



Company K

13th Maine Infantry Regiment News

Volume 1, Issue 4

August 2007

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

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.

Readers are invited to submit articles, inquiries, pictures, etc. for publication in this newsletter.

New History Project *Status of the project*

At this time I have completed the initial genealogical and historical research on 1110 (or more than 98%) of the 1132 soldiers who are confirmed as having served in the 13th Maine Infantry Regiment. *(Sorry... Not much done - I've been fishing and camping a lot again last month.)*

New Project Activities

I will be in Waterville, Maine, during the month of September. If any readers in Maine would like to meet with me or could suggest any research that I might be able to complete in Maine such as cemeteries where they know soldiers of the 13th are buried, historical society meetings, etc. I would appreciate hearing from you. I have a PowerPoint based program about the men of the 13th Maine that I am glad to show to any interested audience.

My contact information is:

(During September 1-30 only)

207-873-2614

(At any time)

801-580-1965

cabonsall@msn.com

Charles A. Bonsall, Ed.

Men of the 13th Maine

Pvt. Addison Beach

(Written by Andrew B. Gordon in December 1816)

"I could speak of many instances that I saw while in the service that seemed brave and heroic. I will speak of one instance.

We had one fellow in the company (Co. K) by the name of Addison Beach. *(Ed. Actually, Gordon called him "Anderson Beach".)* He was tall red-headed and freckled-faced and could not be called handsome; he was rather a rough sort of a chap and didn't try very hard to keep out of a row. On the march up the Red River he and the Captain got into some trouble, and Beach was saucy. (The Captain's name was Felton) The Captain put him under arrest and disarmed him. Later on, after the campaign, he was to be court martialed, so Beach followed on with the company, with nothing to do and unarmed. At the Battle of Pleasant Hill Beach he showed his heroism.

The drummer boys of the regiment are supposed to carry the wounded off from the battlefield on stretchers while the battle is going on. Well, Beach was watching the battle from a safe place with nothing to do. When he saw the boys going into the field with the stretchers, he just couldn't stand it any longer and grabbed hold of one end of a stretcher and commenced to carry off the wounded. He was under fire of shot and shell all the time and they were falling all around him, but he still worked on. One of General Bank's staff officers came riding by and seeing Beach was a strong, able-bodied man, stopped and asked him why he wasn't with his company and in the ranks fighting. Just at this time he and the boy were lifting a wounded man onto the stretcher; when the man was loaded, Beach stepped around to the handles to carry it off. Before answering the officer he saluted, then said, "I am under arrest and disarmed." Just then a shell came screaming by and exploded, killing the man on the stretcher, dead. Beach pulled him off and commenced to load another man. The officer snatched a note book from his pocket, asked Beach his name, Co. and Regiment. Writing it down, he rode off.

Beach helped to carry all the wounded off and didn't get a scratch. The next morning Beach was given his gun and equipment and took his place in the ranks.

Just what was said and done at headquarters, I only know by hearsay, and that was that the Captain got orders to drop all charges against Beach and put him into the ranks where he belonged.

Now, the way I look at it, Beach was a hero. All he had done he did for humanity's sake. He had no need to go under fire, he could have stepped back to the rear and been out of danger. He wasn't expecting any reward; all he did was for others.

(He compared another brave act done under duty to Beach's act.)

Any man who voluntarily risks his own life to save others, or for the good or cause of his country, is in my opinion, a hero."

[Ed. Pvt. Addison H. Beach enlisted at 19 years old into Co. K along with his 18-year old brother, Charles H. Beach, who survived the war. Unfortunately, Addison died in New Orleans about three and a half months after his heroic act. Curiously, although Gordon described him as tall, he was actually slightly shorter than Gordon's 5' 8³/₄" height.]

Pvt. Edward M. Wilder

Pvt. Edward Mason Wilder enlisted as a Musician into Co. I at Machias, Maine, on 11/11/1861. He died of disease on 6/25/1862 at Ship Island, Mississippi.

He was described at enlistment as a 17 year old single painter, 5' 5" tall, with brown hair, black eyes and a light complexion.

He was born 12/16/1844 at Castine, Maine, one of five children of Mason M. Wilder and Mehitable Littlefield.

I think of this as a particularly poignant case because of the following death notice in an Ellsworth newspaper:

*"AUGUST 1, 1862
At Ship Island [Mississippi],
June 25, **Edward M.**, son of
M. H. WILDER of Machias,
age 17 years, 6 months. He
was a musician, Company I,
Maine 13th."*

It was probably written or submitted by his editor father, Mason M. Wilder.

Of course, all families mourned the loss of the 240 or more brothers, sons, husbands and fathers of the 13th Maine who died in service, but this item must have been written for publication with great anguish.

