

FIRST YEAR
of the
Civil War
in
OLD LYONS FARMS

Although there are no individual records for Lyons Farms as Hillside was called during the Civil War, Union County sent a total of ten companies assigned to seven regiments to fight against the South. These were Companies A of the First and Second Regiment, Company K of the Third Regiment, Companies G and K of the Ninth Regiment, Companies B and D of the Eleventh Regiment, Companies C and E of the Fourteenth Regiment and Company B of the Thirtieth Regiment.

Until South Carolina adopted an ordinance of secession from the Union on December 20, 1860, many of the residents in the Newark-Elizabeth area felt the problems would be ironed out. Some of the leaders of Elizabeth met January 31, 1861 at Library Hall to adopt a resolution to preserve the Union, but not by force of war. The names signed included many familiar here such as Fairbanks, Crane, Magie, De Witt, Clark, Lyon, Woodruff, Mulford, Whitehead, Brewster and Drake.

The citizens of the area greeted Abraham Lincoln with much warmth on his tour of the State of New Jersey on February 21, 1861, on his way to his inauguration March 4, when his train stopped at both Newark and Elizabeth.

The attack on Fort Sumter in Charleston, S. C. harbor by the Confederate troops on April 12, 1861 took the North completely by surprise. Residents hurried to the cities or the old general stores on April 13, to read the newspapers and talk about it.

President Abraham Lincoln issued his proclamation of war on April 15, 1861 and Governor Charles S. Olden of New Jersey followed it by a call for troops. New Jersey, like most of the Northern states, had only a token militia, no funds for paying and equipping an army and a limited supply of arms. Since the general belief was that the war would be of limited duration, the first enlistments were for only three month periods. Meetings were held at Washington Hall in Elizabeth April 17, for volunteers and about thirty men registered. A second meeting the same week at Library Hall also in Elizabeth gathered twenty-six more men. Another was held April 21, at the Essex County Courthouse, Newark.

David Hatfield, a watchman at an Elizabeth oil cloth factory, was elected as captain of the volunteers who formed Company A, First Regiment of Union County. Thomas Tillou and Luther Martin were named first and second lieutenants, respectively, of the same company.

The pay for these volunteers by today's standards was low: Private, \$11 monthly; corporal, \$22; sergeant, \$27; first or orderly sergeant, \$29; second lieutenant, \$103.50; first lieutenant, \$108.50; captain, \$118.50; major, \$175; lieutenant colonel, \$194; and colonel, \$218.

New Jersey outfitted its soldiers, although there apparently was some latitude allowed in the selection of uniforms for each company. A correspondent for the "Jersey Journal" commented when seeing Captain James Wilson of Company A of the Second Regiment that he was wearing a "neat looking rig." He was attired in a "coat of dark blue with brass buttons. The pants were light blue gray. The cap was of the usual scouty design. Over the uniform he wore a regulation army overcoat." The correspondent concluded, "The whole formed a very tasty uniform."

Banks Assist

Money was needed to finance the army and loans totaling \$451,000 were made by New

Jersey banks to the State of New Jersey for purchase of equipment to outfit these troops. Of this amount more than \$200,000 was raised in Newark and Elizabeth.

General excitement swept the area. Daily celebrations were held as the American flag, symbol of the unity which the country was seeking to preserve, was raised before public buildings. Nearly every farm also displayed a flag. School children gathered to watch the parading volunteers practice in Military Park, Newark, or on the parade grounds in Broad Street at Caldwell Place, Elizabeth.

The clergymen, who bitterly opposed slavery still present in New Jersey at the outbreak of the war, were vehement in their support of the cause in their sermons each Sunday morning.

There was considerable concern over the spiritual life of the soldiers by the people and the clergymen were encouraged to enlist as chaplains. John Kean of Ursino gave each man of Company A of the First Regiment a compact copy of the Book of Common Prayer, an Elizabeth Bible Society gave each member a copy of the New Testament and William Williams, also of Elizabeth, provided hymn books.

There were appeals to the public and the government for assistance for the families of these new soldiers. Some firms, like the oil cloth factory where Captain Hatfield had been employed, paid the volunteer's salary for six months. Relief committees were formed in communities to pay the families \$5 a week. The State of New Jersey subsequently agreed to pay \$72 per year or \$216 for the term of the enlistment, while the United States Government approved payment of \$13 a month to dependents or widows of servicemen.

