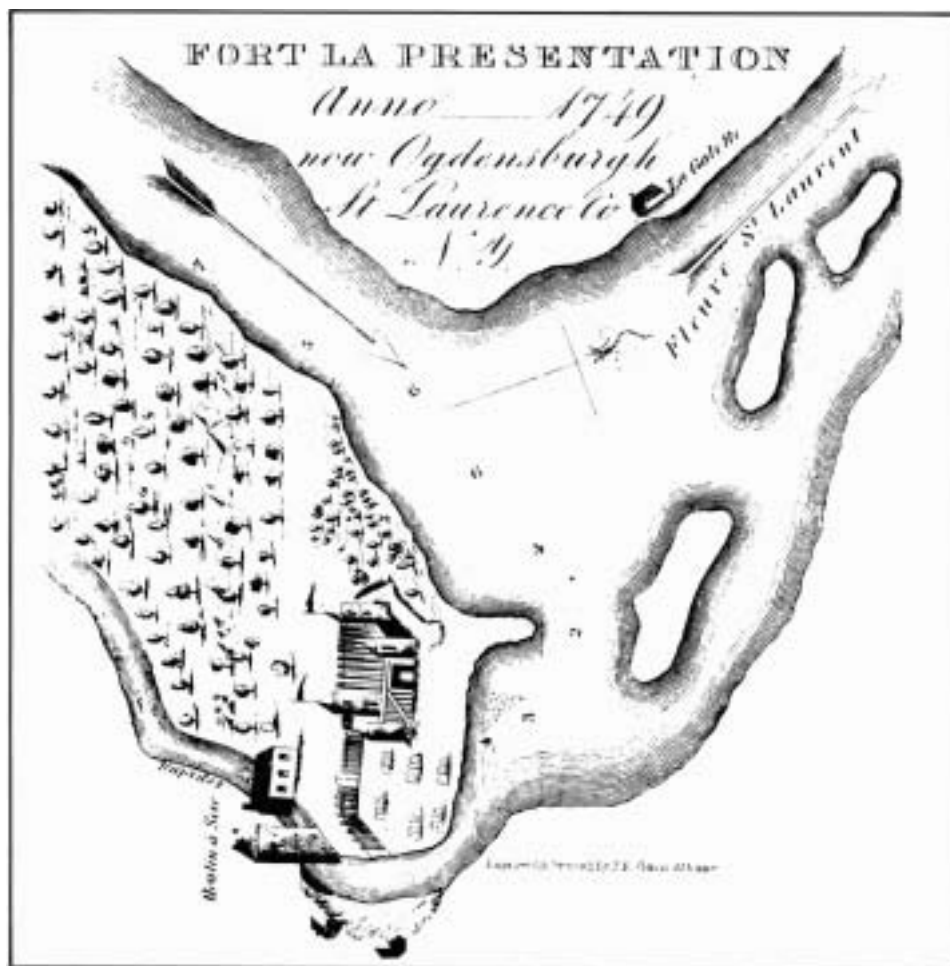
by Jonathan G. Rossie

The St. Lawrence River was not the scene of major military operations during the American War for Independence. It was, however, of considerable strategic importance since whomever controlled the river held the key to the defense of Canada and the western ports at Niagara, Detroit, and Mackinac on the Great Lakes. The French regime in Canada had ended when British forces achieved control of the river in 1760. Consequently, following the unsuccessful American campaign in Canada in the fall and winter of 1775-1776, the British command took steps to strengthen its hold on the St. Lawrence.

The long stretch of the river from Montreal to Cataraqui (present-day Kingston) was especially vulnerable to attack by American raiding parties intent upon disrupting the flow of military supplies to the upper posts on the Great Lakes. To meet this threat, British garrisons were strengthened at Fort Oswegatchie and Carleton Island. It was assumed by the British command that British and Loyalist forces stationed at these posts, with the assistance of Indian allies, could not only protect the St. Lawrence line of supply, but also function as staging points for raids against New York frontier settlements. By the spring of 1779 certain developments forced the British to reevaluate the adequacy of this defensive arrangement.

The dramatic failure of the Burgoyne-St. Leger campaign in 1777 not only frustrated British efforts to secure control of the province of New York, it also undermined the confidence of various Indian nations in the power of the British army. Of greatest concern was the division the British set-back created within the powerful Iroquois Confederacy. At the out-set of the war between England and her rebellious colonies, the Iroquois had adopted a neutral position and although still technically still neutral, by 1778 the Confederacy was seriously divided with braves from the various tribes joining either the Americans or the British.

In general, the Oneidas and Tuscororas had cast their lot with the Americans, while the Mohawks, Senecas, and Cayugas sided with the British. Only the Onondagas remained steadfast in



*A figurative map showing Fort La Presentation in 1749 at the site of present day Ogdensburgh. (By Rt. Rev. P.S. Garand, 1927, from *The History of the City of Ogdensburgh*)*

their neutrality. To some degree, however, this alignment was misleading. Kinship and tradition still bound the Iroquois together more strongly than either the Americans or the British realized. As a result, the so-called "rebel" Iroquois avoided when possible hostile action against their pro-British kin and vice versa. This ambivalent attitude by the Iroquois posed a special threat to the St. Lawrence supply line and the two posts, Carleton Island and Oswegatchie, which guarded it.

At the end of 1778, Carleton Island was garrisoned by a detachment of British regulars of the 8th Regiment and a company of Butler's Rangers, a Loyalist corps recruited principally

from frontier settlements in New York and Pennsylvania. Oswegatchie was held by a detachment of twenty men from the 31st Regiment. Since both garrisons were small, they depended upon Indian scouting parties consisting of mostly Iroquois and Missasaguas to provide early warning of the approach of enemy parties and to assist in repulsing any attack upon either post. Any sense of security that this arrangement provided was rudely shattered on the evening of April 25, 1779.

Years of boring garrison duty had led to lax security and discipline at Fort Oswegatchie and towards evening on the 25th there were a number of small work parties outside the fort

when, without warning, they were attacked by a party of thirty-five Oneida and Tuscorora braves and a detachment of American rangers. In the brief fire-fight that ensued, two British soldiers were killed and four captured before the other members of the work parties escaped to the safety of the fort. After exchanging fire with the fort's garrison, the Rebel party withdrew in the direction of Carleton Island where they alarmed the garrison before returning unscathed to Fort Schuyler (Stanwix) in the Mohawk Valley.

In the overall context of the war this attack might seem a minor affair, but it caused great concern for General Frederick Haldimand, the British commander in Canada. Not only would the laxity of the garrison's commander, Ensign James Davis, have to be dealt with summarily, but an answer had to be found to the question of how the rebel force had approached the fort without detection by the pro-British Indians at Oswegatchie and nearby St. Regis.

The Oswegatchie Indians were a small band of Cayugas and Onondagas who had been converted to Catholicism by the French and removed to the river in the 1740's. Similarly, the St. Regis were mostly Mohawk converts to Catholicism and were also known as the Oughquissasines, or, as it was modernized, the Akwesasne. Since the influence of the French priests among them was still strong, the British authorities had some doubts about their allegiance.

In the aftermath of the raid on Fort Oswegatchie, Haldimand and the two principal Indian Superintendents, Daniel Claus of the Six Nations Department and John Campbell of the Canadian Department, concluded that there had been some collusion between the supposedly pro-British Indians and the Iroquois in the attacking force.

Acting with commendable speed, Haldimand, within two weeks of the attack on Oswegatchie, relieved Ensign Davis of his command, ordered the detachment of the 31st garrisoning the fort back to Montreal, and replaced them with Captain Daniel Robertson and a full company of the 84th Regiment (Royal Highland Emigrants). In addition, he sent the senior deputy of the Canadian Indian Department, Captain Alexander Fraser, to ascertain the loyalty of the Oswegatchie and St. Regis Indians and assure their future support in detecting and repulsing any future attacks on the river posts.

Arriving at St. Regis on May 5, Fraser immediately called a formal conference at which he warned that any assistance given to the American cause, direct or indirect, would lead to

the loss of Indian lands to American speculators. He also directly accused the St. Regis tribe of sending delegates to the Oneida villages on the Mohawk in November of 1778 to promise support of the American cause and then failing to report the approach of the Rebel raiding party in April.

The chief sacham of the St. Regis, Teherese, admitted that he had recently returned from the Oneida Castle, and, further, that he brought with him a letter from the Marquis de Lafayette which called upon all Canadian Indians to return to their former allegiance to the King of France and give all assistance to the enemies of England. Having made this admission, the sacham confessed his error, promised that the village would henceforth support the British cause, and detailed twenty braves to accompany Fraser and act as scouts to detect any future enemy raiding parties.

If Fraser thought he had won over the St. Regis fully to the British cause, he was soon disillusioned. On June 9th, with the St. Regis scouts deployed to detect any enemy movement, more than sixty rebel Iroquois and American rangers crept to the very walls of Fort Oswegatchie, killed two members of the garrison and carried off another as prisoner. Two days later, the same party crossed undetected to Carleton Island and took two more prisoners from the garrison there.

Captain Fraser was now convinced that the St. Regis, Oswegatchie, and probably other supposedly loyal tribes were cooperating with the rebel Oneida and Tuscorora raiding parties. Indeed, Fraser discovered that one of the Oswegatchie chiefs, feeling slighted by the British troops at Carleton Island, had actually sent a request to the Oneidas for the attack on the two posts and promised the support of the local Indians. In return, Fraser reported, the chief had received a certificate of friendship and protection from the American Congress.

If Fraser was not totally disillusioned concerning the loyalty of the Canadian Iroquois, he was not alone. In July, 1779, Col. Claus of the Six Nations Department reported that belts and messages from French and American authorities were passing openly among all the Canadian tribes, and there was every reason to fear that the French Canadian population was aiding the spread of disaffection.

Indeed, by the end of July, anti-British propaganda had spread to the Caughnawaga village on the very doorstep of the British command in Montreal. Six elders of the village returned from a secret visit to the Oneida Castle and brought with them official emissaries from that tribe to advocate the

rebel cause. Colonel Campbell of the Canadian Indian Department, informed of what was happening, sent a detachment of twenty Regulars to seize the Oneidas. There ensued a pitched battle in which the Caughnawagas fought to protect the Oneida emissaries. One of the Oneidas was killed, the rest escaped, several soldiers were seriously wounded, and the Caughnawagas were thoroughly outraged by this gross violation of the rules of protection and hospitality that traditionally protected emissaries.

At this critical point in the summer of 1779, as the Canadian Indians were turning against the British, the Americans initiated a campaign which irrevocably turned them back to a firm allegiance with the British. In retaliation for the raids of the previous year against the settlements of Wyoming and Cherry Valley, an expedition under the command of Generals John Sullivan and James Clinton struck into the heart of the Iroquois country in the summer of 1779, laying waste to the villages of the Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca. The savage destruction by the American troops as they swept through the Finger Lakes region sent a shock wave through the Indian nations.

The Clinton-Sullivan campaign destroyed whatever illusions the Indians might have had concerning their fate if the Americans won the war. The Iroquois and their allies now fully committed themselves to the British cause and fell with a furious vengeance upon the New York and Pennsylvania frontier, making 1780 and 1781 the bloodiest and most destructive years of the war for that region.

The American assault on the Iroquois nation also made life much easier for Captain Fraser and the men charged with the responsibility of defending the St. Lawrence River. Warriors from the villages at Oswegatchie and St. Regis now eagerly volunteered for raids against American settlements, and with their fellow Iroquois from New York kept sufficient pressure on the Americans to preclude any repetition of the river raids of 1779. The vital St. Lawrence River supply line was now secure and would remain so for the duration of the war. Indeed, British control of Oswegatchie and the surrounding territory was so secure that they would retain jurisdiction over the area for more than a decade after the Peace Treaty of 1783.

About the Author:

Jonathan G. Rossie is Vilas Professor of History and Government at St. Lawrence University and author of the book *Politics of Command*.

War of 1812 in Hopkinton

by Kathryn Benham

In the early dawn of a cold February morning in 1814, the residents of the little village of Hopkinton (St. Lawrence County) suddenly became aware that the war they had at most been indifferent to was, in fact, a reality. A troop of British soldiers had just arrived, and the village was in the hands of the enemy!

When Congress in June of 1812 declared war on England, the feelings throughout the nation ranged from true hawkish patriotism to opposition bordering on treason. New England went so far as to threaten secession, and even on the remote frontier people sometimes worried more about political disunity within than the threat of a foreign power.¹

On the northern frontier, along the St. Lawrence River, the first news of the outbreak of war brought a normal amount of concern. Militia companies drilled and more men were drafted into local militia units. The greatest fear was the imagined threat of Indians. The early months of the war were filled with rumors that the British were arming Indian allies to set upon the helpless settlers. The people at Hopkinton were so concerned that in July they sent to the arsenal at Russel for 32 guns to "defend against Indians."²

These fears proved unfounded, however, and the immediate excitement soon died down. It was hard for the people of the St. Lawrence Valley to think of the Canadians across the river as enemies. The geographical nature of the area encouraged friendly relations across the St. Lawrence. Poor roads or lack of roads altogether made overland travel very difficult, and the rivers became the main arteries of communication and transportation. The American settlers in the valley developed closer contacts with British subjects than with their own people in the interior of the state. After the initial panic of the war, life soon resumed as before, including visits across the border.

The American army in the North was disturbed about this "fraternising" with the enemy. John Lovette, secretary to General Stephen Van Rensselaer at Ogdensburg, wrote that "... social life apparently went on as though there was no war. The people must rouse quickly, or we shall inevitably be crushed."³ When General Forsyth learned of an impending British attack on Ogdensburg and requested addition-



*House and barn (center and left) of Judge Hopkins which held the flour the British so desperately wanted. (From *Early History of Hopkinton*, by Carlton E. Sanford, 1903)*

al troops from General Dearborn at Plattsburgh, he received an interesting reply. Dearborn answered that he could not send any troops; Forsyth should evacuate if he felt it necessary to save his command. The loss of Ogdensburg might arouse the American spirit!⁴

When Ogdensburg did fall in February 1813, Elisha Risdon, a resident of Hopkinton, noted the event in his diary and copied a letter he had received giving an account of the incident. The letter began with a report of an inquiry about the cost of building a barn. The loss of Ogdensburg was only of secondary interest to the author!⁵

The village of Hopkinton was thrown more directly into the events of the War of 1812 than it might otherwise have been because of its location. The overland route for troop and supply movements between Plattsburgh and French's Mills in the east and Ogdensburg and Sackets Harbor in the west passed through Hopkinton.⁶ The villagers could not help but notice the military personnel and supplies moving through the area.

In the spring of 1813, signs began to appear that the war was much closer than the people probably wanted to think. A plan was beginning to take shape for an invasion of Canada and the capture of Montreal. Troops and supplies flowed through Hopkinton on the way to Sackets Harbor, the base of operations for the invasion.

By November of 1813 General Wilkinson was ready to make his move down the St. Lawrence, but Wilkinson's

expedition never got beyond Cornwall. On November 11 the Americans met the enemy in a brief skirmish now known as the Battle of Chrysler's Farm. Wilkinson's force took a heavy loss (102 dead, 339 wounded), and Wilkinson gave up the idea of trying to take Montreal. He pulled back across the St. Lawrence to the blockhouse at French's Mills.⁷ Among the wounded was Brigadier General Leonard Covington, who soon died of his injuries. French's Mills in 1817 was renamed Fort Covington in his honor.⁸

An article in the *Boston Weekly Messenger* in January 1814 commented on the foolishness of the Wilkinson expedition. How could anyone think that less than 8000 raw troops could take and hold on to Montreal and maintain communications with the United States in the middle of the winter?⁹

The raid on Hopkinton in the spring came as an indirect result of Wilkinson's failure in November. After the retreat to the Mills things grew worse for Wilkinson's troops. Most of the wounded were sent to the hospital in Malone, but proper facilities and medical supplies were not plentiful.¹⁰ Intensely cold temperatures followed in December and January. Clothing and blankets were scarce, and many of the soldiers became sick.

Finally on February 9, 1814, Wilkinson received the order to evacuate. One division, under General Brown, was to return to Sackets Harbor; the remainder, under Wilkinson, was to go to Plattsburgh.¹¹

Meanwhile, while Wilkinson was at French's Mills, quantities of food were still being forwarded from Utica and Plattsburgh to supply the defunct expedition. A last minute attempt was made to ship these provisions out before the Mills was abandoned. Quantities of pork, beef, flour, and whiskey had to be moved by wagons, a slow process. In spite of efforts to avoid it, much of it was left behind at Malone, Chateaugay, and Hopkinton. It was recorded that 60 tons of hard biscuits were sunk through a hole in the ice of the Salmon River to keep them from the enemy.¹²

There are conflicting accounts of just how the 287 barrels of flour that were soon to attract the attention of the British found their way to Judge Hopkins' barn in Hopkinton. Artemus Kent, a Hopkinton resident, in his journal indicated that the evacuating soldiers on their way to Sackets Harbor left the supplies behind.¹³ Another account has it that a party of teamsters, on their way to French's Mills from Sackets Harbor with the flour, received word to report to the Mills to help remove existing supplies to Plattsburgh. They left their load behind at Hopkinton and proceeded to French's Mills to help the evacuation.¹⁴

The two accounts agree on one point. The villagers did not like the idea of having military supplies left in their town with no protection. Artemus Kent tells how Mr. Hopkins and others urged the army to take the flour farther west where it would be safer and even offered to transport it themselves. The army insisted on leaving it, however.

The Americans had hardly left French's Mills - in fact, some teamsters were still picking up supplies - when the British arrived. After securing any public property that had been left behind, they proceeded in pursuit of Wilkinson. The main body of the British went as far as Chateaugay. Here they confiscated beef, pork, flour, and whiskey, about 150 to 200 barrels in all. It is said that they took private property as well as provisions left behind by the army.¹⁵ Some of the same teamsters who had left the flour at Hopkinton were said to have been on their way back to the Mills from Plattsburgh for another load when they ran into the British at Chateaugay and were immediately made prisoners.¹⁶

One detachment of British advanced to Malone, where they had learned supplies had been abandoned by the Americans. Twelve hundred regulars and 400 Canadian militia, under the command of Colonel Scott, arrived in Malone the evening of February 19, posted sentinels at all roads leading into the village, and proceeded to search for goods.¹⁷ Except for arms and munitions, private property was generally

respected, but all U.S. military supplies that could be found were seized and teams and drivers were pressed to service to move the provisions to Chateaugay.

