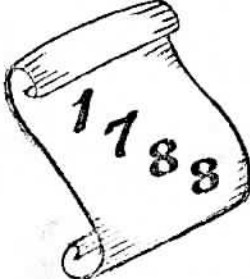


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Bill Mc Dermott, editor

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CLINTON'S CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS

The men of Clinton who served in the Civil War was the topic of the November 16th meeting at the Town Hall. Bill Benson, the speaker, researched this topic thoroughly for this meeting. His research efforts were quite evident in his talk for the manner in which he presented the information was both entertaining and well detailed. Thanks Bill for a fine talk.

Sixty two men from Clinton left their homes to take part in the Civil war as members of either the 128th or 150th Dutchess County Regiments. Fathers and sons, brothers and cousins, neighbors and strangers all left Clinton, many with a feeling of patriotism, to unite a young country which had fallen prey to an internal struggle threatening to sever the South from the North. One "man" from Clinton was sent home the day of his enlistment. This "man" was 14 year old George E. Thomas who probably had been swept up in the wave of patriotic spirit present throughout Dutchess in the year 1862. The patriotic spirit was one of many incentives which accounted for enlistments. As in any war the chance to see another part of the country or to be a hero or to leave an uncomfortable situation at home undoubtedly motivated men to enlist. Money was another incentive. A man who enlisted received \$300. from the government when he enlisted. This was a substantial amount of money when a cord of wood could be purchased for \$3.00 or a broom to sweep the ashes for 25¢. \$300 bought 100 cords of wood at that time (and a lot of ashes). Some men chose not to go even when drafted. For the privilege of staying home a man either paid a substitute \$300. or paid the government the same amount.

Bill went on to describe how the two Dutchess County regiments, which included our boys from Clinton, participated in the war. Bill pointed out that the 128th Regiment left Dutchess early September 1862 (mustered at Hudson, N.Y.) to train at Baltimore where it remained, except for 3 or 4 days at Gettysburg in October 1862. In November 1862 the 128th boarded a boat for New Orleans where it camped until June 1863. During that period the regiment fought one battle at Port Hudson on May 27, 1863 where the first battle casualty of the Clinton contingent occurred. Mathias Graff, wounded on that day, lived only another few weeks before dying of his wounds on July 7, 1863. The regiment left the battle bound for Baton Rouge where it remained until April 1864. After a long period of time there was a chance the regiment would see battle again for it left for Alexandria, Virginia by ship and arrived there on May 13, 1864.

The men of Clinton did not see action again until October 19, 1864 where the fierce battle of Cedar Creek left many dead on the battlefield or hospitalized from wounds or captured. Men of Clinton Charles E. Kisshouer and Robert O. Smith were killed. Four Clintonians were captured - William B. Brown, Stephen A. Moore, John S. Hadden and James W. Meyers. Hadden and Meyers died in the Confederate jail at Salisbury, North Carolina. Brown and Moore were later released and discharged. The 128th remained near Cedar Creek at Winchester, Virginia until early 1865 when they moved in quick succession to New Bern, North Carolina and then to Kinston, N.C. where they arrived on April 9, 1865. The war was over for this regiment.

Of the 30 men from Clinton five had died either in battle or as a result of battle wounds. Martin Rikert never saw Clinton again for he had died of disease at Baton Rouge on January 3, 1864. And Morgan S. St. John saw Clinton but never returned to his regiment having died while on furlough in Clinton on April 10, 1864.

Life in the 150th Dutchess County Regiment was quite different according

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to speaker Bill Benson. This regiment saw battle on six occasions including the battle at Gettysburg. Mustering in at Camp Dutchess at Poughkeepsie on October 11, 1862, the 150th boarded the ship, Oregon bound for Jersey City. Two men never boarded the ship, one is known to have deserted. The regiment arrived by train at Baltimore on October 13, 1862 where they met their friends in the 128th from Dutchess. The 150th remained in Baltimore until a week before their participation in the historic Battle of Gettysburg on July 2 & 3, 1863. In spite of the large number of casualties, Clinton's sons left the battlefield unscathed. A few days later they marched through places made famous by the Civil War. Antietam, Harper's Ferry and Kelly's Ford, Virginia saw Clinton's men marching on their way to the train which brought them to Tennessee on October 4, 1863.

