



13th Maine Infantry Regiment News

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In This Issue

Welcome

Articles:

- New History Project
- Men of the 13th Maine
- Reminiscences of Pvt Andrew Gordon
- The Searcher

Welcome

This Newsletter is for you

After cleaning up our email list with the first and second newsletter mailings, we now assume that all readers have indicated an interest in the history of the 13th Maine Infantry and wish to receive this newsletter.

We invite you to share this information with others you think might be interested and invite them to sign up for their own future copies on the 13th Maine web site.

This newsletter is intended to provide information about how to find and use research. It will also be a way for readers to share their research with others.

The primary resource will be the "New 13th Maine Infantry Regimental History Project" and associated databases, image files, documents, time lines, biographies, etc. described in Issue 1.

New History Project *Status of the project*

At this time I have completed the initial genealogical and historical research on 1076 (or more than 95%) of the 1132 soldiers who are confirmed as having served in the 13th Maine Infantry Regiment.

By "initial" research is meant that at least the following sources have been searched for each soldier:

- US Census (1790-1930)
- Civil War Enlistment files
- Civil War Military record index
- Civil War Pension Index
- Civil War Burial index
- LDS Family History files
- Ancestry.com records
- Lufkin's history
- Gordon's reminiscences

In addition, when found readily available, the following sources have been checked:

- Cemetery records & visits
- Town records & histories
- On-line genealogies
- News paper obituaries and other articles
- Letters from readers
- Other histories

Charles A. Bonsall, Ed.

Men of the 13th Maine Pvt. Andrew B. Gordon

Pvt. Andrew Gordon is the author of 155 pages of "Reminiscences" which have been given to us by his great-great-granddaughter, Nancy Morrill. Many of his accounts will be included in this and subsequent issues of the newsletter. So that the reader will be a little more familiar with this source the following is some of what we know of Pvt. Gordon...

He enlisted as a private into Co. K on 12/7/1861 at Kennebunkport, Maine, and mustered in at Augusta, Maine, on 12/13/1861. He re-enlisted on 2/1/1864. He was transferred into Co. K, 30th Maine on 12/28/1864. He mustered into the 30th Maine at Berwick, Georgia, on 2/29/1865. He mustered out of the 30th Maine at Savannah, Georgia, on 8/20/1865.

The fact that he was one of the relatively small number of soldiers who served the entire war in both the 13th and 30th Maine regiments would indicate that he was a both a robust and cautious individual.

He was described at enlistment as an 18 year old single farmer, 5' 8½" tall, with light hair, blue eyes, and dark complexion. (We have a picture of Co. K but we have no way of knowing which soldier was Pvt. Gordon.)

He was born about 1843 at Saco, Maine, one of at least six children of Richard and Mary Gordon.

He married Mary E. Hill on 8/4/1866 at Saco, Maine, and they had at least five children:

1. Beatrice R. 1867
2. Emma M. 1869
3. Harry E. 1872
4. Herbert A. 1875
5. Frank A. 1879

He lived until at least 1930 when he appeared on the US Census in Massachusetts, so he would have been among the last surviving veterans of the 13th Maine.

Corp. Otis Leonard Coffin

Corporal Otis L. Coffin was the last surviving veteran of the 13th Maine, when he died at Freeport, Maine, on 11/28/1944 at age 100. He is buried in the South Freeport Cemetery. His family burial monument is still in very good condition (9/2003).

He enlisted as a private into Co. E on 10/26/1861 at Freeport, and mustered in at Augusta on 12/10/1861. He re-enlisted on 2/1/1864. He was promoted to corporal. He was transferred into Co. B, 30th Maine on 12/26/1864, and mustered into the 30th Maine at Berwick, Georgia,

on 2/1/1864. He mustered out of the 30th Maine at Savannah, Georgia, on 8/20/1865. He later claimed that he was a Sergeant-Major when he mustered out.

According to New England's Last Civil War Veterans, by Jay S. Hoar, Seacliff Press, Arlington, Texas, 1976:

"Otis L. Coffin, 100, of Freeport and Co. F, 13th Maine Inf. in 1861, re-enlisted in the 30th Maine in 1864 where he served until the end of the war. He was discharged at Ft. Pulaski, Ga., and mustered out as a Sergeant-Major. Coffin was fond of relating how Gen. Neal Dow, commanding the 13th, once called upon him to lead an assault in place of a captain. Dept. Cmdr. [Randall Post No. 98 GAR] 1942-1943. He died Nov. 28, 1944."

He was described at enlistment as an 18 year old single blacksmith, 5' 5 ½" tall, with light hair, blue eyes, and light complexion.

He was born 2/4/1844 in Freeport, Maine, one of at least four children of Ansyl Baker Coffin and Rhoda H. Coombs.