It is at this point that the events that are the main interest of this account occurred. The British had just returned to French's Mills from their excursion to Malone when a civilian spy informed them of a large amount of flour belonging to the U.S. army stored in a barn in Hopkinton with no guard.¹⁸

A Major DeHeirne, a Lieutenant Charlton, and thirty soldiers were dispatched immediately that night in six sleighs to Hopkinton, a distance of about 28 miles.¹⁹ They arrived early in the morning before most of the inhabitants were up. They awoke Joel Goodell as they passed his house on the way into town. Realizing what was happening, Goodell ran across the road to James Thomas' house, where Mike Arquette, a recent deserter from the British army, had just arrived. After being warned by Goodell, he grabbed his snowshoes and gun and went into the woods, where he remained until the soldiers had left.²⁰

The British posted guards and made a search for weapons. A Mr. Thomas claimed the British took all the horses and heavy "Indian" blankets they could find. This same Mr. Thomas claimed that he saved his own horse by covering him up completely with hay in the barn and that this was the only horse the British did not take. Mrs. Thomas, apparently as quick witted as her husband, pried loose a board in a floor of the house and hid their gun and Indian blankets under the floor.²¹ Another fast thinking resident reportedly saved several muskets by slipping them under the crumpled and still warm covers of the bed he had moments before been sleeping in. Although the troops looked under the bed, the guns went undetected.²²

Major DeHeirne soon discovered the 287 barrels of flour in Judge Hopkins' barn, but he found that they were unable to transport all the flour and set about destroying the balance. The inhabitants, appalled by the destruction of valuable food, begged the British to stop. They finally agreed and distributed the remainder among the people, who seemed to have no qualms about taking their own government's property as a gift from the enemy.²³

The British apparently conducted themselves well, respecting private property (except items of obvious military value) and offering compensation for anything they used or took. Mr. Thomas was kept busy all afternoon shoeing horses for the British. For this he was given seven barrels of flour and some silver.²⁴ The detachment left in

the evening, taking most of the men as prisoners. The men were all released on the way back to the Mills, however, and they soon arrived home again with no harm done.²⁵

The villagers at Hopkinton lost most of their guns, their horses, and some heavy blankets. On the other hand, they were left with a good supply of flour to last the rest of the winter, and they had had a little excitement which would provide them with a good story for many years to come.

Following their one day of war, the people of Hopkinton soon resumed their normal everyday life. In March Elisha Risdon wrote in his diary about the cold weather and the dissatisfaction with a new doctor. In April he told of making maple sugar, and in May of planting his corn. The only other mention of the war in his journal is a brief reference in July to his selling some cattle to the British! There is no mention of the American victory at Plattsburgh in September nor of the eventual peace agreement.²⁶ As the war moved out of the immediate area, the people soon lost what little interest had been stimulated by their brief encounter with the British army.

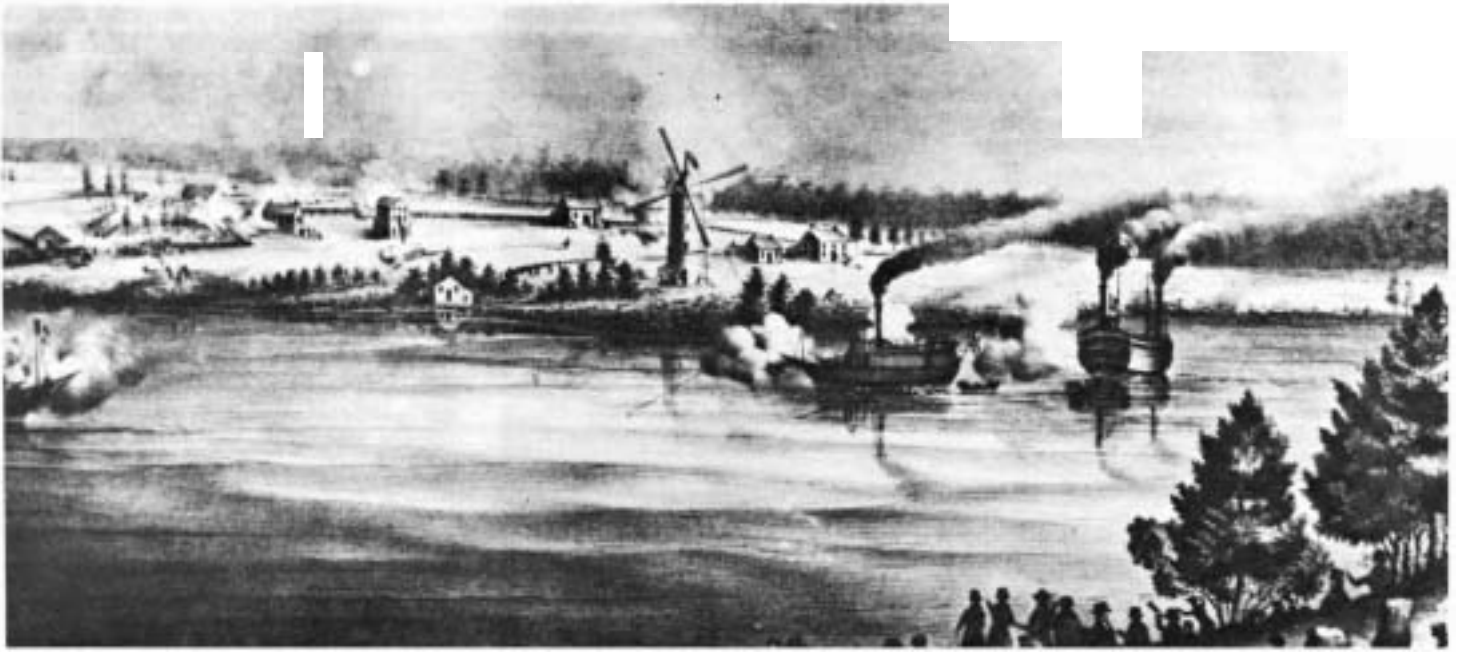
NOTES

1. Carlton E. Sanford, *Early History of the Town of Hopkinton* (Boston: Bartlett Press, 1903), p267.
2. *Ibid.*, p266.
3. Glyndon Cole, "Mr. Madison's War along the St. Lawrence," *North Country Life and York State Tradition*, Winter 1963, p16.
4. *Ibid.*, p18.
5. Sanford, p268.
6. "Rich History Surrounds Hopkins House at Hopkinton," *Watertown Daily Times*, September 4, 1948.
7. Franklin B. Hough, *History of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties*, New York (Albany: Little & Co., 1853), p643,645.
8. *Ibid.*, p645, 501.
9. "Wilkinson's Expedition," *Weekly Messenger* (Boston), January 7, 1814. p3.
10. Hough, p650.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. Sanford, p269.
14. Hough, p651.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*, p508.
18. *Ibid.*, p323.
19. Sanford, p270.
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*, p271.
22. Hough, p323.
23. Sanford, p271.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*
26. *Ibid.*, p271-72.



About the Author

Kathryn Benham is a native of the town of Hopkinton. This article appeared in the spring issue of *York State Traditions* and is reprinted here with permission from the author.



Battle of the Windmill as witnessed and painted by Salathiel Ellis. (Photo courtesy of Frederic Remington Art Museum.)

Closing Scene at Windmill Point

by Elizabeth Baxter

St. Lawrence County has been home to artists of both modest and great reputation, among them Frederic Remington, Sally James Farnum, Charles Chapman and, as we see in the following account, Salathiel Ellis, whose painting of the Battle of the Windmill as he witnessed it caused the kind of excitement one might expect upon seeing the first photograph or moving picture. The article appeared in the Rural News in March, 1978, and is reprinted here with permission from the author.

A great painting by Salathiel Ellis of the Battle of Windmill Point was exhibited at Canton on February 7, 1839.

The artist witnessed the battle from the St. Lawrence River shore in the old Village of Ogdensburgh November 12-16, 1838. The site, a mile west of the Canadian terminus of the Ogdensburg-Prescott Bridge, depicted the conflict in this area of "the patriots" to sever "the Canadas" from Great Britain.

Ellis announced, on February 5, in the St. Lawrence Republican:

"The painting of the closing scene at Windmill Point will be exhibited at the Town Hall (in Ogdensburgh) on Wednesday evening, the 6th. S. Ellis.

"Tickets of admission, 25 cents, to be had at the post office, Mr. Gilbert's store and the Exchange Hotel.

"The same will be exhibited at Canton on Thursday evening, the 7th."

At the same time, the newspaper said:
Painting Six by Four Feet

"Mr. S. Ellis of this village (Ogdensburgh) has completed a painting of the 'Closing Scene at Windmill Point,' which he proposes to exhibit at the Town Hall on Wednesday evening.

"The painting is upon canvas six feet by four, and embodies a comprehensive

view of the battleground, memorable for the conflict of Tuesday, the 13th of November, and its finale on the Friday following, as it appeared in the evening, lit up by the lurid glare emitted from the buildings consumed on that occasion. There is a grandeur and sublimity in the picture that all will appreciate who witnessed the reality, which reflects much credit upon the artist for fidelity and good taste.

"The expense which Mr. Ellis has incurred in bringing out this interesting piece we hope to see cancelled in part or whole by our citizens, who will felicitate themselves on so fit an opportunity to extend a fostering hand to native genius. The picture will afford a rich treat to the lovers of the fine arts."

The painting shows the Windmill, built in 1824, the Mill Point, a store, a schoolhouse, two stone houses, one of them officers' quarters, a wooden building, the "barn burned on Tuesday p.m.," the "place where Lieutenant Johnson fell," three warships in full steam, with their guns firing, and tophatted spectators lining the Ogdensburgh shore - at least one using a telescope for better viewing.

The British on November 16 captured

the patriots, of whom 10 were hanged at Fort Henry, Canada, for piracy, 57 were sent to Van Dieman's Land, a British penal colony, four died of wounds, 72 eventually were released.

Salathiel Ellis, besides being a painter and lithographer, also was noted for his cameos, medals, and bas-reliefs. Among the latter was one of United States Senator Preston King, of Ogdensburgh, 1806-65. At the time of the Battle of the Windmill, King was a New York State assemblyman.

Ellis may have been a native of Ogdensburgh, although some sources say he was born in Canada and others claim it was in New England, possibly Vermont.

The bas-relief of King, a circular medallion, now is at the Remington Art Museum.

In 1839, the local weekly, with pride, referred to Ellis as a "native genius."

His painting of the Battle of Windmill Point was copied in lithographs, one of which is at the Ogdensburgh Public Library.

About the Author

Elizabeth Baxter is historian for the city of Ogdensburgh.

Gettysburg Revisited: Monument to the 60th . . .

by Ernest Krag

When I visited the Gettysburg National Military Park some summers ago my plans were directed to seeing where the 60th St. Lawrence Regiment had fought and the monument that had been dedicated to the regiment. The 60th and its role in the great battle were of particular interest to me because the majority of its soldiers were recruited from St. Lawrence County; and many of the veterans' names are similar to those to be found in Canton and its surroundings today.¹

The regiment's official name was the 60th New York State Volunteers, but it was known as the St. Lawrence regiment.² The unit was organized in the late summer and fall of 1861 in Ogdensburg, out of the 33rd regiment of the New York State Militia with its personnel being recruited from all areas of St. Lawrence County, and it served with distinction throughout the Civil War until it was mustered out of the service in July of 1865. The regiment's most notable engagement as a part of the Army of the Potomac before its involvement in the battle of Gettysburg took place at the battle of Antietam on September 17, 1862. It was at Antietam, the bloodiest one day battle of the war, that the regiment's commander, Colonel William Goodrich, a resident of Canton and founder of the St. Lawrence Plaindealer,³ was killed at the height of the battle. The 60th fought at Chancellorsville in May of 1863, and at the unsuccessful resolution of that struggle, accompanied the Union forces north as they shadowed Lee on his second invasion of the north. The Army of Northern Virginia under the command of General Robert E. Lee, and the Army of the Potomac led by General George G. Meade, who had replaced General Joseph Hooker on June 28, 1863, met at Gettysburg where the famous conflict was fought from July 1 to July 3, 1863. The battle was termed "the highwater-mark of the Confederacy", and, with the fall of Vicksburg on July 4, was considered the turning point of the Civil War.

The 60th played a vital role in the battle on July 2, the second day of the engagement. At that time the 60th was part of the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Division (white star)⁴ of the XII Corps. The 3rd Brigade which consisted of the 60th, 78th, 102nd, 137th and 149th Regiments, New York State Volunteers, was commanded during the battle by Brigadier-General George S. Greene. Colonel Abel Godard led the 60th St. Lawrence. The regiment had been



Painting by Edwin Forbes of the rebel attack on Culp's Hill. The large boulder in the distance was the anchor of the right flank of the 60th Regiment.
(Photo courtesy of David Dickinson)

directed in the early morning of July 2 to Culp's Hill. The hill, which was heavily wooded and covered with rock ledges, constituted the right flank of the Union forces whose line curved from Culp's Hill around to the principal front on Cemetery Ridge with the left flank of the front near Round Top. The line of the Union forces at Gettysburg had the configuration of a hook or cane. By 9 o'clock in the morning the 3rd Brigade had constructed extensive breastworks of logs and stones in order to secure the hill. There then followed a series of moves that placed the 3rd Brigade in a precarious position and which was to make the Brigade's resistance on Culp's Hill crucial to the outcome of the battle, to the Union cause. On the morning of the last day of the battle, July 3rd, the XII fought their way back to their original positions on Culp's Hill. The 60th St. Lawrence as part of the 3rd Brigade had made its greatest contribution on Culp's Hill and it was on this site that a monument was later placed and dedicated to their valor.

Shortly before I visited Gettysburg I read an account of that dedication, which took place on July 2, 1888, twenty-five years to the day after the 60th's ordeal. The granite monument was inscribed on two sides. The front of the monument read: 60th New York Infantry, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Div. 12th Corps; on the reverse, July 2 and 3rd 1863; Killed 11; Wounded 41. Principal Engagements, Antietam, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Lookout Mountain, Ringgold, Atlanta.

The last three battles on the inscrip-

tion took place after Gettysburg and recorded the 60th's participation in those engagements when the regiment served in the Army of the Cumberland and later in the command of General William T. Sherman on his famous march to the sea.

The ceremonies at the dedication included the invocation given by Chaplain Arvine B. Bowdish of the 149th N.Y.S.V., and oration rendered by General Henry A. Barnum, and a historical sketch presented by Lieut. Edwin A. Merritt. The description of the activities recorded in *New York State at Gettysburg*⁵ also included a poem "Russell on the Grasse", and the summation of remarks made by General James Longstreet of the Confederate Army who testified to the importance of the 3rd Brigade's action and cited his admiration for General Greene, the brigade's commander, whom he had known as a soldier before the Civil War. The address taken together evinced a deep religious feeling combined with a fervent patriotism.

It was with emotion and anticipation that I approached Gettysburg now that I was soon to see where Lincoln spoke, the 60th fought, indeed, the sites of all the events of those three fateful days that did so much to shape the country's future. I soon found sentiment had to wait on more practical concerns. My visits to historical parks had been limited to those that had manageable geographic dimensions. I was not prepared for distances measured in miles and the terrain which demanded some athletic effort. It was something of a shock to learn when I inquired at the

Park Center that there were over 1200 monuments and markers on the battleground.

Fortunately the National Park Service does have an excellent program to orient the visitor. The most effective device, I thought, was a large electric map that fixed the locations and the complicated progress of the battle about as clearly as it could be done, considering the complexity of the battle and the extent of the battlefield. It was apparent after this demonstration that it was beyond my capabilities to make a meaningful tour without a guide. Guides are available and the one that accompanied us in our car was a native of Gettysburg, a man in his sixties who was helpful, well informed, and eager to answer any question posed. All went well when, after about two hours of observation and lecture, we reached Culp's Hill which was near the end of the itinerary. I had informed the guide of my particular interest of the 60th and its monument and when we arrived we started looking for it. It seemed to be straightforward task since the monuments were clearly identifiable and near the road, but after a half hour of climbing up and down the road and examining each of the numerous monuments it was apparent that the 60th's monument could not be found. Our guide was clearly embarrassed and frustrated; protesting several times that this was his first failure to find a specific monument. The guide suggested that we return to the Center to see if we could secure any information that might help us.

At the Center we consulted an official register which had an excellent photograph of the 60th monument with the information that it was on Culp's Hill. The designated location was not precise but at least the photograph and the information did confirm the existence of the 60th and the monument; facts not to be deprecated, since I suspected by this time the guide had doubts about their existence and some reservations about me. It was apparent that the whole affair had become something of a point of honor with him and he volunteered to return with us to Culp's Hill for another try. We spent another half hour with no results and I drove him back to the Center, my frustration tempered by his obvious chagrin. We had been at it for nearly four hours and the Center was closed and he suggested that if I were to return the following day he would seek assistance for me.

I think I would have taken his counsel if my wife had not suggested that I should try one more time by myself. We returned to Culp's Hill where I left my car at the summit and proceeded via the road to the bottom of the hill. I decided on a different approach (which

sometimes afterward I concluded in a manner we are familiar with, that I should have done that in the first place). I knew the numbers of the other regiments which were part of the 3rd Brigade and I decided that if I could find one of their markers or monuments I could use it as a base point since the records of the battle indicated the 60th was in a line next to units of the XI Corps. The 60th was the furthest left in the line of the 3rd Brigade's regiments. My luck changed quickly for in less than five minutes I found a marker a little off the road that indicated the 149th had been situated in that area. So if my calculations were correct the 60th should have been obliquely up the hill. I did not know, however, how much area was occupied by a regiment's front, and how far I would have to climb through the woods with my progress impeded by the intermittent ledges. The 60th would be five regiments away if the 149th was last in line. The sun was about to set and it was fairly dark in the woods but I was spurred on by another marker. Finally after about 15 minutes of stumbling up the hill I heard my wife calling from the clearing where I had left my car on the summit. She had begun to wonder if I had become lost, knowing well that I had no credentials as a woodsman and nearly a half-hour had elapsed since I had started my final search. A moment after I heard her voice I came abruptly upon the 60th's monument. It was quickly

apparent of the causes of the guide's difficulties. The photograph had shown the monument in the middle of a field, or at least a clearing, and it was surrounded now by high brush and trees.

After examining the monument I found that there was a barely discernible path leading from the monument to the summit of Culp's Hill.

My first thoughts after I savored the satisfaction of finding the monument turned to my ascent of the hill. What a grim prospect it must have been for Ewell's Confederates to start up that hill in the withering fire of the 3rd's Enfields. What tenacity the 3rd must have had to have had, when greatly outnumbered, they resisted attack after attack. After the battle 541 Confederate dead were found upon the slope.

Later when we had left the battlefield I began to think about the monument and my experiences. It is impossible to say if there are other "lost" monuments at Gettysburg, but certainly no casual visitor will ever see the 60th's memorial. It may not have been deliberately neglected, but the only reason I could see that bushes and trees was the desire to see the hill return to its natural state, but the condition of other markers did not seem to sustain that theory. It was also disturbing to observe that the metal decorations that were on the monument originally had been removed for some purpose or vandalized. It seemed to, at least, that there was something ignoble about its state. The memories of the 60th's service and sacrifice are not diminished but I believe their unique symbol merited more respect.

The reader will find the following story of the rifle that the monument's state and location notwithstanding, the respect for the 60th still prevails with a proper reverence for those who served.

