

A tribute to Middletown's Civil War dead

The following Memorial Day tribute to Middletown's Civil War dead was prepared by the Historical Society of the Town of Middletown and delivered on May 30, 2011 in Fleischmanns and Margaretville by HSM President Diane Galusha, HSM Trustee George Hendricks, and the following community members: Alan Gavette, Roy Todd, Bill Birns, Merilee Todd Asher, Sally Scudder Fairbairn, Willis Marks, Nick Verni, Berna Close VanBenschoten and Sally Elliott Scrimshaw.

150 years ago, this very day, Middletown and the rest of the country were at war. The Civil War, the War Between the States, had opened in April, 1861, with the first rocket blast at Fort Sumter, South Carolina. Almost immediately, Middletown area men were signing on to the first units headed from New York to meet the challenge of Southern secession.

Some 350 men from our town would ultimately serve over the next four years. Many came home with wounds and sickness they would carry for the rest of their days. Thirty-five of them – one in ten -- gave up their very lives to preserve the Union.

Today, we observe the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War by paying tribute to those men. They were as young as 17 and as old as 44 when they went off to war. They died on southern battlefields, in squalid prisons and in hospitals far from the comforting touch of mothers and wives. Remembering their names and their sacrifice is the very least we can offer to them and their descendants on this Memorial Day.

DANIEL W. GAVETTE, a private in the 144th New York Volunteer Regiment, was a son of William G. and Jane Burrow Gavette. He was wounded at the Battle of Honey Hill, South Carolina, Nov. 30, 1864, and died Jan. 10, 1865, at Hilton Head, SC age 23. He was first buried in Lumberville (later called Arena) and now rests in Gavette Cemetery, Millbrook.

WILLIAM HENRY STONE was named Captain of Company G of the 144th Regiment when it was formed in August of 1862. He was a young merchant of Griffins Corners, the son of Robert and Caroline Griffin Stone. He died of illness Oct. 17, 1863, age 22, and is buried in Clovesville Cemetery.

GEORGE G. SLITER, a son of Jeremiah and Nancy Russell Sliter, served in the 20th New York Militia, entering as a paid Substitute in September 1864. He died of typhoid fever while guarding the prison at Richmond, Virginia July 23, 1865, age 18.

JOHN MAYES enlisted as a private in the 101st New York Volunteer Regiment on New Years Day 1862. He was captured at Savage Station, VA June 30, 1862 and was held in Richmond, where he is believed to have died at Libby Prison.

ABRAM WILLIAMS, son of John and Mary Chase Williams, joined the 97th New York Volunteer Regiment as a paid Substitute. Wounded at the Battle of the Wilderness in Virginia, he died May 23, 1864, age 27.

DAVID J. (JEWETT) CROSBY enlisted in the 102nd New York Regiment in November of 1861 when he was 29. He was killed in action May 25, 1864 at Dalton, GA.

PHILO DICKSON, a son of Enoch and Amelia Dickson, was a private in Co. A of the 101st Regiment. He died of consumption December 20, 1864, age 40.

JAMES ANDREW BAKER enlisted in Company G of the 144th Regiment in September of 1864. He died of disease at Hilton Head, SC, Oct. 28, 1864, at the age of 29. He is buried in Beaufort National Cemetery, South Carolina.

HERMAN EDGAR SMITH, son of Samuel and Rachel Yapple Smith, enlisted in August of 1861 in the Third Cavalry. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in June of 1864, and was killed in action near Richmond, Virginia October 7, 1864.

JOHN B. TODD, son of Isaac and Fanny Bouton Todd, enlisted in the 101st Regiment in December of 1861. He was discharged for heart disease on May of 1862, and died three months later at the age of 27.

EDWARD A. HOOD, a son of Minor and Hannah Rose Hood, enlisted with the 8th Delaware Battery in October, 1861. He died of measles three months later, Jan. 20, 1862, at Columbia College Hospital, Washington, DC, where he was buried at age 25.

JEROME A. MORSE, son of Joseph and Abacinda Ellice Morse, enlisted in the 144th in August of 1862. He died of illness while the regiment was camped at Washington, DC Nov. 22, 1862, age 21.

JAMES GILLESPIE, son of William and Margaret Zwidle Gillespie, served as a private in Co. G of the 20th Militia. He was discharged for disability December 29, 1862 and died May 7, 1865 in Clovesville of disease contracted in the Army. He was 23.

NICHOLAS ROBINSON, son of James and Betsy Redmond Robinson, served in Co. B of the 101st Regiment. He was wounded in December, 1863, and died June 17, 1864, age 34.

DANIEL HENDERSON, son of John and Cynthia Bodine Henderson, was a private in the 144th. He died of pneumonia at Benton Barracks, MD, Feb. 14, 1864, age 23.