They remained in Normandy, Tenn. until they moved by rail and foot to headquarters at Tullahoma, Tennessee. In May 1864 the 150th Dutchess Regiment joined General Sherman's army. For the next two months they saw a great deal of action in battles at Resaca, Dallas, Kenesaw Mt., Culp's Farm and Peach Tree Creek. These were men seasoned in battle through their experience at Gettysburg. This was very apparent in the Battle at Resaca where they saved a battery from being overrun by the enemy. Later, from an entrenched position and reserving their fire until the enemy was three hundred yards away, the 150th retained their position against greater numbers while suffering few casualties. Clinton's men suffered no battle casualties until Henry W. Story was killed at Dallas, Ga. on May 25, 1864. Julius Hicks and Perlee Hoag were wounded but recovered and were discharged later.

The regiment finally moved into Atlanta, Georgia without firing a shot. They left Atlanta burning and headed for Savannah with General Sherman's army. On the way their leader and friend from Dover, Colonel John H. Ketcham was

severely wounded on December 21, 1864. While he would fight no more, he would take his seat in Congress and later be in Poughkeepsie to welcome his men home from the war.

After Savannah was secured in January 1865, the men of Clinton in the 150th fought one more battle at Aversborough, North Carolina where 18 year old Jefferson Traver was wounded but recovered at Albany Hospital. The regiment finally arrived at Raleigh, North Carolina on April 13, 1865 just four days after the other Dutchess County regiment, the 128th, had camped at Kinston, a few miles away.

Of the 32 Clinton men who served in the 150th Regiment, there was only one battlefield death; three men were wounded but recovered. Unfortunately 18 year old Sackett Travis and 41 year old Christian Closs did not return home. Both men died of disease while in the South.

The two regiments proceeded to Washington, D.C. in May 1865 before finally returning home. The Clinton men of the 150th returned to a grand reception in Poughkeepsie on June 12, 1865. The arrival of their friends in the 128th regiment was anti-climactic on July 12, 1865. Of the sixty two men from Clinton in both regiments nine died as a result of battle or disease. They were among the 350,000 men of 1½ million who died while serving in the Union Army.

Contrary to the belief of some, Clinton men did not respond to the Poughkeepsie Eagle of 8/21/1862 which editorialized (Clinton)"has had the name of being far behind her sister towns" in enlistments. Three days earlier Clinton Town Supervisor John S. Wing had offered a \$200 bonus to each enlistee. He knew the property owners would support him. Independent Clintonian had answered the call to arms issued from Clinton Hollow not from Poughkeepsie.

MEETING

REMEMBER

Clinton Historical Society

ANTIQUÉ ENGINES

talk and slides by

JIM BOICE

at The Library - Schultsville

January 18, 1980

Friday

8 P.M.

Speaker Jim Boice has been collecting antique engines for a number of years. In his talk he will discuss how his interest began and what is involved in this unusual hobby. Jim actually started his collection in Clinton. His knowledge of restoration techniques is extensive and will be illustrated with slides and pictures. In addition Jim will discuss the uses of these sturdy old engines.

Looking forward to seeing you on Friday January 18 at 7.PM.

The Annual Dinner

The annual dinner, while not yet a tradition, will be held again this year at the end of March. As usual reservations will be needed for this well attended event. You will receive information about the date, time and place in enough time to make your reservations.

AND

TRADITIONAL FOLK MUSIC

A Saturday at the end of April has been set aside for an evening of traditional folk music. The well known singer-musicians, THE MERRY WIVES, will play various traditional musical instruments while singing their repertoire of folk songs. This is an event which will be sponsored by the Clinton Historical Society but will be open to all residents and their guests. This is a first step in bringing this kind of program to the Town and perhaps could be followed by other such programs in the future.

Please mark these last weeks in March and April on your calender.