NOTES

¹Richard Eddy, *History of the 60th Regiment, New York State Volunteers*, (Philadelphia, Pa., 1864) pp. 23-38.

²The regiment was sometimes called the "Ogdensburg Regiment", but only Company F was recruited in Ogdensburg. The majority of the recruits came from county towns.

Frederick Phisterer, *New York in the War of the Rebellion*, 2nd ed. (Albany, 1890) p. 420.

³Ibid: pp. 178-179.

⁴The badge of the XII was a flannel star worn on the men's caps, red for the First Division, white for the second. William T. Fox, *New York at Gettysburg*, (Albany, 1900), Vol. I, p. 70.

⁵Ibid: pp. 442-454.



The 60th Regiment monument as it appeared in 1910. The monument has since been vandalized. (Photo courtesy of David Dickinson)

About the Author

Ernest Krag teaches in the Social Sciences department at Canton ATC and has had a long time interest in Civil War history.

Story of a Gun

by David Dickinson

It was a mystical moment. With the old musket in hand, I poked among the leaves and fallen branches. There it was, the stone which marked the right flank of the 60th Regiment-New York State Volunteers. Sighting diagonally up the hillside, past the granite monument, I could envision the line of trenches and log barricades that stood there on the second and third days of July, 1863. After one hundred nineteen years, I had returned this old Enfield musket to the site of its most famous and perhaps most vigorous use. I stood on Culp's Hill, the northeast anchor of the Union line at Gettysburg. I held the rifle as if to fire, aimed downhill toward Rebel lines. I tried to conjure up the excitement, the thrill, the horror of those days when Hell was Gettysburg. I envisioned Brady's photographs of shattered trees and a hill almost stripped of brush by the sheer quantity of shot and shell. I remembered reading of the bodies quilting the slope in patterns unknown to genteel ladies in St. Lawrence County. Rock Creek, at the base of the hill, had been choked with rebel dead and wounded. I could only read and imagine. This rifle I held probably could remember; its owner was at the Battle of Gettysburg.

I noted mentally, as I first picked it up: "Enfield rifle . . . 577 caliber, three lands and three grooves . . . lock dated 1862 and marked with England's crown . . . stock a light brown, almost yellow . . . metal gray but sound . . . barrel and stock both cut back several inches . . . military sights removed . . . rear sight replaced with a lump of lead in which a crude "V" notch had been cut . . . blade type front sight fixed near the end of the raw muzzle, not a sight to hold a bayonet". As a specimen of a Civil War rifle, it was a piece of junk. I bought it anyway. It needed a home and tender loving care and so, in 1975, the rifle-musket came to stay with me. Little did I know that it was a special gun with an identifiable past.

Once home and with hurried explanations to my wife, Mary Ann, as to why I needed this old relic, proper cleaning and oiling began. What had appeared to be a particularly rusty area near the breech of the barrel proved to be letters stamped into the metal. "John Brown, Co. D. 60th Regiment, N.Y.S.V." (New York State Volunteers) In an instant, the rifle had a past and a future. Its past was linked to an unknown soldier named John Brown. Its future was to return to Gettysburg with me in April of 1982.

It immediately became important to learn the identity of this John Brown who had carried "my" rifle through the War. It was a curiously appropriate name for a soldier in the Civil War! The National Archives answered my query with a wealth of information. Miss Clarice Brown of Canton, a niece of the soldier, also provided much information. John Brown has enlisted with his brother Donald in Ogdensburgh (sic) on October 23, 1861 for a term of three years. John was from Pierrepont and was about nineteen years of age. He was born in Scotland. Off went John and his brother on November 4, 1861, undoubtedly by rail, as part of the "Ogdensburgh Regiment" officially known as the 60th Regiment, New York State Volunteers Infantry. Action came their way quick enough: Cedar Mountain, Second Bull Run, Sulphur Springs and Antietam. Meatgrinders fought with tactics decades old but with weapons much more efficient and deadly. With Antietam behind them, John and his brother went into winter camp. The following summer again found them trodding the dusty roads of war. In the summer of 1863, these roads lead to Gettysburg and to that hill upon which I stood one gray afternoon one hundred and nineteen years later.

At Gettysburg, John's brother was



The author posing with John Brown's gun in front of the 60th New York monument at Gettysburg. The view behind shows Culp's Hill. (Photo courtesy of the author)

wounded and left the Regiment; he would recover. However, Gettysburg was not the end of the ordeal for John Brown and his Enfield musket. Transferred to the Army of the Cumberland, John and his fellow soldiers of the 60th New York saw new countryside and new conflict. Other battles and skirmishes followed, among them Ringgold and Lookout Mountain, Tennessee. John was on his way to the sea with Sherman in the spring of 1864. But for John the march halted on May 28, 1864 near a little town called Dallas, Georgia. A wound in the leg brought Brown back to Nashville, Tennessee, in hospital. He remained on sick call through February of 1865.

On July 17, 1865 John Brown was mustered out of the 60th Regiment at Alexandria, Virginia. His muster-out roll states that six dollars was "stopped" or deducted from his pay for rifle and accoutrements. In this fashion, John Brown's rifle came home from the Civil War to St. Lawrence County. Being a practical man, apparently, John may have decided that, to be a proper hunting rifle, the musket should be shortened to allow easy movement through the wooded foothills of the Adirondacks. Like many a soldier before and after, John probably "sporterized" his musket. Off came eleven inches of barrel and many inches of wooden stock. On went a new front sight. Why he removed the rear sight we'll never know. Perhaps it just broke. Conjecture takes over.

After the war, John Brown returned to Pierrepont. He bought a farm, the house of which up until recently, was occupied by Millard Hundley. Reportedly, Brown spent his last years living in a veteran's hospital in Hampton, Virginia during the winters. When green began to cover the hills of St. Lawrence County, he returned home to be with familiar folk and scenery. Buried in the cemetery in Pierrepont, John's grave is marked by a substantial red granite stone. When I visited his grave, I promised myself that someday I would return young John Brown's musket to Gettysburg, that touchstone battle of the Civil War. And so it was that on that day in April of 1982 I found myself poking over a wooded hill, gazing up at a large monument dedicated to the men of the 60th Regiment. I felt that I somehow had been faithful to the memory of a young Union soldier from Pierrepont. I had brought the rifle full circle. I felt good.

About the Author

David Dickinson is a native of Lisbon who presently lives in Newfane, New York. He has an MA in history from SUNY Binghamton.

Donald Brown Memoirs: An Excerpt

by Donald Brown

In the summer of 1859 a lad from Scotland landed at New York and found his way to Pierrepont. Barely understanding what his adopted land was about, he enlisted in the Civil War in 1861, Company D, 60th New York State Volunteers. His daughter, who presently lives in Canton, thinks he was just the adventuresome type, always ready for a little excitement. Following the war he dictated to a daughter his Civil War experience. The patriotism and glory of the time is captured in his opening lines: "We embarked at Albany, with light hearts—a thousand strong. Fathers, fond mothers, and sweethearts followed their loved ones thither, while banners waved, heavy drums rolled, and tears fell fast." Here, from his final chapter, Donald Brown describes the horror he had come to at last—Gettysburg.

CHAPTER VIII

Flushed with their late victory, the rebels now seemed determined to get us out of Virginia. We learned that they were assembling with force powerful enough to sweep us from the face of the earth.

So, again we fell in line, marching our way this time straight into the memorable Battle of Gettysburg. This battle, as my readers know, was the turning point in the great campaign. But we did not know when we started out, nor did Abraham Lincoln himself who now reviewed our troops again, riding past, covered with dust and suffering with heat, that the God of Abraham of old was going to crown his army with victory at last.

For the second time during the war, the rebel army now attempted to march North but that great invasion was neatly checked by our Union army.

We had reached a heavy growth of timber where we built up a temporary breastwork and remained for the night. In the morning we could see the rebel pickets at our left. Groups of cavalry started to march through the field, reviewing our line. One of our batteries was immediately opened on them, sending them flying in all directions; but before long, our pickets were driven in, which we knew meant business.

We prepared ourselves, reserving our fire, until the long grey columns came in sight. Then, the work of death was recommenced in earnest. Volley after volley we poured into their staggering ranks, but on they came. A cross fire was now opened from an angle further to the right. They seemed determined to break that wing, but we were equally determined that they should not. They brought their old frightful yell into requisition but it failed this time to make any impression on our ranks. So, for a time, they staggered back under cover of the forest but only to reappear in greater number. Again, shot and shell poured into both armies with determination, and I feared for a time in spite of the good start we had made that the enemy would succeed in driving

us back.

However, we increased our shots to such an extent that they began to fall back in dismay, leaving the ground strewn with their dead and dying. Encouraged by this, we kept up a continuous firing until they were out of sight.

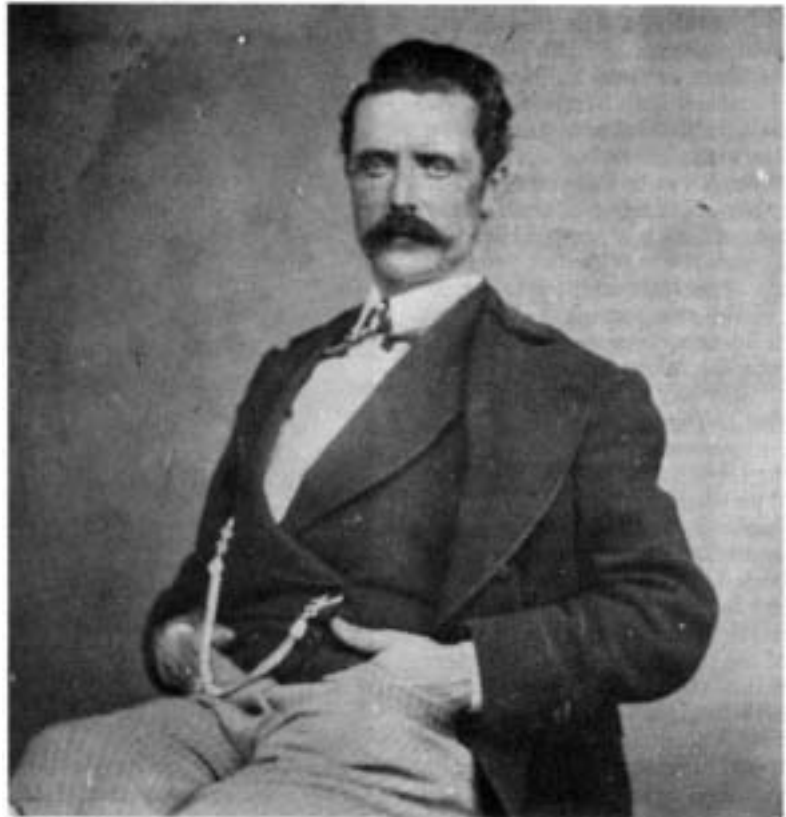
Then, in spite of the oncoming dusk, those determined ranks approached again. How well I remember it! Slowly they came and with great caution, but also with a sullen determination to conquer or die.

Now, some fresh troops came in on our right and opened on the approaching foe the deadliest fire I ever witnessed. A rebel grasped our flag and received at the same moment a bayonet through his body. A rebel officer, urging

his men to scale the breastworks in the face of our musketry, fell, sword in hand. Many, throwing up their hands, tried to surrender but were shot down in the confusion.

In the face of death, hundreds of rebels now leaped the breastworks and cut their way through, only to be met by the bayonet points of the second line of battle, where they were forced to surrender.

An order now came along the line for volunteers to bring in our men who had fallen on the picket line. The moon was still behind the clouds when we quietly slipped through among the dead, but we were obliged to keep a sharp lookout ahead, for the rebel sharpshooters were not far distant and would open



Donald Brown, about 1880. (Photo courtesy of Clarisa Brown, the author's daughter)



Grand Army of the Republic 50th reunion at Gettysburg, 1913. The 60th regiment was called the St. Laurence regiment. (Photo courtesy of SLCHA archives)

fire every now and then with a heavy storm of lead.

As I moved along silently behind the trees, I observed a dark form just ahead of me. Suddenly this form stooped, glancing stealthily towards our line. He arose, moved on a pace, and stooped again.

I cocked my rifle and coming up behind him asked, "What are you doing?"

Taken by surprise, the big burly rebel muttered that he was giving one of our soldiers a drink of water. Instead of performing this kind act, he was quite obviously robbing the dead.

Levelling my rifle on him, I told him to put for the breastworks, which he did, with a growl. When halfway there, we were fired on by my confederates in the darkness, but I bade them cease and succeeded in getting my prisoner in, whom I handed over to Captain Stanley. At the Captain's order, I now lay down to get some rest.

When I awakened from a short sleep,

I laid my rifle on the edge of the breastworks and peered over. Near enough to cut my throat with a jack knife, had he seen me, stood a rebel. In a flash, I drew my rifle on him, at the same time bidding him surrender. In a dazed manner, he raised his hands, exclaiming, "My God, am I in the hands of the enemy?"

As soon as it was light enough, the rebel sharpshooters opened the "ball." Some were in the tree tops, some behind trees, while others hid behind the dead bodies that lay scattered about. Fighting now opened in many sections of the field.

Sheltering ourselves as best we could, we sent forth a volley of lead. Captain Stanley, who was almost behind me, was in the act of handing me a cartridge, when a bullet, grazing my face, cut his throat. He did not bleed externally but when I looked at him, I knew from his eyes that he would die. He tried to rise, only to topple over, dead. Slap! went a bullet through the body of

Sergeant Clark on my left and slap! went another through the hand of Comrade Bullock, beside me.

I was now left alone in this particular spot in the breastworks. It is difficult for a private soldier to conjecture whether victory or defeat is to be a battle's outcome. So, weary and worn, I dropped my head in my hand and leaned against the breastworks in the hope of gaining a moment's respite. But I had no sooner taken this position than a ball crashed through the wrist on which my chin was resting. Passing lengthwise through the hand, it came out between my fingers, taking the tops of two of them with it.

As the blood commenced to flow freely, I now left my rifle for the first time in my three years' service.

The ground in our rear was higher than the breastworks, hence no one could go out unseen by the foe. With a shower of bullets at my heels, however, I reached a place of shelter where by reason of extreme fatigue, loss of blood,

and an empty stomach, I fell fainting to the ground.

When I came to, another wounded man gave me a mouthful of water which helped to revive me, so we staggered down the road together, in search of the field hospital, a farmhouse just out of reach of the enemy's guns.

The grounds around the house were covered with large tents and amputating tables. A row of dead for whom amputation had proved too much, lay side by side and near them two heaps of amputated limbs.

Upon finding some of the boys of my own Company who showed me their place of rest, I gladly entered their large tent and lay down.

Ladies came with their servants, bearing us baskets of linen and did all in their power to alleviate our suffering. One kind lady begged me to let her put a clean bandage on my hand and wrist but as soon as the condition of it was exposed to view, she fainted.

Later, I bound my hand in a sling as best I could and slipped back to the battlefield. The rebel army was now marching south, leaving the highway strewn with wagons, cannons and wounded men. Thousands of our boys in blue had fallen too, never to know that this great Battle of Gettysburg in which they gave their lives would be our victory.

I rejoiced in having been able to take my part in it and now as I bade goodbye to the boys of my Company who were marching out and away, my heart was heavy, for this was the first time that I had ever been separated from my regiment and Company since we had left Ogdensburg.

I was thankful when my name was called with others, to go to Philadelphia where we could get proper treatment, for my hand had become most painful and was swollen to a frightful size.

The long train for Philadelphia was soon filled and on its way. We reached Baltimore in the night and found the streets lined with people, bearing baskets full of every good thing to eat. With their linen bandages too, they did their best to relieve the suffering.

Again we stopped at Wilmington, Delaware, where we were given the most loyal reception imaginable. An immense crowd, young and old, begged us to partake of their food and wine. The train moved off amid the cheers of our boys for the people of Wilmington.

At last we entered the city of Philadelphia where we were conveyed by ambulance from the train to a hospital. Here three thousand of us were distributed throughout the wards.

By this time my hand was getting black and my whole arm pained me greatly so I was glad when my time came for an operation.

Christmas came while I was here, and the good women of Philadelphia did not forget us. Our tables were loaded down with turkeys and all good things to eat. We had a large reading room where every afternoon the ladies entertained the soldiers who were able to be about. We also had a fine library, furnished with all kinds of books.

There was, of course, a great deal of suffering among the boys. Gangrene set in and carried away many who had been doing well, and typhoid fever took its toll.

The bed next to mine was occupied by a sergeant, a very powerful fellow, who had been shot in the throat. One night, having taken his medicine as usual, he lay down and went to sleep at once.

The lights were always turned low at nine o'clock. I must have been sleeping myself for a couple of hours, when I was suddenly awakened. The sergeant, with a sheet from his bed wrapped around his shoulders, stood over me. In a subdued voice, he said, "Follow me!" I did so as far as the head of the ward where we paused in the dim light. He now assured me that I had been in great danger. "For," said he, "there are four men under my bed and they are laying a plan to kill us both". Of course, I knew at once that he was delirious, so I coaxed him back to bed, telling him that I would stand guard. When he had straightened himself out on his bed, I felt his pulse and found it still. He was dead.

The man in the bed on the other side of mine was a one-armed man who was subject to horrid nightmares. He would dream that he was in his tent and could hear footsteps approaching. The door of the tent would be cautiously drawn aside and the devil would appear, seize him by the feet, drag him out, and stamp the breath out of him. During all this time, he would lie with his eyes wide open, unable to move as much as a finger. He used to beg me, if I should ever find him suffering thus, to drag him out of bed.

Being very young, I soon regained my general good health, but the condition of my hand forced me to remain in the hospital until the following spring. When examination day came, I was pronounced not fit for active service and was turned over to the Invalid Corps.

I was armed now with a sword which we called a "toad stabber" and was sent in a short while to Washington where I was consigned to light duty. Here we patrolled the city and guarded the aqueduct bridge that spans the Potomac.

While on guard one night, I heard a voice calling from the middle of the river, "Help! Help!" I knew well what that meant. Some poor deserter going down to a watery grave.

I often saw President Lincoln, his wife and little son, while I was in Washington. In spite of his immense worry, the president now appeared to be always in good spirits.

Rumors now reached Washington that General Early was crossing the Potomac, with the intention of seizing the Capitol, so all possible preparations were made to give him a hearty reception. All available men received long muskets and having marched to Fort Stephens, were placed in breastworks on the left hand of the fort. Farmers began to leave their homes, hurrying through the field, loaded down with children and household goods.

Soon, now, the enemy appeared on the ridges. Our heavy guns were opened on them. After a while, we got range on a large house about three quarters of a mile in front, where the rebel sharpshooters were at work, and smashing in the gable ends, soon drove the enemy out. During this scrimmage, the president who was inside the fort came near being shot by a musket ball.

Orders now came for all those who could handle a musket to leap the breastworks and march out to meet the rebels who were advancing from all directions on the fort.