JACOB HANER enlisted at the age of 44 in Co. G. of the 144th Regiment in September of 1862. He died at Stone Hospital, Washington, DC, March 12, 1863.

JOHN HANER, Jacob's son, was 17 years old when he enlisted in Co. G with his father, serving as a drummer. He later served in the 158th New York Volunteers and was listed as missing in action May 5, 1864 at Evans Mills, North Carolina. A monument to John stands alongside that of his father's in Gavette Cemetery, Millbrook.

JOHN RACE was a son of Milton and Lavina Miner Race and served in the 156th Regiment and in Co. G. of the New York Heavy Artillery. He died of unknown causes at Philadelphia December, 1864, age 47.

JOHN F. SMITH was 21 when he enlisted in the 144th, in August of 1862. The following April 10, he died of typhoid fever at Vienna, Virginia.

WILLIAM SMITH, 21, went to Halcott to enlist in the 20th Militia in September of 1861. He was wounded August 30, 1862 at Manassas, Virginia, was discharged for disability on October 26, and later died from his wounds.

EDWARD O. ANTHONY, son of Charles and Margaret Cashdollar Anthony, enlisted in the 3rd New York Cavalry in January of 1864. He was taken prisoner the following June at the Battle of Ream's Station, VA, was held at Libby and Andersonville Prisons, and died of sickness at Macon, Georgia that September. He was just 19 years old.

DANIEL MYERS enlisted in the 144th when it was formed in August 1862. He was 23 when he died Dec. 17, 1864 of wounds received on Nov. 30 in the Battle of Honey Hill, South Carolina. He is buried at Beaufort National Cemetery, SC.

RICHARD HALCOTT left his wife and five children in Halcottsville to enlist, first in the 10th Legion, and later in the 3rd New York Cavalry. He was taken prisoner at Stony Creek, Virginia, was held for six months at Andersonville Prison, and after being paroled, died on the steamer Northern Light Dec. 19, 1864, age 44. He was buried at sea.

ALONZO COONS was 22 when he enlisted in the 56th NY Regiment in September, 1861. He died of congestive fever, August 3, 1863, at Folly Island, S. C.

CORNELIUS B. DELAMETER enlisted in Co. G of the 144th in September of 1862. A son of David A. and Jane Dumond Delameter, he died Oct. 19, 1864 of illness on Folly Island, SC. He was 20 years old.

JOHN B. OSTERHOUDT, enlisted in August 1861 as a private in the 3rd New York Cavalry, and was killed in a skirmish at the Weldon Railroad, near Yellow Tavern, Virginia, Aug. 21, 1864, age 33.

THOMAS ELLIOTT, son of William and Eleanor Elliott, joined Co. B of the 90th NY Volunteers in 1864. Wounded at the Battle of Cedar Creek, Virginia Oct. 19, 1864, he died two weeks later, on November 6 in a Baltimore hospital, age 24. He is buried in Bovina.

JAMES C. ELLIOTT, Thomas's brother, enlisted in the 144th in August of 1862. He was killed at the Battle of Honey Hill, SC, Nov. 30, 1864, just three weeks after his brother's death. James was 23. His body was never located.

AARON CLOSE, son of Elijah and Rhoda Burrow Close, was a Corporal in the 144th when he contracted typhoid fever in Jacksonville, Florida. He died June 13, 1864, age 21, and is buried in Florida.

ISSACHAR LOOMIS, son of Aaron and Mary Robinson Loomis, enlisted in Co. G of the 20th New York Militia in September of 1861. He died at David's Island Hospital, Long Island Sound, in April, 1863, age 22.

ABRAM HINKLEY was 41 years old and the father of six when he enlisted, with his 18-year-old son George, in the 20th Militia in September of 1861. Abram died just 3 months later of illness at Upton's Hill, Virginia.

GILBERT SWART, son of Abraham and Mary Kittle Swart, was in the 3rd New York Cavalry when he was taken prisoner near Ream's Station, Virginia June 29, 1864 and later died of illness at Depot Hospital, Point of Rocks, Virginia, August 6, 1864, age 18.

JAMES SCUDDER, 30, enlisted in the 146th Regiment in September of 1863. He was a son of William and Phoebe Balts Scudder. He died of illness at Armory Square Hospital, Washington, DC, Mar. 3, 1865, age 31, leaving a wife and two young sons.

DANIEL SLACK, son of Roswell and Polly Tompkins Slack, father of two, was 30 when he joined the 146th New York Regiment as a paid Substitute in September of 1863. He was wounded and taken prisoner May 5, 1864 at the battle of the Wilderness in Virginia, and was sent to Andersonville Prison, where he died August 30, 1864.

JAMES CRAFT, son of John and Eliff Woolheater Craft, was an 18-year-old private in the 144th when he was wounded at Devous Neck, South Carolina. He died December 13, 1864 and is buried at Beaufort National Cemetery, South Carolina.