He married Hattie Almira Hutchinson and they had at least six children, including:

1. Ernest Linwood
2. Arthur Bailey
3. Lillian Delnoria
4. Wellington Bennett
5. Rose O.
6. Violet Arabine

He had a variety of occupations in his lifetime, including: laborer, farmer,

blacksmith and ship carpenter.

He, too, must have been a very active, competent, robust and careful man. He served from the mustering in of the 13th Maine to the mustering out of the 30th Maine and advanced from private to corporal in the regiment. Although he claimed an invalid pension in 1878, he lived to be the last known surviving veteran of the regiment.

He was active in the G.A.R. and at age 97 he attended the 75th National Encampment of the G.A.R. at Columbus, Ohio.

(His father, **Ansyl Baker Coffin**, also served in the 13th Maine and mustered out with the 13th Maine on 1/1/1865.)

A Reminiscence of Pvt. Andrew B. Gordon

(Written 3/2/1916)

How Bosworth Got His Goat

"When our company came to Fort Macomb, La, we found a dog and a Billie Goat there. The value of the dog was reckoned by dollars; the value of the Goat was reckoned by cents. The officers who were quartered outside of the Fort were very much in love with "Billie Goat", calling him "our mascot" and it would mean a court-martial to the one wilfully injuring him. I think that young Bosworth's [*Corp. Leonard Bosworth Jr. was actually older than Gordon, but smaller...*] dislike to Billy was greater than any other man

in the Fort. I wasn't in love with Billy myself.

One day Bosworth and I -- who were good chums -- had a talk, pro and con, about that "Goat". When we got through I was convinced -- if never before -- that Billie was really a nuisance, and Bosworth had taken a solemn oath to get him if ever he got a chance that appeared to be accidental. The time came afterward.

Right here I want to say that "Young Bosworth" was the shortest man and one of the very best shots in the company.

It was customary for the Guard which was relieved every morning at nine o'clock, to discharge their rifles in target practice, the one making the best score would be exempt from next guard duty. One morning while the guard were at target practice Bosworth and myself were part of them. The target was on the parade ground which was as level as a pool table, and green with grass. 200 yards was the range. The guard was drawn up in line, the man to fire stepped two paces to the front, discharging his rifle and waiting for his score to be taken. When Bosworth's turn came to fire, I noticed Billy grazing right in a line with the target and close to it. I held my breath in suspense for I could see the goat's finish if Bosworth could keep his nerve. He kept it all right. Raising his rifle he fired,

shooting Billy plum through the heart. He dropped dead without a quiver. Our Col. Haseltine, umpiring the whole business, he came right up and ordered Bosworth to remain standing where he was. Taking the rifle from him he stepped into Bosworth's tracks, aiming the gun at the bull's eye. He dropped the muzzle just a mite and it covered the goat's heart. The Col. Then turned to Bosworth "Did you see that goat before you fired?" ...talk about nerve and acting, he missed his calling, he ought to have been on the stage! "No, sir," says he "my eye was on the bull's eye, I'm sorry I did not see him."

Right here I will say that the Col. was the best shot with rifle or revolver of anyone in the whole Regiment, and knew what he was talking about. The Col. said that it was a perfect line shot, and that no doubt "Billy" was killed accidentally. Bosworth and myself, we two, knew better.

This happened over 50 years ago and every word is true."

The Searcher...

(This column solicits help finding information about a particular soldier or soldiers.)

In this issue we are asking readers if they have any information about any of the regimental cooks -- all black men. They are very difficult to find in the records searched. Because most of these men were listed as "deserters" they are not on the 1890 Veteran

Census or pension indices. Since they were originally slaves before the war most early records do not identify other family members.

There were 28 cooks and we only know a little about the following seven men:

Samuel Boles was born in Maryland, mustered out with the 30th Maine and was living in Maine in 1890.

Benjamin Henderson was born in Virginia and was a servant living in New Orleans in 1880.

Alfred Henin was born in Louisiana.

Clement M. Marshall filed a pension application in 1870 and may have been living in Brazos, Texas in 1880.

James Blue filed a pension application in 1891 in Louisiana.

Perry Grimes was born in Maryland about 1820 and was a church sextant in New Orleans in 1880.

James Harrod was born in Maryland about 1840 and was a baker in New Orleans in 1880 and a neighbor of Perry Grimes.

Does anybody know anything about the others? Their names can be found on the regimental roster in Lufkin's history on the 13th Maine web site which can be downloaded from:

www.maine13th.com/13thhi_story.html



Corp. Otis Leonard Coffin family cemetery plot, South Freeport, Maine

Editorial Notices

- This newsletter will be archived on-line in *.pdf and Word doc format at:
<http://www.maine13th.com>
- Best efforts will be made to credit all references, photos, etc. but some from early in this research have been lost.
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