Somehow, we managed to keep them at bay until the carbines of our dismounted cavalymen relieved us, but we lost a great many men in this battle. In fact, those of us who survived it had some very "close calls." But the enemy was driven back and the victory was ours.

When morning came, since there was not a living rebel in sight, we were ordered back to the city, to our old headquarters.

Thus it was in defense of Washington that I fought my last battle in the Great Rebellion. Now, my three years of service were drawing to a close and after a good dose of fever and ague, I received my honorable discharge. Then, with a free transportation ticket in my pocket, I turned my back upon the South.

So end my reminiscences of the great war. If I have omitted many interesting features, I beg my readers to remember that what I have written is entirely from memory after a lapse of many years.

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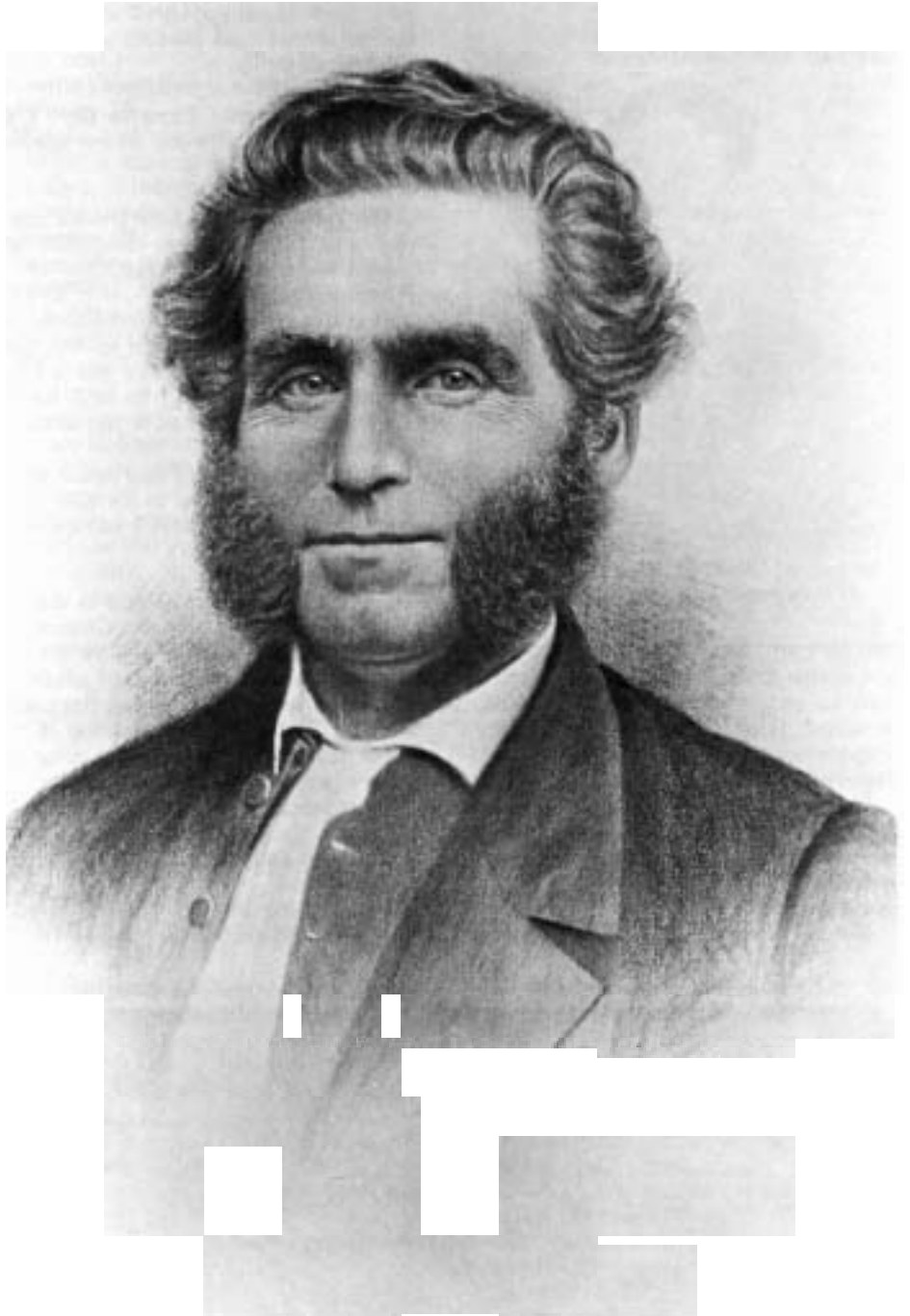
To Day Papa has Gone to the War

Edited by Varick Chittenden

In the fall of 1861, when lawyer William B. Goodrich, aged 39, of Canton joined the 60th Infantry, New York State Volunteers, and took command of Company A of its 60th Regiment, he was soon to distinguish himself as a soldier and a leader. Like every other young man going to war, he left behind a family worried about his safety and anxious for his return. While the glories and horrors of men at battle have been much described in print, we are far less likely to read about the life back home, especially that of the children of the soldiers and officers, who must have been mystified at all the confusion and disruption in their own lives. Just how did *they* react to these times of national trouble?

What follows is a rare expression of a Civil War - period child's view when "Papa has gone to the War." Seven-year-old Stella M. Goodrich began her diary on the day her father left. By selecting entries (recorded here with some punctuation added for clarity but otherwise as written) from the first four months - the remaining small books in a child's inexact pencilled handwriting are apparently missing - we can understand both the sense of fear and lonesomeness we would expect *and* the real sense of distance this small girl felt from it all. Rarely does she refer to soldiers, never to the violence and bloodshed of the war effort. She is even allowed to visit her father's military camp in Baltimore, as a child today would be treated to a trip to "the office" and lunch. More often she writes of school and spelling "bees," piano lessons and parties, her big sister's dresses and "sparking," and a variety of childhood interests. Of course, we don't know what she had to say as her father left for battle or of his injuries and death at Antietam on September 17, 1862.

Her daily observations mention several people who were from St. Lawrence County: Col. Abel Goddard of Richville, later a very prominent businessman; Lester Wilson, who actually joined the Army in October 1862, after Goodrich's death, and later became a colonel; Edwin A. Merritt of Potsdam, according to Everts the quartermaster, but



Colonel William Goodrich of Canton, commander of Company A, 60th Regiment. He would be killed at Antietam within a year of daughter Stella's diary entry of "papa" going off to the war.

who later became one of the County's most distinguished citizens; Rollin C. Gale, adjutant; Lyman M. Shedd, a second lieutenant who apparently was Goodrich's personal aide; and Richard Eddy of Canton, described as a "Universalist Preacher" in the 1860 census, and the chaplain of the regiment. Eddy, aged 32 at the time of the diary, and his wife Sarah, 30, were apparently very close friends of the Goodrich family.

November 1, 1861

To day my papa has gone to the War and I am sick with the croup. Dear

good Papa. How we shall miss him.

November 4

I was sick all night so I could not sleep much. The Dr. has been here again to night. Mr. Eddy has been here to night to bid us good bye.

November 6

We got a letter from Papa and we are glad to here from him.

November 7

I wrote to Papa today. Mrs. Gurley has got a baby and I have been over to see it.

November 9

I have been to see Ellen about my



The young author.
(Photo recent gift to the SLCHA)

mu-sic and I have been down town and got a nice new hood. It was a nice little vail to put over my face in the cold weather. It is just a week today since Papa went a way.

November 10

I wish I could see Papa. It is so lonsome here without him here. I hope we will get a letter from him by to morrow.

November 12

We got another letter from Papa to

day. He had not got three we had written to him. I had perfect lessons. Not whispered today.

November 13

Mama wrote to Papa to day. I got above three boys to day in my spelling class.

November 14

We got anothe(r) letter from Papa to day and I have got a new slate and pencil and it cost a shilling.

November 20

It is time to go to bed but I thought I would write a few lines in my book before I went to bed. We got a letter from Papa to day and he said he had got the first letter I had wrote to him.

November 22

I got a letter from Papa again to day and it was written all to me and it was good as it could be and I have got the best papa in the world.

November 23

I begun to write to Papa to day the way Mama does. Uncle Gustus has been here this evening to here me play on the piano and he thought I played on the piano very nicely. In five days more will be Thanksgeving. I hope it will snow so we can have some slaing and have a real nice time.

November 25

I sent my letter to Papa to day by Mr. Merrit and I wish I could go with it.

December 4

I got a nice long letter from Papa to day and he directed it to me on the out

sied of it. What a good Papa I have got and what a good letter Papa writes me.

December 6

Mama has gone up to the college and I have been writing to Papa and Mary is writing to her sister Clary.

December 16

We sent the letter to Papa to day. Mrs. Eddy has been here to day and she said that she had got a letter from Mr. Eddy and thay are going to winter there and that Mrs. Eddy and her children and Mama and me come there too.

December 20

I got a letter from Papa to day and he said that we might come there if we wanted to. Gorge Boman is here this evning as he dose every week and Jennie and he are in the parlor sparking.

December 25

Last night was Christmas and we all got something and I got a gold ring from old Sanda Claus. Aunt Laura was here and I has glad to see her.

December 27

Jennie has gone to the dance to night and she wore her white dress.

January 3, 1862

. . . Mother and Katy are beginning to get ready to go to Baltimore. I am glad I am going but I hate to leave Mary and all of them.

January 4

. . . Lester Willson was here to night and he said he wish he was going with us to Baltimore. I wish he could go with us too.

January 7

We are on the cars for Baltimore. We left home at noon and passed through Watertown.

January 8

We stayed in Rome all night last night and to night we are in New York with Mrs. Eddys sister.

January 10

I saw Papa to day. I was real glad to see him and he was glad to see me too. Mrs. Eddy has gone over to her new house to night.

January 11

Papa and Mama and my self went to Mr. Eddys this morning and we are going to live here the rest of the time I stay here.

January 13

I wrote to brother Davis to day. Papa went to camp again to day. Sissy Eddy and me have strung some beads to day and freddy Eddy has begun to go to school to day too.

January 15

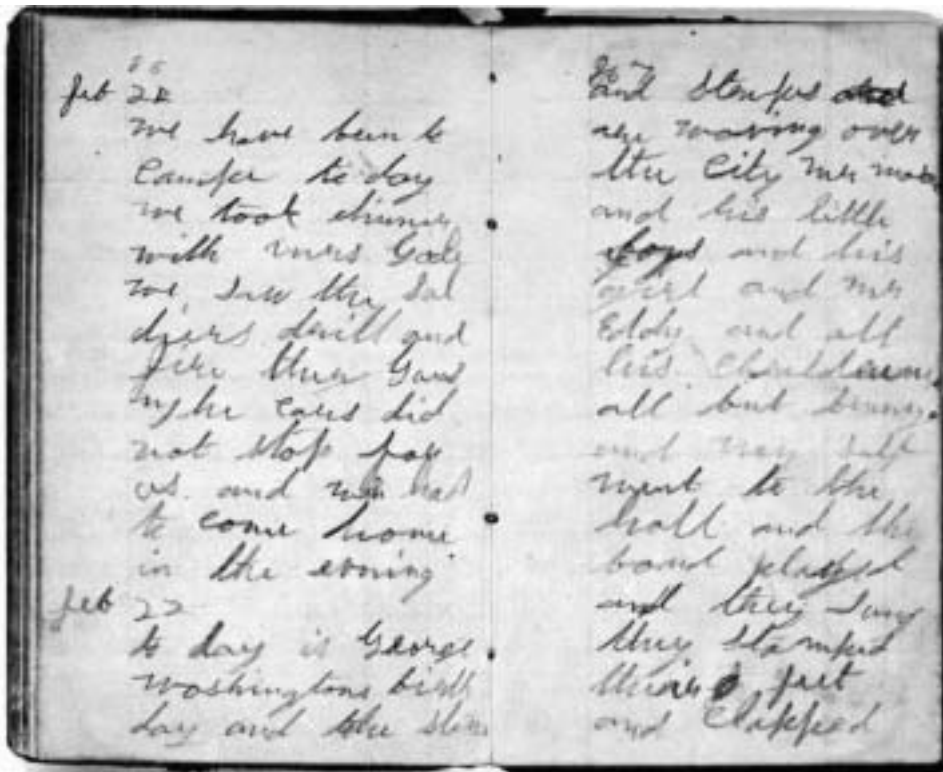
Papa did not come up to the house to day. I want to see him ever so much.

February 3

It snowed all day to day. Papa went to washington to day too. I heard the slay bells to day and it sound real good.

February 4

Papa got back from washington to day but he did not come up to the house.



Stella Goodrich's diary (4 3/4 x 2 3/4), dated November 1st, 1861. (Recent gift to the SLCHA)

April 1984

February 6

Before I got up this morning I heard the band play in the night and I hop(p)ed out of bed and looked out of the window and I wanted to dance it sound so pirty that I wanted to dance. It was the first time that I had heard the band since I have been here.

February 8

Today is Mamas birthday and Mrs. Eddy and Mr. and Mrs. Mason and Mama went to camp . . .

February 10

Mama and me went to see George Washington monument and went all a round it and Mrs. Eddy and Mama went to George Washington again this afternoon.

February 11

Lyman brought me a slate that Papa sent me. It is a real nice one. Sissy and me can writes on it to gather.

February 14

I went to camp this morning with

Papa and stayed all day. Lyman came home with me and he walked back. I had a real nice time. Martha and me got some valentines to night.

February 15

Martha and me sent some valentines to the little Masons boys. I went in the evening and lade them on the doorstep and rung the door bell and ran away.

February 19

Papa came home to night to go to the theater with Mama. I am going to stay to Mrs. Masons to night.

February 21

We have been to camp to day. We took dinner with Mrs. Gale. We saw the soldiers drill and fire thier guns. The cars did not stop for us and we had to come home in the evning.

February 22

Today is George Washingtons birthday and the stars and Strips are waving over the city. Mr. Masons little boys and his girl and Mr. Eddy and all his

children (all but benny) and myself went to the hall and the band played and they sung they stamped their feet and clapped thier hands and they waved thier handkerchiefs. They hurraid for the union and groaned for Jeff Davis.

February 26

To night we came home in the rain. We walked all the way from the depot. We took supper to night in Capt Godards quarters and it was just as nice as it could be.

March 6

I am going to a party to night and I am going out with Mama this morning to try to find me a new hoop skirt.

Varick Chittenden is professor of English at Canton ATC and former editor of *The Quarterly*.

Russell on the Grasse

by Edward Reynolds

The 60th New York State Volunteers was made up of many soldiers from Russell on the Grasse, Edward Reynolds being one of them. Reynolds served at Gettysburg as a mounted orderly to General Slocum, and in the course of his studies was on Culp's Hill, where a boyhood friend, Sergeant William W. Clark, of the 60th, lay mortally wounded. (Reprinted from New York at Gettysburg)

A soldier of the sixtieth lay dying on
Culp's Hill:

There was lack of tender nursing, there
was dearth of surgeon's skill;
For the battle hot was raging, and each
moment added one

To the thousands that lay dying in the
hot midsummer's sun.

A comrade, fighting near him, bent to
hear what he might say—

To receive his latest message to the
dear ones far away.

The dying soldier faltered: "Ned, I'll
never more, alas!

See my home and friends in Russell—
dear old "Russell on the Grasse!"

"If you're among the lucky ones who,
when the war is o'er,

Returning home in triumph, hear the
'High Falls' greeting roar,

And see the sister's sunny smile and
mother's gleam of joy,

When the one beholds her brother, and
the other clasps her boy;

If, with trembling voice a maiden asks
about her brother 'Will'

You can tell her that you saw him fall
on Culp's foe-girded Hill.

And tell her, too—'twill soothe her grief
—how traitors fled en masse.

When they met with men from Russell
and the towns along the Grasse.

"Tell my brothers when they gather
round, the story of to-day—

How gallant Green's 'New York
Brigade' held Ewell's hosts at bay

And tell them that 'twas at the point
where foemen turned and fled

That their brother 'Bill' was found,
among a score of Rebel dead.

Tell my sister not to weep for me, nor
grieve that o'er my tomb.

No roses planted by her hand, nor
violets may bloom;

And tell her if she's true and good her
soul at death shall pass

To a happier home than Russell—
happy 'Russell on the Grasse'

"There's another—not a sister—you will
know her when she speaks

By the music in her voice and by Roses
on her cheeks—

But no—; her voice will lose its ring,
the roses take to flight,

When she reads my name tomorrow in
the death-roll of the fight.

Last night, in a dream, I stood within
a church, and by my side,

Her hand confiding in mine, she stood
my queen bride:

A happy dream! but oh! 'twill never,
never come to pass!

We shall meet no more in Russell—
peaceful 'Russell on the Grasse'.

"In coming years, when you relate the
story of 'the war',—

Of the days when 'millions marched to
beat of drum and cannon's jar',—

You can truly say the sons of old St.
Lawrence were as bold

As the boldest of their comrades—brave
as bravest knights of old.

And of all the gallant regiments that
faced the 'fire of death',

None faced it with a firmer front than
did the Sixtieth;

And, 'mid the bravest of the brave, were
none who could surpass

In courage men from Russell—loyal
'Russell on the Grasse'.

He paused—the comrade lower bent to
hear his latest word;

The swelling roar of battle was the only
sound he heard;

The wounded heart had ceased to beat,
the spark of life had fled;

Another happy home was filled with
sorrow for the dead;

One more recruit was mustered in to
swell the length'ning train,

Of "troops en route from Gettysburg
to Heaven's peaceful plain"

And none who knew him doubts that
good St. Peter let him pass;

And showed him where the boys were
camped from 'Russell on the Grasse.'

Medals of Honor of the Civil War

by Peter Longshore

The Medal of Honor, the country's most cherished mark of esteem, was created for the Navy December 21, 1861. The Army Medal of Honor was established six months later. These early Medals of Honor, when given, were done so by the President of the United States or by the Secretary of War.

President Theodore Roosevelt, by executive order, on Sept. 20, 1905, provided that the presentation of a Medal of Honor always be made with "formal and impressive ceremony". Presidential instructions read: "the recipient of a Medal of Honor will, whenever practicable, be ordered to Washington and the presentation made by the President". Most of the St. Lawrence County men so honored won their medals for the capture of confederate colors.

The most cherished item of a regiment is their flag, (colors), which is presented to them with great pomp and ceremony and which they are sworn to defend with their lives. Now just imagine that this prize is in the center of about 600 men, armed to the teeth with cannon, swords, muskets, pistols, bayonets, and knives and you are going to try to capture it. Thomas Wells of DeKalb captured two stands of colors!

The eleven men listed represent only a fraction of the brave soldiers of this county. Many men left St. Lawrence County never to return, and many more lay in unmarked graves from Canton to Appomattox. It is sad to know that not one of these men has a marker to denote the award of the Medal of Honor, yet each of them is entitled to a special marker denoting that he has earned the nation's highest service award, the Medal of Honor.