Women in the area began to prepare clothing and food for the fighting units and gifts for the sick. Included among these were little bags containing buttons, thread and needles as well as flannel shirts and handkerchiefs.

The economic life of the community began to change too. A carriage maker in Rahway was given a government contract to build 100 wagons and 100 ambulances for the army and J. A. Bannister of Elizabeth was awarded an order for 100,000 pairs of shoes. Newark firms were given contracts for saddles, harnesses, shoes, hats and provisions.

Most important for the Hillside area however was the demand for farm produce and horses.

Theodore Runyon of Newark, a lawyer, was appointed as Brigadier General by Governor Olden and placed in charge of the first four regiments composing the First New Jersey Brigade.

John Y. Foster, author of "New Jersey and the Rebellion," reports in his book published in 1868 that the first New Jersey volunteers were sent in early May on canal boats used on the Delaware-Raritan Canal to Annapolis, Md., because the Confederate Troops held the railroad at Baltimore, Md. There the New Jersey companies were deployed along the telegraph and railroad tracks between Washington, D. C. and Annapolis.

Other companies were among the first to be moved into the District of Columbia where they camped on Meridian Hill, which it is said they renamed "Camp Monmouth." When it became apparent the rebel forces were amassing at Manassas Junction, Va. about 30 miles away to capture Washington, the New Jersey regiments were moved across the Potomac River to Arlington Heights, Va., where they dug entrenchments they called "Fort Runyon."

They subsequently were moved south in Virginia until they faced the enemy troops for the first time on July 21, 1861 in the first battle of Bull Run. The Union line broke at Centreville and the forces representing parts of the thirteen regiments and 10,000 men retreated in a panic, leaving supplies and wounded behind in their stampede. The First Regiment reformed and attempted to make a stand the next day, but realizing that it was alone also retreated, picking up provisions as it went. Many Union soldiers were taken prisoners for the first time in this battle.

Two days later, the three months enlistments of many of the men expired and many of them returned to Washington and took the trains home. Some of them reenlisted.

Major Philip Kearny was appointed Brigadier-General to replace General Runyon on July 25, 1861. There were few incidents for the First Brigade during the remainder of the fall and winter of 1861-62, but there were skirmishes with the enemy and reconnaissance missions. During one of these Private James Donnelly of Eliza-

beth was captured October 16, 1861 at Manassas Junction after losing his left eye. He managed to escape on January 28, 1862 and returned to Union lines. After a furlough at home, he re-enlisted.

The First Brigade participated in a general Union advance to Fairfax Courthouse, Centreville and Manassas Junction on March 10, 1862, and found the rebel forces had withdrawn.

Jonathan Townley, Jr. Named

Other companies also formed during the first year of the war included Companies G and K of the Ninth Regiment mustered October 5, 1861 at Camp Olden. Jonathan Townley, Jr. of Union Township, of which Hillside was then apart, was appointed second lieutenant in Company K. He was a graduate of Princeton University and a farmer just across the Elizabeth River from today's Hillside.

Citizens of Union Township contributed \$5 toward purchase of a library for Company K at Christmas time.

The name, "Jersey Blues," made popular during the Revolutionary War was especially applied to the Ninth Regiment during the Civil War. This regiment was equipped with Springfield rifles and also had more ambulances and wagons than any other that had left the state. It was sent to Washington December 6, 1861 and remained at the capital for a month when it was attached to the expedition of General Ambrose E. Burnside to make the Northern blockade of the Southern ports effective.

The regiment sailed southward from Fortress Monroe, Md. January 12, 1862, and anchored at Hatteras Inlet off the North Carolina coast the next day. A violent gale struck the northern vessels on January 14, and several of them were blown ashore, others became lodged on sandbars and some were sunk.

Samuel J. Dilkes of Company K swam ashore in the gale to fasten a rope so the "Pocahontas" loaded with horses would be secure. He later swam again to assist a woman cook from the ship to the shore. The brigantine "Dragon" with most of the Union County troops got stuck on a sand bar and was towed off by the "Patuxent," January 16.