Another Reminiscence of Pvt. Andrew B. Gordon

(Written 3/2/1916)

(These events took place in Savannah, Georgia, while the 13th Maine soldiers who transferred to the 30th Maine were on federal police duty there.)

Calling His Bluff. Nerve Won Out.

Along in the afternoon I heard a cry of "Murder! Murder!" I sounded a call for help, which was three raps with my club against a stone post. I was sure that my chum (*Alin*) Chase would come. Up the street ran a big, bull-headed nig..., nothing on but a shirt and overalls, no hat or shoes. His head was thrown back with his mouth open as big as a coal hod, and bellowing those ungodly yells out of him. Close on his heels were three soldiers; one was a Sergeant belonging to a New York regiment; they all three had a "jag" on and were trying to get the n..... They were hurling brickbats and everything else they could get hold of. When the n..... got to me I told him to keep on, I would stop the soldiers. He was making good time all right, and got away. I drew my bayonet, with my right hand and club in my left, I stepped squarely in front of the Sergeant, commanding him to "Halt". He stopped five or six feet from me, whipping out a 45 Colt's he got the drop on me, and swore he'd have that n..... if he had to go over my dead body to get him. The other soldiers did not take any part in the affair, but just stood

back to see me shot. Well, I was looking into that 45 gun of his and hoping Chase would come in time. "Look here, Sergeant, you know that the first duty of a soldier is to obey orders; you know what I am here for, I shall obey orders. If you shoot you may kill me and you may not; in either case it means death to you. If you kill me you will be court marshalled and shot. If you don't kill me dead, I swear by the Great God above me I'll drive this bayonet through your heart. Now if you have got tired of living --- Shoot, and be darned.

Just at this time I felt an arm thrown over my right shoulder, and saw a hand holding a 45 Colt's covering the Sergeant.

"Drop that gun!" and he did. Chase, good old boy had got around in time.

We locked those three drunken devils up. I had learned that a revolver was an awful handy thing to have. When you need it "you need it darned bad". After that day I lugged a good 45 Colt's with me all the time that I was on the force in Savannah, and I never allowed no man to get the drop on me after that.

The next morning, July 5th, I appeared at court and filed charges against the prisoners as being drunk and disorderly, I said nothing about the hold-up. The three were discharged and ordered to report to their Regiment.

I never met the Sergeant that held me up but once

afterwards. He met me one day on my beat; he was perfectly sober and was every inch a soldier.

"Hello Officer, aren't you the same fellow that was on this beat 4th of July?"

"Yes" says I.

"Well," he says, "I see you are toting a 45."

"Oh yes, I've carried it ever since that day, thinking it might come in handy sometime."

"Well," he says, "you got the damndest nerve of anybody I ever saw; only think what a damned, drunken fool I was to hold you up, and all the time you was looking into my gun regarding the thing as a joke, I don't see how you ever did it!" (I did not tell him that I did not see where the joke came in.) "And then the next morning your charges were for being drunk and disorderly! My God, what a damned fool I made of myself, and how good you were to me! Say, will you shake hands with me and forget that the thing ever happened?"

"Yes" says I, "little, small things like that is easy to forget."

"There it is again, that damned nerve of yours! 'Little, small things'. Say, look here, if you ever see me doing 'little small things' like that again, I'll give you leave to blow my damned brains out --- if I have got any! Good by, we may never meet again, but if we do, I'm your friend."

The Searcher...

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

In this issue I am asking readers if they have some additional information about the wives of Pvt Fifield Ireland, Co. B. (*Soldier on the right*)



Fifield Ireland was this editor's great-grandfather. I know quite a bit about his last wife and children, but there are cemetery and Canaan town vital records indicating that he was married three other times. Any information readers might have about the first three wives would be appreciated.

They were:

Andusca L. (Ireland) who died at seventeen on Christmas Day, 1859, without children, and is buried in the Pooler Cemetery in Skowhegan.

He married **Arabella Rowe** on July 4, 1861, and then

Irene Strickland on January 28, 1867. I do not know what happened to these women and I have found no record of any children born to these marriages nor do I know how the marriages ended.

He married **Ardelle "Ida" Pooler** on December 4, 1870, in East Skowhegan. They had the following children: Fanny May (8/1872), Harriet May (7/26/1875), George Edward (1/1878), Charles Addison (10/31/1883) and William (5/1889).

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.
- It is assumed information submitted by readers includes permission to reprint in part or whole unless expressly prohibited.
- If you do not want to receive this newsletter please send an email with "Unsubscribe" in the title.

Charles A. Bonsall
editor@maine13th.com