The Army Medal of Honor adopted 1862-1896.

JAMES ALLEN

Pvt., 16th N.Y. Infantry
"Gallantry in Action"

DAYTON P. CLARKE

2nd Volunteer Infantry
"Gallantry in Action while commanding 2nd Vol. Inf."

NEWTON MARTIN CURTIS

Col., 16th N.Y. Volunteers
"Gallantry in Action, he being the first man to pass through the stockade at Fort Fischer"

JOHN GILMORE

Maj., 16th N.Y. Volunteers
"Gallantry in Action"

FRANCIS HALL

Chaplain, 16th N.Y. Volunteers
"Gallantry in administering his holy duties on the Battlefield"

CHARLES HOUGHTON

14th N.Y. Artillery
"Gallantly repelled a confederate assault on his position"

FALLET JOHNSON

Corp., 60th N.Y. Volunteers
"Voluntarily exposed himself to divert fire of a Confederate sharpshooter who had been doing great damage to Union forces"

JOHN MOFFIT

Pvt., 16th N.Y. Volunteers
"Gallantry in carrying and defending the colors"

JOHN T. RUTHERFORD

Lieut., 9th N.Y. Cavalry
"Captured two Superior Forces"

WILLIAM WALLING

Lieut., 142nd. Regiment
"Capture of Confederate Colors"

THOMAS M. WELLS

Chief Bugler, 6th N.Y. Cavalry
"Captured two Confederate Colors"

Editor's Note: Mr. Longshore's research has found that a twelfth Medal of Honor recipient from the County was Michael Valente, of Ogdensburg, a private in the 107th Infantry, 27th Division in World War I. Valente was cited for "Gallantry in Action, France 1918, "voluntarily exposed himself to great fire removing wounded soldiers."



About the Author

Peter Longshore is a native of St. Lawrence County and has spent much of his life researching military history.

The Too-Tall General

by Peter Longshore

Newton Martin Curtis of Depeyster became the county's most prominent Civil War soldier, receiving the Medal of Honor for his daring—some believed foolhardy—assaults upon Fort Fisher. Disregarding orders to retreat, Curtis, then a Colonel, led four assaults against the rebel defenders of the fort before finally overcoming the resistance. Various accounts of his war service indicate that he seemed to face death defiantly.

The exploit most often connected with General Newton Martin Curtis was the assault and capture of Fort Fisher, a strong seacoast fortification in North Carolina. Curtis, a colonel at this time, proved himself an extraordinary soldier by leading four assaults on the fort after being ordered to retreat. He received four wounds during the course of the day, the last and most severe took his left eye.

Acts of gallantry were not uncommon in the Civil War, but General Curtis' is interesting in light of a passage from his book *From Bull Run to Chancellorsville*. On March 7, 1862 Colonel Thomas

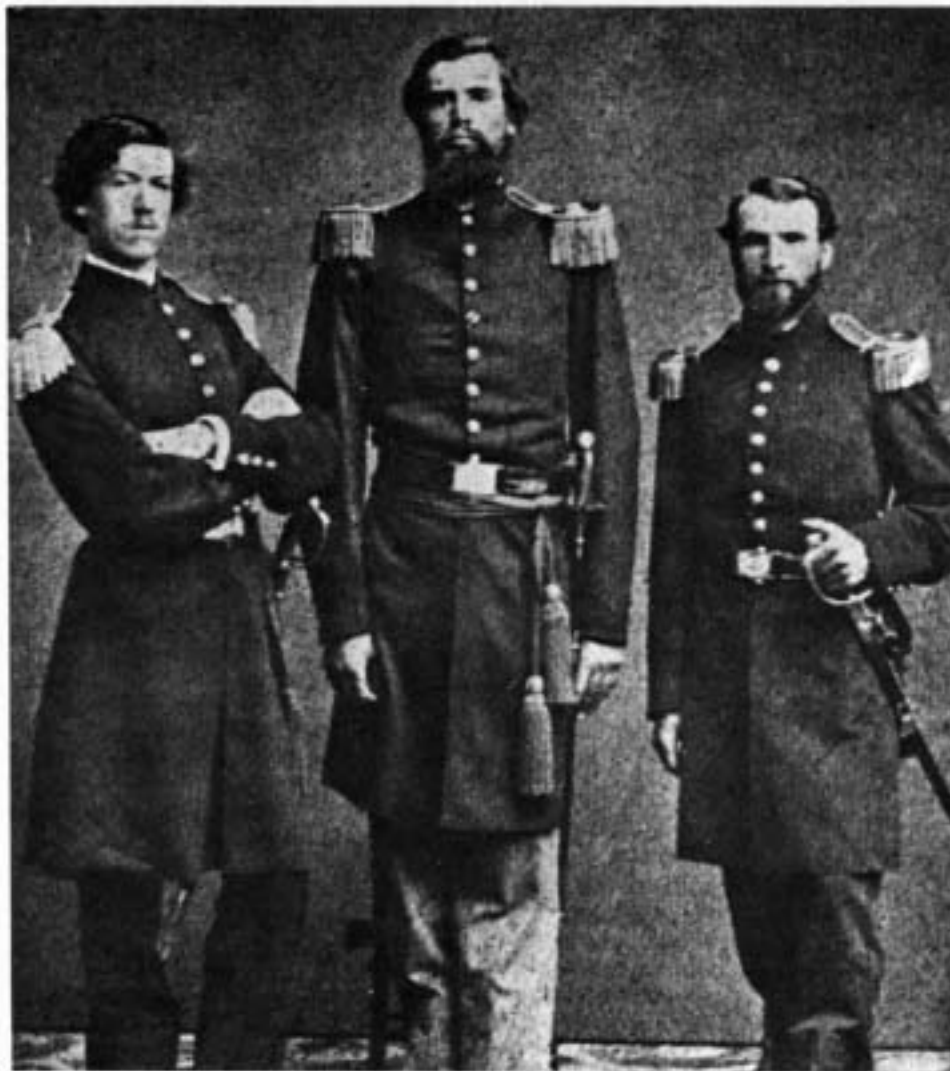
A. Davies was promoted to be Brigadier-General United States Volunteers. Curtis tells of an overheard remark which may have planted some subconscious inclination toward heroism:

"The officers called on the general in the evening to express their congratulations, and to thank him for his care in qualifying them to discharge the duties of their new profession . . . Leaving his quarters, I passed a number going in, and met another party, who said they would wait until those within should come out and give them an opportunity to see the general. Those of us on the outside, near enough

to the general's quarters to hear moderately loud conversation, were silenced by a remark from the general: 'Did you see Captain Curtis who just left here? I want to tell you that he will be of no use in an active campaign; all the time and money spent on him has been thrown away.' Someone said that they had never heard him speak unkindly of Captain Curtis. 'O!' said he, 'Curtis is well enough as a man and an officer, in camp; but, for active service, he will be utterly useless, and for the reason that he will get killed in the first engagement and all the instruction given him will be lost. I did not like to tell him, but you remember what I now say. He is too tall and cannot escape the enemy's bullets; if he does, their firing will not be very creditable.' Following Curtis' adventure at West Point, Virginia, where he had received a wound, General Davies wrote him a letter in which he said: "You take two chances to one of a man of average height, and I am afraid the enemy will get you next time."

This attitude certainly of a senior officer toward another officer of lower rank could not have raised a great deal of confidence in the young Curtis. Perhaps if one went from day to day with the shadow of death over him, a "presentiment," as Curtis called it, that one was going to die, this sort of grim opinion might well have supported the feeling to a burdensome degree. It is not far-fetched to assume that Curtis' behavior in battle was either a result of a fatalistic philosophy - that events are fixed in advance and the individual is powerless to change them, and therefore one might just as well do and not think - or of the pessimistic opinion of his chances held by General Davies -acting oppositely so as to prove his worth, despite the opinion.

Either way General Curtis survived the war, received the highest honor the country could give, and returned to Depeyster to become Postmaster. During the war his regiment was viewed by President Lincoln. Lincoln, not used to meeting men taller than himself, eyed Curtis up and down and remarked: "Colonel, how do you know when your feet are cold?" At age seventy-four, while in New York, Curtis suffered a seizure and died.



Newton Martin Curtis (center) as a captain. He wasn't given much chance of surviving battle. (Photo courtesy of the author)

Women at the Front: Civil War Nurses

by Richard Rummel

The common image of the opening days of the Civil War is one of the local men and boys riding or marching off to an uncertain destiny, with rows of women and children cheering and waving flags. The rebellion would be put down; and the men would be home before Christmas. As the fighting raged on and it became all too painfully clear that the confederacy was just as determined to win the war and secede as President Lincoln was in keeping the republic intact, many wives and mothers left their homes to serve the cause with the same spirit of patriotism that had spurred the men before them. The history of these women and their role in the war is almost unknown, but without them, certainly, the task of caring for the staggering numbers of sick and wounded that came to the field hospitals would have been far greater, and many of them who lived to see another day owed their good fortune to the women who came to nurse them.

At the beginning of the war the Medical Department of the government thought to be in the worst condition of any branch of public service. Many surgeons who passed the technical examination were utterly incompetent to discharge their duties required, and, in some cases, physicians sought the position merely for the purpose of perfecting themselves in surgery.¹ The system for caring for the sick and wounded was greatly improved as the war progressed.² But of the women who had seen their men off to war then followed as the horrors at the front came back to them, the story of medical care in field hospitals is really their story. Given the inestimable value of such associations as the United States Sanitary Commission, which raised millions of dollars in medical supplies, it was the groups of women, braving battlefield dangers and public opinion (it was probably as brave for women to act in this untraditional way as it was to confront the danger of warfare) who received the greatest praise and appreciation from the highest commander to the lowliest soldier.

When the government finally began to see the value of the service women rendered, an attempt was made to organize them as nurses. Dorothy Dix, who acquired the name "angel of mercy," was appointed to enroll women. But as she would not take anyone under



Maria Olmstead Eldrid lived in Pierrepont during the Civil War, and as a young girl went south to care for the sick and wounded. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Ben Ware of Canton, granddaughter of Maria Olmstead Eldrid)

thirty, many young girls offered their services independently. The army surgeons were reluctant to have them employed and, in many cases, made their lives as unbearable as possible, that they might be forced in self-defense to leave the hospitals. Delicate, refined and cultured women were often required to perform the hardest and most menial labor, to subsist on poor fare, and to rest at night on wretched beds.³ Yet through their persistence and strength the women endured these hardships willingly without complaint, and won for themselves a high place in the history of medical service.

Maria Olmstead Eldred of Pierrepont was one such woman who traveled to Falls Church, Virginia as a medical volunteer. It was believed Mrs. Eldred (then Mrs. George Olmstead) went to care for her husband. Many of the women who went to the front did so for the purpose of tending to a loved one, and then assumed greater duties as general and much needed nurses. She served for nine months, drawing a \$12 per month pension; \$50 at the end of her life.

In 1881 Miss Dix invited all nurses to meet her in Washington, where the Ex-Nurses Association of the District of Columbia was formed. In 1892, following the formation of other nurses' groups, the National Association of Army Nurses of the Civil War formed to meet at each encampment. The goal of the group was "to keep green the memory of those days of civil strife, to keep in touch with the Grand Army of the Republic in its efforts to perpetuate the grand principles for which the boys in blue fought and died, to seek out and aid unfortunate and needy nurses and assist in procuring pensions." Those admitted to membership had to be of

"good moral character" and have served at least three months as a regular or volunteer nurse.⁴

In Camp on the Chickahominy, June 12, 1862

"From old Saint Paul till now,
Of honorable women not a few
Have quit their golden ease, in love to do
The saintly works that Christ-like
hearts pursue.

Such an one art thou, God's fair apostle,
Bearing His love in war's horrific train;
Thy blessed feet follow its ghastly pain
And misery and death, without disdain.

To one borne from the sullen battle's
roar,

Dearer the greeting of thy gentle eyes,
When he aweary, torn and bleeding lies,
Than all the glory that the victors prize.

When peace shall come, and home shall
smile again,

Ten thousand soldiers' hearts, in northern
climes,

Shall tell their little children, with
their rhymes,

Of the sweet saint who blessed the old
war times."⁵

This poem was written by First Lieutenant Royal Corbin in honor of a Mrs. Howland for her personal attention paid the sick and wounded in the Peninsula campaign.

NOTES

¹Newton Martin Curtis, *From Bull Run to Chancellorsville*, New York and London (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1906), p. 275.

²Ibid., p. 275

³Ibid., p. 275

⁴Mary H. Biondi, ed., *St. Lawrence County Historical Association Quarterly*, "National Association of Army Nurses of the Civil War" (July, 1969), p. 16.

⁵Newton Martin Curtis, *From Bull Run to Chancellorsville*, New York and London (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1906), p. 279.

Against the Enemy in St. Lawrence County, 1917-1918

by Judith Ranlett

America's first foreign war was as notable for the voluminous flow of propaganda, and the runaway emotion that it caused, as the war itself. No one who read a newspaper, especially, was spared the "awful facts" about the "horrible Hun." Everything German was despised. The freedom to hold and express opposing views was tantamount to treason. In this account of anti-German sentiment in St. Lawrence County we are given cause to wonder about how fragile the rights are that we take for granted.

Sandstone, Pershing, Clarkson, Streatfield - all were suggested as more suitable names than Potsdam for that St. Lawrence County town and village during the height of the anti-German hysteria that characterized World War I. The *Ogdensburg Advance* declared Potsdam to be too "Dutchy" and the *Saranac Lake News* asserted, "All neighboring towns have wondered for months why a change was not made. The quicker it is done the better it will look to the rest of Northern New York."¹ A former Potsdam resident claimed that a name change would give "the world proof of [Potsdam's] patriotism."² The existing name, regardless of its origins, did have its defenders. The *Watertown Times* labelled demands for a name change "excessive patriotism" and pointed out the "complications . . . if we change the name of every city or village that has a German origin . . ."³ What, for example, would be the new geologic name for Potsdam sandstone? And one Civil War veteran claimed only non-residents wanted a name change while "one hundred percent" of residents were opposed.⁴

Surely, the debate over the name of Potsdam was an isolated instance, and not a manifestation of a common theme in World War I North Country life? What did St. Lawrence County have to fear from the tiny number of Germans or Austro-Hungarians in its population? (The special military census taken in the summer of 1917 revealed fewer than 5000 alien adults in the county, of which many must have been Canadian.⁵) What was the probability that Northern New York attract spies and saboteurs? Whatever reason and common sense might seem in retrospect to dictate, in fact a reading of the World War I era *Potsdam Herald-Recorder* and *Courier and Freeman* indicates that Northern New York - at least as reflected in their pages - was not immune to the virulent hatred of all things German or demands for unity of opinion which swept the nation. The *Courier and Freeman* especially did its best through editorials, news reports, and its selection of material from other papers (frequently other Northern New York

papers) to insure that its readers fully shared in this national nightmare.

Elsewhere in the nation, anti-Germanism gave rise to lynchings, to bans on the teaching of German in schools and on the playing of so-called "German" music in concert halls. Names were changed, not only of people and places, but even of things. Sauerkraut became liberty cabbage, for example. Much of this activity was supported by the Committee on Public Information whose assigned task it was to inspire enthusiasm for war.⁶ Furthermore, the draconian Espionage and Sedition Acts passed by Congress put federal force behind efforts to produce a national conformity in ideas. The Sedition Act of 1918 prohibited "disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language" about the government or language that might bring the government, the Constitution or the flag "into contempt, scorn, contumely or disrepute."⁷ Such sweeping language made all sorts of statements that could in no way harm the war effort violations of law.

There were no lynchings in Northern New York, though there was perhaps one close call in Ogdensburg when a naturalized citizen of German birth "was seized, tied with a rope and dragged" from his porch into his front yard by a gang of young men who apparently intended to tar and feather him.⁸ Demands to ban Bach were not evident. In fact, June 1918 baccalaureate ceremonies at the Potsdam Normal School which excoriated everything German (the speaker proclaimed the primary characteristics of German social life were "suicide, insanity, and illegitimacy") were accompanied by a Mendelssohn duet.⁹ As late as June 1917 the *Potsdam Herald-Recorder* was willing to print a recipe for German kuchen.¹⁰ But six months later the same paper was reassuring readers that pinocle was not German, presumably freeing aficionados from changes of disloyalty for their Friday night card games.¹¹

Even before the United States entered the war in April 1917, there were those who worried about aliens of German or Austro-Hungarian background in the

region. The *Courier and Freeman* was especially concerned about the local labor scene and concluded that Austro-Hungarians employed in lumber camps were no threat, but that those employed in Unionville or at the aluminum works in Massena could do "considerable damage" because of their "access to valuable and costly machinery." Consequently, in the event of war, all such aliens should be put "in detention camps immediately."¹² By early 1918, the same paper rejected internment as devastating to the local economy.¹³

Internment did not occur, but aliens of "Teutonic birth" were disarmed and males did have to register.¹⁴ Nevertheless, some efforts were made to reassure such people that they had "no need to fear" as long as they heeded the following advice: "Obey the law; keep your mouth shut."¹⁵ Soon after the United States entered the war, the secretary of the State Emigration Bureau and the chief investigator of the New York State Industrial Commission toured New York, stopping at Unionville, Hewittville, Norfolk and Massena, telling foreign-born workers they were in no danger if they obeyed the laws and did not withdraw their savings from American banks.¹⁶ The *Courier and Freeman* later added editorially that "loyal Germans or Hungarians" also had another responsibility: "to help unmask those who deserve punishment," for they best knew who the "scoundrels" were within their group.¹⁷

German and Austrian spies and saboteurs were feared. "Every German or Austrian in the United States unless known by years of association to be absolutely loyal should be treated as a potential spy," warned the American Defense Society.¹⁸ Northern New Yorkers has anticipated that warning and were busily "finding" spies and saboteurs at every turn. Especially in the early days of the war, spy reports were numerous. Someone speaking with an accent and carrying a camera or a pair of skis might find himself on the wrong side of the law.¹⁹ One man reported as "apparently disguised" and "acting strangely along the Potsdam-Hopkinton road" was at first thought to

be a spy; he turned out to be an "aged peddler residing in the vicinity of Hopkinton."²⁰ Similar spy accusations against a group of photographers, travelling about making enlargements of pictures, were also found to be groundless. What had initially aroused suspicion about this group was apparently the fact that they carried a map of the area with them.²¹

And then there was the fear of saboteurs. In May of 1917, the *Courier and Freeman* was already editorializing against fireworks on the Fourth of July because fireworks could mask efforts to "blow up factories or bridges or anything of importance."²² Indeed, very early in the war it was suggested that the Home Guard be assigned the task of protecting - presumably from saboteurs - the local bridges on the New York Central and Rutland Railroads.²³ At various times during the war, the communities of Canton, Gouverneur and Ogdensburg all experienced incidents that were wishfully interpreted as failed sabotage. Dynamite was found in two milk plants in Canton and Gouverneur, both of which were said to have contracts with one of the Allies. In each case, worker carelessness was ultimately accepted as the source of the dynamite, but not before the more delicious prospect of sabotage was thoroughly entertained. In Canton, "taking no chances," five deputies were assigned to guard the Paige factory.²⁴

Super-patriots in Northern New York as elsewhere sought to squelch German language publications and end the teaching of German. Wiping out "Germanism" was "a plain and bounden duty." "Nothing that is German must be allowed to exist on this continent . . . The German language must be cast out of our system of education, German newspapers must be put out of business . . ." inveighed the *Courier and Freeman*.²⁵ Since there were no local German publications to close down, efforts concentrated on language teaching. The *Courier and Freeman* approved the request made by the Board of Trustees of the Potsdam Normal School to the State Department of Education to substitute the teaching of Spanish for German in normal schools.²⁶ The Board of Trustees was reported to claim that enrollment in German classes was declining, a highly probable development in view of the kinds of charges that could be levelled at one who wished to study German: "No patriotic boy or girl will desire to waste any more time in the study of such a language [described as "harsh, guttural, barbaric"] and certainly no parents will care to demand this branch of work for their children." Teachers of German were, of course, themselves highly suspect creatures.²⁷

The "tainted teacher" was an object of special concern. Firings of "pro-German" teachers elsewhere in the country were favorably reported,²⁸ and the paper applauded the dismissal of an Edwardsville teacher subsequent to an investigation by a United States Attorney and a representative of the State Department of Education. What was described as a pro-German poem fell out of the teacher's pocket outside of school hours, and she was prevailed upon to read it, which she did "reluctantly." Some parents complained, but the local school board found "no serious offense has been committed." The complaints went further, and a full-scale investigation concluded ". . . that she should not have had in her possession literature of that character." The *Courier and Freeman* found her actions "excuse the tar pot and feathers" and insisted she "ought to be driven out of St. Lawrence County."²⁹

If the teacher of a one-room school could foment such a storm, imagine what the faculty of students of the area colleges could inspire! Even before American entry into the war, a Clarkson student of German descent was reported to have been compelled by the government to dismantle the aerial of his wireless telegraphy station. The student had to deny he was sympathetic to German, and a Clarkson College spokesman described the young man as "greatly upset."³⁰ The reported expulsion of a former Clarkson professor of mechanical engineering from Columbia University as "a typical German," offensive to his colleagues, and "suspected of peculiar work in the testing out of crankshafts for aeroplane motors" provoked local attention. ". . . [T]here has been a growing belief that the professor's work locally might have had more motives than were at first apparent."³¹ In spite of the fact that Clarkson seniors offered their services as "technically trained men" to the government before war began and that Clarkson College itself carried out special war-related programs, Clarkson students were charged with being "slackers" or "yellow streakers" by a local minister because they did not enlist.³² The entire student body responded in outrage, pointing out that they were told by the government not to enlist but to complete their engineering training.³³

Clarkson students were not the only local students who had to protest their patriotism. The faculty and students of the Saint Lawrence Theological School had to do likewise.³⁴ Late in 1917, the Rev. L.M. Powers, of Gloucester, Massachusetts, a pacifist, lectured on "What Germany Has Done for the World" at the invitation of the Theological School.³⁵ As if pacifism were not an inflammatory enough charge to level at

the Rev. Powers, the *Canton Plaindealer* also claimed the speech was "socialistic," for Powers showed pictures of German workers' houses built by Krupp and said ". . . if Andrew Carnegie had built houses like those for his workmen his libraries would come with better grace."³⁶ According to the *Ogdensburg Advance*, "This sort of business must be vigorously suppressed."³⁷ The *Canton Commercial-Advertiser* was somewhat milder in its criticism, but even it said "Certainly a lecture that was very pleasing to known pro-Germans must be of a nature that will bear examination."³⁸

Other St. Lawrence faculty leaped into the combat to dissociate themselves from the taint brought by the Theological School, and President F.A. Gallup quickly pointed out that the university itself was not to blame, for the speaker was sponsored only by the Theological School. "The Officers and faculty of the Seminary never consult the University executive as to details of procedure or even as to general policy, and on this occasion they made use of a college building without securing executive permission."³⁹ No ringing defense of academic freedom here!

During the height of the Powers' ruckus, the local press seemed to take the existence of "a nest of pro-Germans" at St. Lawrence for granted.⁴⁰ Perhaps that assumption helps to explain the letter written to the *Canton Commercial Advertiser* by an assistant professor of modern languages at St. Lawrence, protesting herself "to be as sincerely and truly American in thought and feeling as every high minded, patriotic citizen of the United States."⁴¹

Somewhat different was the situation of an instructor in the Crane Normal Institute of Music in Potsdam, who found herself appearing before the senior class of the Institute, with a representative of the United States Department of Justice in the audience, to make a retraction of statements she had made the previous week. She was alleged to have said "that there were those in high governmental positions who had no real desire to see the war prosecuted to a full and successful conclusion." In her defense, the *Courier and Freeman* pointed out that the instructor's statements came from an excess of patriotism and not from any pro-Germanism.⁴² As the Crane instructor learned, it was the case during World War I that not only might one be accused of sympathy for the enemy, but almost any criticism of governmental war policy or leadership, even disrespectful statements, could find one on the wrong side of the law. As one headline in the *Potsdam Herald-Recorder* concisely put it, to be safe, "Don't Criticize Your Government."⁴³

People were encouraged to watch each other, and to report to the authorities any "disloyal" statements. At least some did so.

The local press praised such actions and urged more of the same. Week after week in late 1917 and early 1918, the *Courier and Freeman* printed, completely in capital letters, an editorial which proclaimed, "IT IS THE DUTY OF EVERY LOYAL CITIZEN . . . TO REPORT IMMEDIATELY ANY DISLOYAL STATEMENT THEY OVERHEAR OR WHICH MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THEM" to the authorities and, of course, to the *Courier* itself, for "We want to point them out to the public." Such statements, in the editors' judgment, included refusal to work for the Red Cross.⁴⁴

Such exhortations perhaps helped lead a travelling salesman to make a citizen's arrest of an Ogdensburg man overheard on the train to DeKalb calling President Woodrow Wilson "an educated fool."⁴⁵ A native-born Gouverneur man, son of a Civil War veteran, was arrested and given a six-month suspended sentence for remarks he made at William White's grocery store while discussing high prices.⁴⁶ And a Russell woman was held for the federal grand jury at Auburn for allegedly tearing down a liberty loan flag on the hotel in Russell, saying "that the government did not need to offer bonds for sale as it was rich enough to finance the war and to take care of the boys in the service." A complaint was made to the United States District Attorney that the woman had violated Section 3 of Title I of the Espionage Act, an offense which, the *Courier and Freeman* was quick to point out, could net her a \$10,000 fine or twenty years' imprisonment or both. She was not, however, indicted.⁴⁷

Liberty loans and war relief work were causes that absorbed many St. Lawrence County citizens. The papers were full of ads urging people to buy Liberty Bonds and of lists of the specific contributions made by individuals to various fund-raising drives. Community pressure on those who, for whatever reason, chose not to contribute or who contributed less than others thought their fair share could be inexorable. Yellow paint, a large red cross, and the words "Friends of the Kaiser" painted on the sidewalk before their store compelled two Norwood merchants to increase their contribution to one war relief drive more than tenfold.⁴⁸ A Canton merchant caught buying stolen goods was given the choice of going to jail or contributing \$30. to the Red Cross. He chose the latter.⁴⁹ There is no way of knowing how many people gave in such canvasses because they feared the results of doing otherwise.

Reporting one's neighbors for sedition

or coercing contributions were ugly enough manifestations of the dark side of World War I at home. Northern New York was spared the worst forms of vigilantism which engulfed some communities, but no action taken in the name of patriotism elsewhere was apparently bad enough to win condemnation. Even the tragic lynching of young Robert Prager near St. Louis in the Spring of 1918 was justified. The *Courier and Freeman* editorialized that the government's failure to bring any spies or criminals in front of firing squads compelled mob action.⁵⁰ And, as a substitute for lynching, the *Canton Plaindealer* suggested that government doctors administer strychnine to pacifists.⁵¹

The point is not that Potsdam or Canton or any other St. Lawrence County community was worse than other places in their demands for conformity of thought or hatred for all things German during World War I. They were not worse. If the *Courier and Freeman* justified lynching and excused vigilantism, so did the *Washington Post*, which referred to the Prager lynching as "a healthful and wholesome awakening in the interior of the country."⁵² If a Canton minister was willing to claim ". . . the only good German is a dead German,"⁵³ similar assertions were coming from pulpits all over the country. And there lies the point. If Potsdam or Canton was no worse than most other communities, it was no better either. The anti-German hysteria, the suppression of civil liberties, the demand for absolute unity which accompanied World War I were not limited to big cities or to the Far West or to places with substantial German or Austro-Hungarian populations. They were also found in St. Lawrence County. The progressive faith in a rational and decent public - a belief which helped inspire the great reform period at the beginning of the twentieth century - did not meet the test of experience in World War I, not in the United States as a whole, and not in St. Lawrence County.

NOTES

¹Quoted in *Courier and Freeman* (hereafter *C&F*), Potsdam, New York, 18 Sept. 1918, p. 4.

²*C&F*, 2 Oct. 1918, p. 4
³Quoted in *C&F*, May 1918, p. 2.
⁴*C&F*, 9 Oct. 1918, pp. 6 & 2.
⁵*Potsdam* [New York] *Herald-Recorder* (hereafter *H-R*), 20 July 1917, p. 1.
⁶For a survey of the domestic experience in World War I, see David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York, 1980), especially the first chapter, "The War for the American Mind."
⁷Kennedy, *Over Here*, p. 80.
⁸*C&F*, 12 June 1918, p. 1; 3 July 1918, p. 1; 2 Oct. 1918, p. 1.
⁹*C&F*, 26 June 1918, p. 1
¹⁰*H-R*, 22 June 1917, p. 6.
¹¹*H-R*, 25 Jan. 1918, p. 7.
¹²Feb. 1917, p. 1.
¹³*C&F*, 16 Jan. 1918, p. 3.
¹⁴*C&F*, 18 Apr. 1917, p. 1; 23 Jan. 1918, p. 2.
¹⁵*H-R*, 13 Apr. 1917, p. 1.
¹⁶*C&F*, 2 May 1917, p. 1.
¹⁷16 Jan. 1918, p. 4.
¹⁸*H-R*, 31 May 1918, p. 1.
¹⁹*C&F*, 25 Apr. 1917, p. 1; 2 May 1917, p. 1; 17 Oct. 1917, p. 1; 7 Nov. 1917, p. 8; 23 Jan. 1918, p. 3.
²⁰*C&F*, 23 May 1917, p. 4.
²¹*C&F*, 23 May 1917, p. 4.
²²*C&F*, 2 May 1917, p. 4.
²³*C&F*, 18 Apr. 1917, p. 2.
²⁴*C&F*, 24 Oct. 1917, p. 1; 7 Nov. 1917, p. 8; 27 March 1918, p. 1.
²⁵8 May 1918, p. 4.
²⁶29 May 1918, p. 2.
²⁷*C&F*, 29 May 1918, p. 2; 13 March 1918, p. 4.
²⁸*C&F*, 26 Dec. 1917, p. 4.
²⁹*C&F*, 8 May 1918, p. 1; 22 May 1918, p. 4; *H-R*, 31 May 1918, p. 9.
³⁰*C&F*, 14 March 1917, p. 2.
³¹*C&F*, 30 May 1917, p. 1.
³²*C&F*, 28 March 1917, p. 1; 18 Apr. 1917, p. 1; 30 Jan. 1918, p. 4.
³³*C&F*, 30 Jan. 1918, p. 4; 13 Feb. 1918, p. 4.
³⁴*C&F*, 8 May 1918, p. 3.
³⁵*C&F*, 28 Nov. 1917, p. 4.
³⁶Quoted in *C&F*, 28 Nov. 1917, p. 1.
³⁷Quoted in *C&F*, 28 Nov. 1917, p. 4.
³⁸Quoted in *C&F*, 28 Nov. 1917, p. 4. When one's
³⁹*C&F*, 5 Dec. 1917, p. 1.
⁴⁰*C&F*, 28 Nov. 1917, p. 4.
⁴¹Quoted in *C&F*, 3 Apr. 1918, p. 8.
⁴²*C&F*, 23 Jan. 1918, p. 1.
⁴³4 Jan. 1918, p. 1.
⁴⁴19 Dec. 1917, p. 4; Dec. 1917, p. 4; 3 Jan. 1918, p. 4.
⁴⁵*C&F*, 16 Jan. 1918, p. 1.
⁴⁶*C&F*, 25 Apr. 1917, p. 1.
⁴⁷*C&F*, 15 May 1918, p. 3; 29 May 1918, p. 3; 12 June 1918, p. 1.
⁴⁸*C&F*, 5 June 1918, p. 6.
⁴⁹*C&F*, 5 June 1918, p. 8.
⁵⁰10 Apr. 1918, p. 4.
⁵¹Quoted in *C&F*, 24 Apr. 1918, p. 1.
⁵²*C&F*, 5 June 1918, p. 4; Kennedy, *Over Here*, p. 68.
⁵³*C&F*, 1 May 1918, p. 4.

About the Author

Judith Ranlett is an Associate Professor of History at Potsdam College, with special interest in women's history and family history.

This pro-German sentiment, penned by an Edwardsville teacher, was a serious enough "offense" to have her dismissed.

The Germans were Germans
 When England wasn't much.
 The Germans will be Germans
 When England speaks Dutch.

Here's to sweet Germany,
 The land of my birth.
 Hurrah! for sweet Germany,
 The best land on earth.

Hurrah! Hurrah! for Germany,
 The land of good cheer.
 We'll step up with the Kaiser
 And have a good drink of beer.

The Germans were Germans
 When England wasn't much.
 And before the year is up
 They will all be speaking Dutch.

"Blood is Ankle Deep"

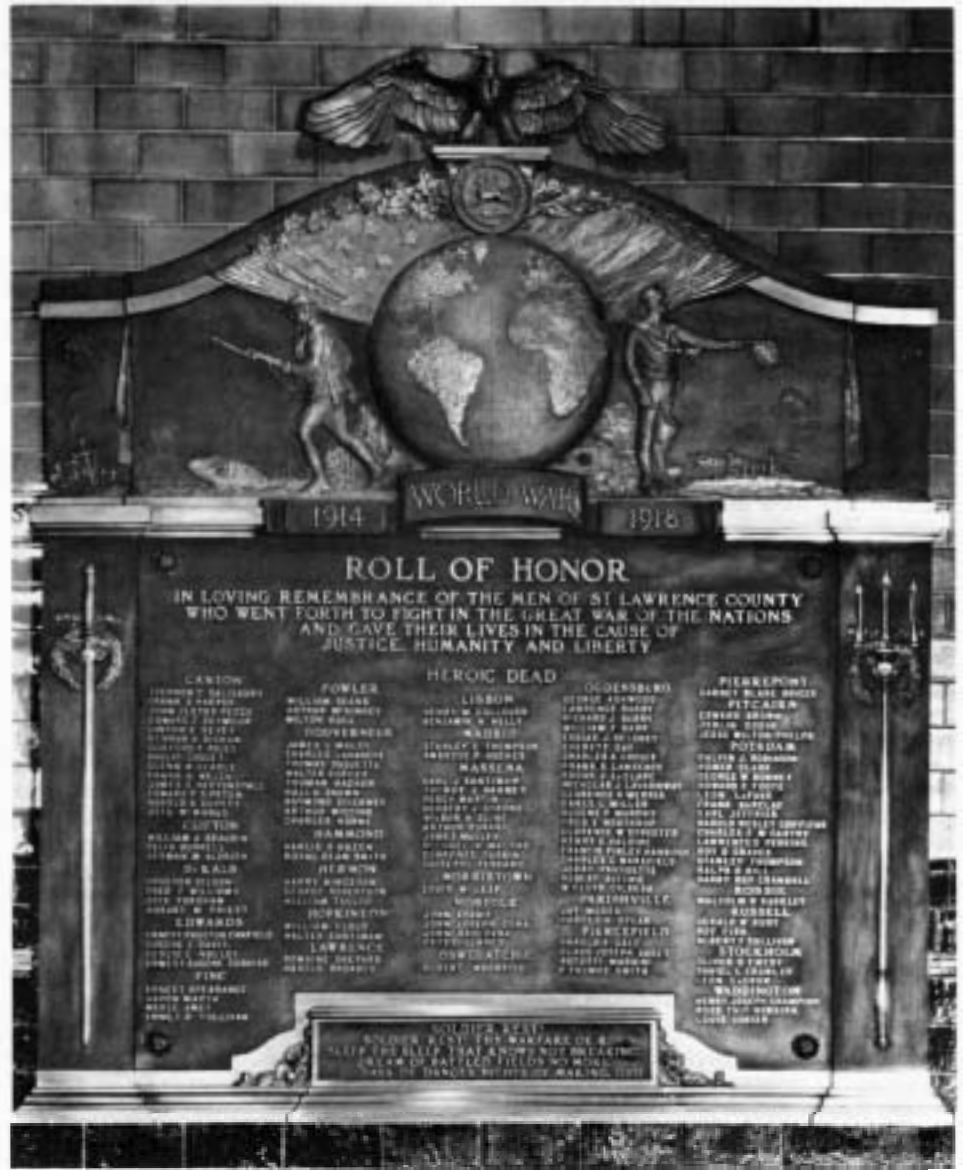
Madrid Boy Writes Home

What could have prepared the north country soldier for what he encountered in the trenches of France and Belgium? Surely the gentle hills and curving rivers and farm-rimmed roads of his home must have seemed infinitely far away or non-existent. In this letter, which appeared in the Ogdensburg Journal near the end of the war, the writer reveals an incongruous playfulness of boy soldiers caught up in the reality of war.

Ogdensburg, Nov. 6 - Private Ivan H. Robinson, a Madrid boy who is serving with Company D, 107th Infantry, in a letter to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Robinson, gives the following description of the big battle in which the New York state troops smashed the Hindenburg line:

"Well, it's all over. I mean our drive, and I don't think we will make another one for a while. My old friend Fred Northrup got killed. I was beside him when he got his lead pill. I avenged him, for I shot seven of the dirty skunks and finished the eighth with a bayonet, so I think I have done my bit. Our first fight was in the second trench that we took, and mother, I don't suppose you will believe it, but the blood was ankle deep in that sector of the trench. Oh, it was awful. It was there poor Fred got hit in the head with a machine gun bullet. I had been running my machine gun and had tired myself out. I said to Fred, 'For God's sake, Fred, take a turn at this, and don't spare the ammunition.' He took the gun, and he got his. Oh, how badly I felt, for he and I were together all the while. We slept together like a couple of kid brothers, but he had to leave me. That makes two of my friends who have gone west. That morning before we started we shook hands and I said, 'Fred, we are going through this and we are coming back to celebrate,' but we were mistaken. One can never tell. I came through all O.K. until Sunday night, when I was with a party carrying out some wounded, and a big mustard shell broke beside us. Well, I am in the hospital now, blistered a little, but expect to be out again soon, so don't worry.

"I will try to explain briefly how we went over Sunday morning, Sept. 30, at 5 o'clock, when we climbed over the top of our trench, and our artillery barrage started and we started. Inside of 15 minutes we had gained our objective and had gone way beyond it. The Huns had got word of our coming over and were ready for us. They had practically a machine gun to every seven feet of trench. Well, our trouble was we failed to 'mop up' as we call it, and that is to kill all the enemy that is left in the trenches and dugouts after the first wave had gone over. The consequence



World War One monument to those who made the supreme sacrifice. Canton court house. Note the name Fred Northrup under Ogdensburg, who was a friend of the Madrid boy writing home. (Photo courtesy SLCHA Archives)

was that after we had taken their first trench a few of them had hidden in dugouts which we had neglected to throw a bomb into and kill them. Well, they grabbed a machine gun and turned it on us from our rear. One or two of the dogs can do a whole lot with a machine gun. We got them and stuck a bayonet through them and they were finished.

Although we lost heavily, we gained what we were after and a whole lot more. The Hindenburg line, one of the strongest fortified of any German line, is now in our hands, and the bunch that relieved us are still moving forward."



“Over Here”

World War I Photographic Essay on St. Lawrence County

The First World War broke out August 1st, 1914. President Wilson was strongly opposed to America being involved and signed a proclamation of neutrality as this country's official position. But American property and citizens were fair game for German war machine. Six ships, including the Lusitania with many Americans on board, were sunk in 1915 alone. German U-boats continued the assault through 1916, but it wasn't until April of 1917, nearly three years after a declaration of war in Europe, that the United States engaged in war with the Axis powers. The draft went into effect in June, 1917, and the first St. Lawrence County detachments were on their way to France by August.



Veterans marching on Main Street, Canton, 1919. (Courtesy SLCHA Archives)



Kathryn Knowles Wheeler of Potsdam. She gave selflessly as a war nurse. (Courtesy Potsdam Public Museum)



George Buller, Jr. family with soldier son, 1917. Troops trained in Potsdam. (Courtesy Potsdam Public Museum)



Company D, 40th Separate Co., 1917, shown marching down Ford Street in Ogdensburg on way to train depot. (Courtesy SLCHA Archives)



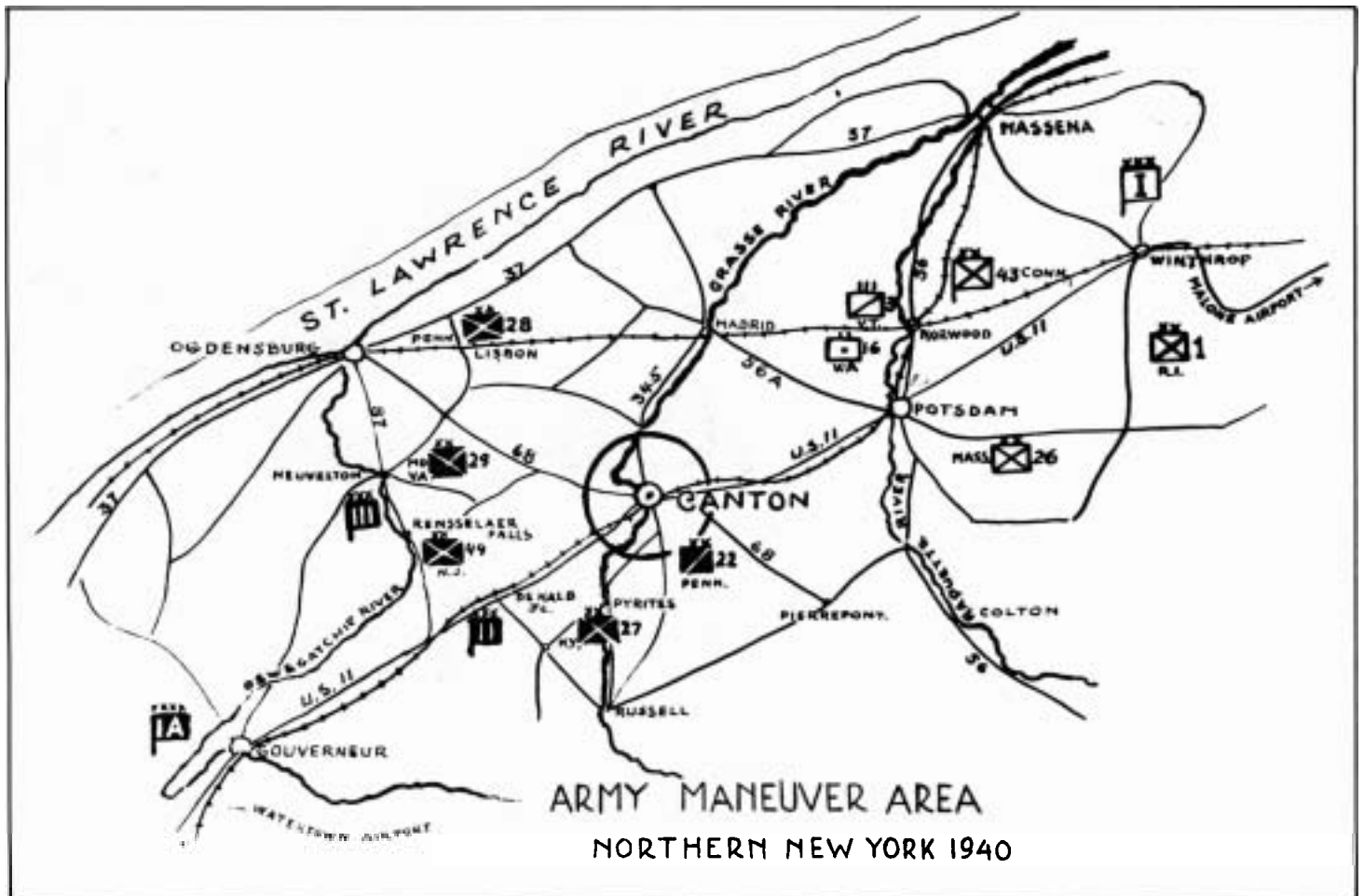
Liberty loan parade, Potsdam, about 1917. (Courtesy Potsdam Public Museum)



Black troops marching through Richville just prior to America's involvement in the war. (Courtesy SLCHA Archives)

The innocence of youth still glows on these faces during the draft of July 1918 in Potsdam. (Courtesy Potsdam Public Museum)





The maneuvers covered an area from Plattsburgh to Watertown, but the center of activity was in St. Lawrence County because it was considered to have ideal conditions.

War Maneuvers of 1940

by Everett Dona

The phrase "war games" suggests a wry commentary on the real nature of the business at which soldiers play. This is even more of an irony when one considers that in little more than a year from the time of the St. Lawrence County maneuvers, we would have real misery and death to contend with. We in the north country, as everywhere else, could not have known what awaited us. War raged in Europe, but to us Americans war was someone else's problem. The maneuvers were just another spectator sport.

August, 1940 has not been forgotten by St. Lawrence County people who remember the "gunfire" that echoed over the countryside as two armies "battled" in the largest peace time maneuvers ever held on the North American continent. At the same time across the Atlantic Adolph Hitler's Nazi troops were continuing their conquest of Europe, and the Soviets were annexing Baltic Sea countries. Our nation had already declared its neutrality, and two months previous had authorized the sale of surplus war material to Britain. Little did we in the North Country know that in fifteen months, at Pearl Harbor, we would become part of the world con-

flict. During the war games the nation's military, as it then existed, assembled in St. Lawrence County to prepare for an invasion of the United States. Materials to wage war were in short supply. Trucks were designated as tanks. Wooden sticks were rifles. And stove pipe and plumbing pipe were fashioned to resemble mortar and machine guns.

Our military leaders in late 1939 and early 1940 would not admit in public that our boys would become part of the world conflict. But plans were mapped to stage "war" in St. Lawrence County whose terrain was considered a natural route for any foreign invader. The Nazi war machine was conquering Poland

in less than a month, and blitzing through Norway, Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Belgium and France before the maneuvers commenced here. The British and French were escaping to Britain. The Soviet Union was pushing to gain its share of territorial spoils. Japan had already taken most of the coastal region of China by 1938. President Roosevelt considered it critical that military training be stepped up rapidly to wartime basis at installations all over the country. The St. Lawrence County maneuvers signaled the commencement of a new era in military activities in the U.S.A.



Army troops marching on King Street in Rensselaer Falls. (Courtesy SLCHA Archives)



Cavalry horses detraining at Canton. (Courtesy SLCHA Archives)



Troop train arriving to martial music at Canton depot. (Courtesy SLCHA Archives)

Plans Outlined

On March 2, 1940 a seemingly ordinary event was taking place at St. Lawrence University. There, at a luncheon, Brigadier-General Irving J. Phillipson, Chief of Staff at Governor's Island, outlined plans for war maneuvers to a group of north country civic leaders, seeking their cooperation and support. The entire finalizing of the maneuvers would depend on Congress approving a \$2 million appropriation requested by the War Department. Congressman Clarence L. Kilburn, R-Malone, pledged "every effort" to get the bill passed. County Farm Bureau agent Russell Cary was named to head the group to secure lease and trespass rights for property owners. In turn the supervisors of the townships to be involved were selected to handle the local lease-trespass rights signatures, giving the army the right to move over grounds listed. No money was to be paid for the leases, but the army was to provide "proper and equitable payment for any damage that might occur." A civilian committee would determine the extent of damage, or whether there was cause for restitution. Conservative estimates were that \$5 million would pour into the north country - \$2 million of federal funds for payrolls, quarters, rations, fuel and other expenditures; and \$3 million from entertainment, hotels, etc., would accrue from the thousands of relatives, friends and observers staying in the area for the three week maneuver period.

Every speaker at that first meeting agreed that one of the finest patriotic gestures the civilian population could provide was the utmost cooperation with the military. Many of the speakers were veterans of the First World War who said they hoped and prayed that any man who fought for this country in the future would have the advantage of actual field training before having the misfortune of going into actual battle. It was stressed that actual damage to land and buildings would be kept low by strict discipline, and Engineer Corps personnel would follow soldiers, repairing any damage they might do. Lawrence F. Cuthbert, an Ogdensburg civic leader and farm owner, said "the army could have all the rights it wanted on his farm. If the soldiers happened to kill a sheep on the way through they could have it, without damages, for a mutton dinner."

The Old C.C.C. Camp

The Civilian Conservation Corps camp at Pierrepont became the maneuvers area headquarters, under the command of Colonel Cassius M. Dowell of the 28th infantry. There many of the battle details were developed; but one factor not under headquarters' control was the weather. It seemed that the weather-



Cavalry unit on Main St., Canton, as part of the 3rd, rather than the 4th, of July parade. The military command wanted the Fourth left open for the troops. (Courtesy Canton Historian's office)

man was not very keen about the maneuvers being held in the north country, for when the early troops arrived with their horses and equipment the skies opened up wide. On June 18th, in a three hour period, 4.49 inches of rain fell, marking the start of a two-week rainy period, described by many old-timers as the worst weather in twenty years. Before the sun regained its reign 6.79 inches fell. A big casualty of the weather was the land. Mud like that had never been seen created impossible conditions, with the troops hard put to establish their campsites. Milk for the soldiers would not have gotten delivered were it not for the perseverance of Edwin Sykes driving his loaded milk truck over the impassable roads, or for the engineers who built temporary roads with logs, winches and cables. The horses made the best of the deep mud; and the cavalymen did not lose their sense of humor. They just smiled and grinned at the visitors who flocked to their campsites to watch the military in action. The Army Engineers were critical to the success of the maneuvers. They found that cordoroy roads (built with their firewood) were not sufficient to withstand the additional rainfall, so plank roads were laid for better movement in camp areas.

Pre-Maneuvers Action

On June 23rd, over a four hour period in bright sunlight, cavalry troops with their horses arrived at the New York Central railroad station on Park Street in Canton in four movements, while military bands provided martial music for the thousands of spectators on hand to watch the unusual sight. State troopers, village police and deputy sheriffs were on hand to maintain order among the on-lookers. The first to detrain were

182 men and officers, including a 31 piece band from Newark, New Jersey. They came in five coaches, two baggage cars and four stock cars. At DeKalb Junction the 101st, 51st, and 121st Cavalry Regiments arrived, bringing troops from as far away as Virginia, Pennsylvania, and the New England states. Top among these was the famed "Yankee" Division of World War One. All in all seventy-five to a hundred thousand troops, comprising "eastern" and "western" armies, plus seven air squadrons with better than a hundred fighter and bomber craft (these were stationed at Pine Camp, now Fort

Drum, and at Malone) formed the largest military exercise ever conducted on American soil.

The entire war maneuvers were under the leadership of Lt. General Hugh A. Drum, First Army commander, who served as the Chief of Staff under Pershing in the First World War. In a pre-manuever speech he said: "Modern weapons are of little value in battle if an offensive military spirit is lacking in the personnel manning them. Our military, soldierly conception must be based on a will to carry the fight to the enemy and on applying the offensive spirit to the enemy and to the modern weapons of war. The lesson to be learned from recent European conflicts is that our people must stop basking in the sunshine of peace and in the security of two oceans and search for a sound defense solution."

The objective of the maneuvers was for the western army to repel the invading eastern army. The "Black" (western) army was grouped near DeKalb Junction, Depeyster and Gouverneur, with its extreme flank at Morristown. The "Blue" (eastern) army moved from Plattsburgh to positions south and east of Potsdam, with the center of operations at Plumb Brook, Sanfordville, and Parishville. The "industrial area" of Watertown was the blue army's objective. "Umpires" housed in the men's residence hall (now Sykes Hall) at St. Lawrence University, were part of each unit in the field, and whose job was to declare winners and losers in the "battles." Fifteen hundred rounds of blanks were provided the troops for rifles, machine guns, and 75mm guns. Medical



President Roosevelt (white suit) ready to begin a tour of the maneuver area at Norwood. With him are Secretary of War Henry Stimson, New York Governor H.H. Lehman and Lieutenant-General Drum. (Courtesy SLCHA Archives)

battalions, however, carried out their duties as though they were dealing with actual warfare casualties. They also tested the water supplies and inspected food daily and the disposal of refuse to prevent illness and disease. Each soldier was vaccinated for small-pox and typhoid.

The Big Push

As the opening of the maneuvers approached a D-Day like atmosphere prevailed. A constant flow of troops and army equipment gave one the impression that, indeed, a gigantic life and death struggle was at hand. A scorching sun and vaporous humidity in July added to the seriousness that the mind of the military man locks into as the battle approaches. Contact between the Black and the Blue armies came in the vicinity of Lisbon and Madrid, with the center of no-man's-land at the little hamlet of Eben, between Potsdam and Canton. Norwood's rail junction was the scene of a "furious" overnight "battle" by New England troops. Clatter of small arms fire wakened north country folks early as things got under way Monday, August 19th in 90 degree heat. All day Sunday was spent making ready the trucks and other equipment, and outlining their maps.

The Blue army, which included the First Corps, Regular Army and considered the most modern equipped infantry division, was presumed to have advanced from New England through the Lake Champlain area and had reached the general line of the Raquette River by Monday night. The Black army, under the command of General Drum, was presumed to have retired in the direction of Watertown. Its aerial forces had indicated the Blue concentrations were the first day in the vicinity of Norwood, Potsdam and North Lawrence, with horse units west of Norwood. At 9 p.m. the Black army had completed its concentration with the



Television crew set up in front of Brewer fieldhouse along Park Street on the St. Lawrence University campus. (Courtesy Canton Historian's office)

arrival of its cavalry and was in concealed bivouacs prepared to move in accordance with orders issued by General Drum. Its air defense command had established general protection and an aircraft warning service covered an area of Troy-Albany, Cape Vincent-Boice-West Pierrepont-Port Douglas. The main Black forces were responsible for providing protection south of that area.

Zero hour, Tuesday, was 5 a.m. when General Drum and unit commanders issued their orders. Mechanized "suicide squads" of New York National Guardsman led repeated stabbing assaults at the main flank of the invading Blues, and secured vital crossings on

the Racquette River. But two Black battalions of the Fifth Maryland Infantry and a tank company of the 29th Division were captured by the Blue army after they had broken through the north flank and moved into enemy territory. Umpires ruled the entire battalion out of action after it had been enveloped by the Blues.

Main activity in the morning was near Colton where control of the Racquette River was seized by the Blacks after units of the 27th Division had advanced, under cover of darkness, from Russell. Company M of Ogdensburg remained as a guard for the right flank of the defending army at North Russell. There was numerous spots of action in other locations during the day as the soldiers fought under poor weather conditions. Monday had been very wet, the field soggy, and the humid air brought misery in abundance. Tuesday was a bit better. Five enemy planes were "downed" by anti-aircraft fire by the defending Black forces, largely due to the civilian air raid warning personnel. (Bags of flour were dropped to simulate bombs.) The Black units encircled the left of the enemy invaders, crashing through his right and center. Concern in Headquarters was the "only skillful use of strong reserves" would prevent defeat and end the battle earlier than planned, thus terminating needed troop training.

At 1 p.m. Wednesday the major battle was called off by umpires a day early when the Black forces had knifed stead-

PRESS

Mr. *Ernest W. Dona*

Representing: *A.P. - SYRACUSE POST-STANDARD - OGDENSBURG JOURNAL*

is an officially accredited public relations representative accompanying the First Army on Maneuvers in the Plattsburg—Watertown Area August 3-31, 1940. He will be accorded all courtesies.

For the Commanding General:
Ernest W. Dona
 Officer in Charge, Public Relations Division

Press pass of the author. A press pass was essential for anyone given assignment to cover the maneuvers, but few restrictions were placed upon reporters. (Courtesy of the author)



Car pool near Canton waiting for the "brass" and other dignitaries. (Courtesy Canton Historian's office)

ily into Blue territory and reached Par-
ishville after overcoming a strategic
Blue retreat late the previous day.
Tuesday night Black forces had used
light assault boats to cross the Rac-
quette River at Hannawa Falls under
cover of darkness.

I have noted only some of the action
of the main maneuvers, for "battles"
were fought all over the "front" as
farmers and their families and other
spectators tried to keep up with the
"war." The Black forces on Thursday,
August 22nd, were back in their camps,
dog tired, bewhiskered and hungry from
the three-day war. Charles S. Cantwell,
a First World War veteran, covering
the maneuvers for the Ogdensburg
Journal kept a keen interest on the
Ogdensburg Company M boys. Wednes-
day noon he caught up with Lieutenant
Elder and his tired gunners sprawled
about in a thicket a quarter mile south
of the Racquette, and about the same
distance from the pontoon bridge over
which the 27th Infantry troops were
still pouring. Having just come from
the Public Relations Headquarters in
Ogdensburg, Cantwell brought the
pleasant tidings to the 108th Infantry
that "war" was to end at 1 p.m. Passing
the word among troops of Company M,

someone remarked, "Oh, yeah, what's
the gag?" A half hour later a runner
brought the "cease fire" word to the
area.

By nightfall some of the troops had
loaded their trucks and had started mov-
ing out of the maneuver area. Trucks
and crowded troop trains started to roll
south and east on Friday. By Sunday
all but a few of the suntanned, khaki-
clad units cleared for home. Only units
committed to maneuver clean-up and
damage repair were still around. The
job took about a month. There were
very few claims to process with the
civilian population. General Drum, in
an address to 8,000 troops of the First
Army, made a final critique when he
said, "A valuable return has been
secured by your efforts. National de-
fense has been greatly improved there-
by, and the financial outlay of about \$2
million dollars has been more than
justified."

FDR's Visit

On August 17th President Franklin
Delano Roosevelt visited the maneuver
area after Secret Service officers had
inspected the routes of the chief execu-
tive would take. The scene created as
much excitement as the maneuvers
themselves. His official cars - one a 16

cylinder Cadillac, the other a 12 cylin-
der Packard - arrived from Washington
at General Drum's official residence on
East Main Street, Canton. FDR arrived
at Norwood aboard his special train to
commence his first visit to the green
hills and valleys of the north country.
After official greeting ceremonies, he
was given a 21 gun salute, an army
band played the National Anthem, and
cavalry troops presented arms as he
stepped off the train, accompanied by
Secretary of War Henry Stimson. The
long trek from Norwood to Ogdensburg
included staff cars, four buses for news-
papermen and photographers, and a
signal corp truck with amplifying
equipment. The route took the President
through Sanfordville, where lunch was
prepared. Planes flew overhead in per-
fect formation, soaring in over the
motorcade through sun-baked clouds.
Then it was on to Potsdam and Canton,
where thousands lined the streets; De-
Kalb Junction, Rensselaer Falls, Lisbon
Corners, and finally to Ogdensburg.
There, he entered the State hospital
grounds, and the Ogdensburg streets
filled with thousands and thousands of
people. Prime Minister of Canada Mac-
kenzie King met the President there
for dinner and talk. Ogdensburg had



A typical infantry encampment of the maneuvers, location unknown. (Courtesy Canton Historian's office)

never seen such a day as that; nor all of the north country, for that matter. Traffic that weekend was full of long delays and very heavy. An example of this was that it took a reporter and a photographer three hours and one hundred and twenty miles over a circuitous route to reach Ogdensburg from Canton!

Other Facts of Interest

A special sight for Canton residents occurred during payroll pickup time at the St. Lawrence County National Bank. National Guard and regular army units, carrying machine guns and rifles, guarded the money handlers and their \$36,000 or so in payroll. Merchants and tavern owners did a landslide business after the soldiers were paid off. Upwards of \$20,000 (a vast sum in those days) was spent between March and July at locations in Pierrepont and Canton.

—Trains ran daily from Watertown and Plattsburgh bringing food and other supplies. These trains carried fresh vegetables and fruits during the week and ice cream on Sundays. Food was also dropped in by parachute. Food poisoning occurred among some officers and troops from egg sandwiches.

—Some \$20,000 worth of straw was purchased for forage and for the en-

listed men's bed sacks. They did not enjoy modern mattresses and box springs when they had a chance to doze while not on alert.

—During the maneuvers the troops found time to help with a carnival on the "Island" to raise funds to beautify the community picnic area and trailer camp behind Charlie Cook's garage (now Willow Island Restaurant).

—Two fatalities occurred when a Maryland private died of head injuries when a telephone pole he was helping to unload hit him. The second died from meningitis.

—One soldier was court martialed and given a dishonorable discharge for attacking a village police officer.

—NBC and CBS radio (then CBC) made their headquarters in the dormitory of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity house.

—The maneuvers "No Man's Land" was strikingly similar to the French-Belgium coastline, if one examines a map of France and Belgium and compares the channel area with that of St. Lawrence county between Ogdensburg and Massena - a very interesting resemblance.

—Sickness among the troops from the adverse weather was of nearly epi-

demio proportions. A makeshift hospital was set up in the old St. Lawrence University fieldhouse.

A Few Reflections

The maneuvers were good for the north country *and* the nation - the north country because of the sizable economic impact, the fact that the operation was a major event that brought St. Lawrence County to the attention of the country, and, most importantly, that the north country had the honor of playing a critical role in what was a national defense operation; and the nation because valuable training under field conditions (including the rain and horrible humidity) was gained. The soldiers, despite the mimic nature of the "war," had a pretty rough go of it and did not complain much. I was fortunate in being part of the tremendous undertaking, because it was, really, the first step in a long, five year march that would end on a battleship in Tokyo Bay.

About the Author

Mr. Dona covered the 1940 maneuvers for the *Watertown Daily Times*. He is a former resident of Canton who presently lives in Bedford, Massachusetts.



Readying artillery for action. (Courtesy Canton Historian's office)



Not exactly like mother makes. (Courtesy Canton Historian's office)

A Very Big 3rd of July

"We were sitting down at the hotel (Harrington, *Ed.*) one evening a week or so later and Colonel Guthrie was with us. He was a southerner. He turned to father and said, 'Well, Man-lee, with all these troops 'round here you mean you ain't gonna have a pee-rade on the Fourth of July.'"

So begins Atwood Manley's gleeful and fond memory of how he and a few stalwart citizens of Canton set off on a patriotic mission to organize a parade of war maneuver troops. The parade was actually held on the third of July, because the commanding officer believed the troops would want the Fourth to themselves. Here excerpted from a long conversation with Atwood is his account of that "big show." (*Ed.*)

They had twelve hundred and fifty horses out on the Pike farm (the main cavalry headquarters, *Ed.*) with the troops there. Came the evening. Father, Colonel Guthrie and some other families got on top of the portico - there was a second floor veranda right out on Main Street down at the hotel, and we had the prize level. Then we had a reviewing stand up in front of the old town hall; and the troops started coming down the Park Street road in columns of two. They'd been burnishing their brass and polishing their leathers and grooming their horses - a gorgeous sight!

In columns of two they came, down Park Street, up Elm Street, across Jay Street, and as they came onto Main Street at the Jay Street crossing they formed into columns of eight. They marched straight down Main Street to the riverside crossing, opposite the hotel (Hodskin House, where the IGA store now stands - *Ed.*) Then they turned in columns of four, up over here to the flat iron turn up on State Street, then into twos and back to the farm. Every inch of that march was protected by military police standing shoulder to shoulder. The troopers marched between two rows of military police.

We had twenty-five thousand people in Canton that night; and we had cars parked two and three miles out on every road out of Canton. People were walking in from two and three miles out - whole families. Main Street was packed from the stores to the curbs. When seven o'clock struck there wasn't a thing, not even a mouse, on the pavement between the railroad and the bridges.

Then of course these troopers all loved to sing. They had some magnificent voices in the group. They came in with their colors flying first. General Powell came with his beautiful palomino mare leading the procession and his staff with colors flying. Then came a gorgeous band playing all the old songs. The troopers'd all wail, and there'd be a band coming in farther up - they had eight bands. These bands would be coming in playing popular and army numbers, the troopers singing their hearts out, riding their horses, clanking and everything. Just glistening and stepping high. The horses felt it just as well as the men. They were just all at their very best. It was simply a wonderful, wonderful sight. It was probably the largest cavalry parade the army ever held. They had one down in Mississippi one time, but they said this one was bigger.

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"Parade"—a diorama from a collection of Vietnam scenes by veteran Michael Cousino of Gouverneur. The irony, of course, is that there was no parade for the returning Vietnam veteran.

Vietnam Story: Boys Grow Up to be Soldiers

by Thomas Coakley

By late afternoon, the sun had beaten down for so long that you had stopped feeling it. We had been assigned to an armored cavalry unit for three or four days on a search and destroy mission. The mission of search and destroy wasn't new; we had been doing that on foot for months, walking and searching for the enemy by day and lying in ambush by night. We were ground pounders, the foot infantry, and none of us relished being assigned to the cavalry unit. Rather than walk, we now rode on tanks and armored personnel carriers that would crush their way through the jungle. On foot we would move quietly, but the "cav" with their mammoth Chrysler engines in the track vehicles telegraphed our position over hundreds of yards, or so it seemed to us. The cavalry units covered far more territory than our foot unit normally would, increasing our chances of combat and decreasing our chances of survival. Yet the men of the cav unit abhorred the thought of being foot soldiers with the gruelling daily schedule of walking miles and sleeping night after night in the jungle. They felt uneasy without the firepower of tanks and fifty caliber machine guns.

By four o'clock the day's operations were done, and the track vehicles were forming a circle for the night's encamp-

ment. (Yes, just like the covered wagons in the old western movies. Some survival tactics are as basic as eating and sleeping.) It was break time and I began talking to the guy from the cavalry unit who had been riding next to me all day. With the usual inventiveness of conversation I began with, "Where are you from?" Of all the small world stories I'd encountered, this one was most pleasant. The fellow was from Norwood, New York, a mere stone's throw from my home in Canton. The mutually shared familiarity with St. Lawrence County provided a wonderfully reassuring feeling of nostalgia as we quizzed each other on local sports heroes, area schools, famous local saloons, and many other persons and places of importance to each of us. We spoke, yes fondly, of winter and how wonderful it would be to dress to keep warm. We had talked for fifteen minutes, then the army intruded once again, ordering our foot infantry to saddle up and proceed back into the jungle about 500 yards to set up an ambush. True to form, we were robbed of the one part of the cav assignment that we did appreciate: the chance to sleep almost restfully within the safer confines of the "covered wagon" encampment.

That night we heard the enemy with-

in the kill zone and we were forced to execute the ambush. The claymore mines, the first line of attack failed to detonate resulting in only a harmless "pop" of a blasting cap which exposed our presence to the enemy. What ensued was the sound of enemy soldiers running in all directions, a volley of grenade throwing, and the need for our platoon of eighteen men to get up and relocate in the pitch black of the jungle night. Worst of all, we were ordered to link up with a South Vietnamese army unit in ambush, which required walking into their "kill zone" with only indirect-radio communication. All told, the nocturnal activities were far from comforting, and I have forgotten how and when we rejoined the cavalry unit. I never saw the fellow from Norwood again. We parted with only first names, a bit of a tradition in the field. That eliminated the possibility of learning later if an acquaintance had been killed.

"Hours of boredom, followed by seconds of terror." That was a favorite cliché describing one's tour in Vietnam. Often times I was left in these hours of waiting to contemplate all the circumstances that led to my being twelve thousand miles from home. It was 1969 and very few of us suffered from any illusion of winning a war. Nixon had already promised the people to reduce



The author (center) at a basecamp near the Cambodian border in 1968.
(Photo courtesy of the author)

troops and end the war. Rumors were rampant that The Big Red 1 (First Division) would be the first to be withdrawn, and we all waited anxiously for that day. Who of us could have known the emptiness of that promise, that war would carry on four more years. It seemed to most of us a trick of bad fate that kept us fighting for our lives while the politicians contemplated the great question of how to "leave with dignity".

The physical events leading to the departure for, and the arrival in, Vietnam are a story in themselves, but the greater story may be in the thought process and the conditioning that led many of us there. Our generation saw great numbers of heroic World War II movies, and spent countless days of childhood mimicking those celluloid heroes. Many of us had fathers, uncles and family friends who had fought in that war of a truly noble cause. The end result for so many of us was an impenetrable (though possibly subconscious) belief in the infallibility of the United States government. The belief in the infallibility strengthened by a loyalty that put one's own safety second to the country's call, led so many young men from St. Lawrence County and elsewhere to volunteer or join when the draft notice came. And young they were; the average age of the Vietnam veteran was nineteen versus twenty-six in World War II. The typical infantry soldiers in Vietnam was the rural, small town boy just out of high school; and St. Lawrence County gave its share, nearly thirty-seven hundred Vietnam era veterans.

Why didn't patriotism, loyalty, and a sense of government infallibility carry the day in Vietnam? The answers are many. For one, the war just wasn't the same as World War II. Many heroic acts were performed in that war of a very clear and unmistakable cause. In Vietnam heroic deeds were done but it was all but impossible to determine if they had any meaning. Contrary to World War II, there was nothing to

win. Taking land was like building sand castles by the sea. When the job was completed, these efforts would be wiped out within days by the incoming tide of North Vietnamese and Viet Cong, while we were off building castles elsewhere.

Division on the homefront was another factor making this an entirely different war. St. Lawrence County played a major role regarding this aspect of the war as well. Local disenchantment and eventual protest over the war in all probability began with the various colleges in the county, but as time moved on, the war continued to lose popularity, and significant numbers of "stop the war advocates" could be counted beyond the campuses in the traditionally more conservative business and farming communities as well. As well represented as St. Lawrence County was in the battlefields of Vietnam, the county was also representative of the nation as a whole in the peace effort.

We were very aware of the peace movement raging on the homefront, and a great number of soldiers firmly believed that the protesters were right in their efforts. The same peace sign carried by the protesters at home, was a most popular symbol in Vietnam by 1969. It was a symbol of hope that the diplomats would be pushed to bring an end to the war sooner rather than later. There were of course an equally great number of soldiers who abhorred the lack of patriotism in the states. I would not venture to say what view carried the majority. That depended on the time and the place. Nevertheless, the division at home and division in Vietnam had all but eliminated those noble and patriotic causes that motivated, so well, our own fathers in World War II. I would hasten to add that the division of opinion among the troops very seldom affected performance. Vietnam, like all wars had its heroic deeds, but the noble causes or motivators of these deeds were internalized and personalized into survival

and self-esteem. The noble cause of survival carried the day, pushing us to skillful performance of duty, and often heroic actions. Self-esteem, a mere extension of survival, dictated that we perform well at what we were trained for, and, when the situation demanded, survival became secondary to the self-esteem that only perfect execution of one's duties could provide. The political insanity surrounding the war and the severely weakened feelings of patriotic cause, placed a very heavy importance on the internalized motivation of survival and personal esteem.

The U.S. presence of ground combat troops in Vietnam ended in 1973, and the nightly news no longer reported the body count just prior to the Dow Jones Industrial average. Society gladly closed the door on an inglorious escape, unwilling to be consumed with its costs and its failure. But, noticed or not, Vietnam did leave its afflictions upon us. Families of 57,000 dead, twenty-nine from St. Lawrence County, grieved in private, their sadness heightened by the lack of public recognition. Seventy-five thousand disabled veterans began reassembling their lives again without public recognition. As time passed, delayed reactions to the war began to set in. The toxic chemical dioxin used in agent orange, an extensively used jungle defoliant, began to take its toll among vets, in the form of death, nerve disorder, skin disorder, and even birth defects. Delayed effects of the war began to take their toll mentally in the form of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, which in its blandest form, surfaces as recurring Vietnam-related bad dreams. It is estimated that as many as 80,000 Vietnam vets contend with some form of this problem. And, saddest of all, Vietnam veterans in the thousands, possibly approaching the number killed in Vietnam, have chosen to end their own lives.

At the root of many of the problems mentioned above, the Vietnam veteran returned to a hostile society, sometimes openly hostile, where overly zealous war protesters spit on the returning vet in an erroneous displacement of anger from the government to the returning soldier; and sometimes passively hostile, where there were no parades, no recognition, and no "thanks" for his year of sacrifice. He returned two years behind his contemporaries with respect to career. To be sure the obvious skills developed in Vietnam carried little value in society's workplace, and the indirect skills of leadership, and task orientation were ignored. He returned to a government offering considerably less than the WWII vet received in the form of a GI bill, and he returned to an antiquated and inept Veterans Administration, which often failed miserably

in treating or even recognizing medical need. But the worst problems was the intangible ones, society's attitude. People would not listen to the veteran. America was bred on stories of winning and Vietnam was not that kind of story. Society's attitude had a great deal to do with the vet's ability to get back on track. After WWII the patriotic attitudes that prevailed helped to make jobs readily available to the returning vet. After Vietnam, however, those returning nineteen year olds with little or no previous job experience, found a society unwilling to bend in the slightest to help in securing that first job. Sad as it may sound vets often learned the hard way that it was better to omit Vietnam entirely from their resume. To be sure a great number of returning Vietnam vets were able to duck the roadblocks of a hostile society. Typically those vets who were older and who had already acquired a college degree or a previous job were able to rejoin society, filling their lives with family and occupations, and more often than not, writing off Vietnam as a wasted year. Many other veterans never found their niche, and never got on track, and therefore the wounds of their tour in Vietnam and their hostile return to the U.S. are not easily forgotten.

Almost as if society can now better cope with the healing processes that never took place, the subject of Vietnam has recently taken on a new resurgence of sorts, and again activities within our county portray events nationwide. After ten years, a national memorial to the Vietnam dead and missing in action was erected totally through private donations. In a similar manner a memorial to St. Lawrence County's veterans killed in Vietnam was recently established at the courthouse in Canton. Nationally the thirteen part public television series on Vietnam presented the viewing public with its first chance to learn about Vietnam in an objective environment that only the distance of time could provide. Locally, university courses are being offered with surprising popularity to a student audience whose average age was five years at the height of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Nationally, Vietnam Veterans Service Organizations are beginning to grow and flourish. Ten years ago that could not have happened. Never in our history had a group returned from war in such a nonaligned manner, coming home one by one, quietly absorbed into society, and with a great deal of political polarization over the war they just left behind. Locally, a group has been formed, the Vietnam Veterans of St. Lawrence County, with the intentions of vet comradeship, the enhancement of the Vietnam veteran's public image, and the general support and service to



Congressman David Martin and Colonel David Hannum, Jr. unveiling Korea-Vietnam memorial on Memorial Day, 1983. (Photo courtesy of the author)

the Vietnam Era veteran. In unity and largely through the efforts of the Vietnam Veterans of America, veterans have forced the government to recognize the effects of agent orange and of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. In attacking the latter problem a national outreach program has been created to provide Vietnam era veteran counselling, and again, St. Lawrence County has, through the efforts of many, established such a program locally.

Indeed the story on Vietnam is not yet complete. Nationally the bitter tasting end in 1975 is being countered by a nation of people who have sought to understand more fully the war and its effect on the soldier. If we can avoid recollecting the Vietnam war as the continuation of some sort of "glorious human tradition", then maybe the les-

sons we learn in this post-mortem will deter the recurrence of such a situation again. That in itself would give Vietnam a happy ending. The real stories, however, are the individual stories from an individualistic war. The interest in Vietnam history is here and will pass, but while it is here there is a great opportunity for Vietnam veterans to make their reconciliation with society. Society never has been and never will be so receptive as it is today. It is in this area that the story of Vietnam can hopefully arrive at many many happy endings.

About the Author

Thomas Coakley spent four months in Vietnam before being severely wounded. He teaches in the Social Sciences department at St. Lawrence University.

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