

589

L23K4

LAKE MILLS IN THE WAR OF SECESSION

BY
ELISHA W. KEYES

[From Proceedings of the Wisconsin State Historical Society]

MADISON
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

1897



Class F589

Book .L23K4

LAKE MILLS IN THE WAR OF SECESSION

BY

ELISHA W. KEYES

[From Proceedings of the Wisconsin State Historical Society]

MADISON

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

1897

IN EXCHANGE
WIL. HIST. SOC.

E 21
3 K 4

LAKE MILLS IN THE WAR OF SECESSION.*

BY ELISHA W. KEYES.

In this memorial address, on such an occasion, and before this large audience, composed of friends and descendants of those who risked their lives in the War of Secession, it seems eminently fit and proper to recall the noble deeds of those brave men of this village, whose names stand inscribed upon the roll of fame.

The State archives record the part that Lake Mills took in that war, and give the names and number of the men she furnished as her quota. But it has been my desire to enlarge this record, by giving some account of the particulars of their enlistment and service; and for this purpose I have spent much time in research and investigation. I have scanned nearly one hundred thousand names of soldiers, given in the Roster, in order to pick out the names of those who claimed residence here, and who were credited to this place. From a careful and painstaking examination, I find that 156 persons, hailing from Lake Mills, became soldiers; and I give here their names, with such additional information as I can find regarding their services in the war.

There are a few left of this gallant band, and they are here within the sound of my voice. Their names are still upon the roll of life, and I will call them; and, as I pronounce their names, let them respond "here." And let this audience look upon them kindly, remembering what they have done, what sufferings they have endured, and the dangers through which they have passed. They are few in number, as compared with those who went forth from this town a third of a century ago; and, while we

*Extracts from a memorial address delivered at Lake Mills, May 30, 1896.

honor their dead comrades, let us not forget them, the living comrades, who have been spared to us by a beneficent God, to be present here. They remember those dead comrades, when they were in life, who may have fallen by their sides, with life ebbing away; they may have assisted in consigning them to their mother earth, and, with their bayonets, filled in the graves with the clods; they can to-day go back in memory, and see all those stirring scenes again, and live over again the years they served in the Army of the Republic. I will call the roll:

Henry Abbe, William B. Allen, Charles M. Atwood, Roswell T. Atwood, James Austin.

Gabriel Bailey, Gilbert Banson, Henry L. Beach, George E. Beckwith, Morris B. Bemis, Morrill A. Bennett, L. E. Benton, Edward S. Bigelow, Jerry C. Bliss, Alexander Brink, Nicholas Brink, William L. Brooks, Gustavus H. Bryant, Spencer A. Bryant, Tom Burdick.

Albert Cabell, Ezra S. Carr, Albert H. Clemens, Mason Collins, John G. Colt.

Charles Dains, Clark L. Dains, Thomas Davis, Jerry W. Dean, Francis De Forrest, Homer Doolittle, James Douglass, Joseph Doutey, Joel C. Dow, Washington D. Dow, Charles Draeger, William Draeger, Darwin Dubois, Charles L. Duncan, F. A. Dyke.

Albert H. Edwards, Olney Edwards, Harmon Ellis, George E. Everson.

Philander Farmer, Samuel Farsen, Edward Fitzgerald, Franklin Foote, Horton E. Francisco, Jay Francisco, Harrison Fuller, Henry E. Fuller, John W. Fuller, Lyman Fuller, Simon Fuller.

George N. Gause, William Gilbert, Perry B. Glines, F. D. Griffin, Nelson T. Griffin.

James Hamilton, Christopher Hanson, Hans Hanson, John W. Hanson, E. N. Harvey, Lynden A. Hildreth, William Hitchcock, William D. Hoard, John Huffy, Peter Huitzer, Walter Hume, Seldon Huntly, Oliver C. Hurd.

Michael James, Charles Johnish, Mathias Johnson.

William Kaselka, Almond E. Keene, Charles A. Keyes, Norman D. Keyes, George Kilborn, G. A. Kline, Albert H. Krogh, Peter G. Krogh.

Peter La Flambois, William H. Lent, George H. Lewis, Ferdinand Lohn, William Lord, John Lusted, Leonard W. Lusted, Samuel Lusted.

Alexander McKee, James McLaughlin, P. B. Martin, Sylvester Matson, Charles J. Millard, Christian Miller, David H. Miller, Henry W. Mills, John B. Mise, Albert E. Mosley, James Mullaby.

William M. Newcomb, Isaac Newton.

Barney O'Brien, Thomas O'Brien, Nelson W. Olmstead, William Overbeck.

Delos H. Piper, Charles H. Pohlman, William Potter, John Q. Proutey.

Peter Ran, Milor E. Ray, August Reese, George Reiner, James Ringer, Wilson J. Ringer, W. G. Ritchie.

Daniel D. Saly, Asa E. Sampson, James Seavy, J. Short, C. W. Simmons, Casper Smith, Edward Smith, George W. Smith, John W. Smith, William L. Spencer, D. W. Stanley, Fred Strasburg, Winslow Stuart.

John Taggart, Steven R. Teed, Charles W. Thayer, Robert Thompson, Arthur J. Toogood, William E. Toogood, John Tyler, Alonzo D. Tyler.

J. W. Uglow.

R. Van Slyke.

Orange Warner, Henry W. Warren, Libbins F. Whitney, Oscar P. Whitney, George W. Willday, Gillman D. Willey, Lewis J. Winget, August Wollene.

Franklin C. Young, James C. Young, Silas D. Young, William M. Young.

Few, alas! have responded audibly to the living ear; but, if we listen with our spiritual sense, we shall hear the answer sound from the infinite depths of space, from the realms of light and glory, and everlasting life.

Of this list, the following were killed in battle, or died from their wounds,—ten in number: Spencer A. Bryant, Joseph Doutey, Charles Johnish, William Kasselka, Sylvester Matson, John B. Mise, Delos H. Piper, Milor E. Ray, Wilson J. Ringer, and August Wollene.

Fourteen died, while in service, from disease: Morris B. Bemis, Nicholas Brink, William L. Brooks, Clark L. Dains, Francis De Forrest, Joel C. Dow, Lyman Fuller, Ferdinando D. Griffin, Nelson T. Griffin, William Hitchcock, Walter Hume, John Lusted, Alexander McKee, and William Overbeck.

Those who received wounds while in action, eight in number, are: Albert Cabell, Thomas Davis, Charles Draeger, George H. Lewis, Christian Miller, David A. Miller, Daniel W. Stanley, and George W. Willday.

In addition there were eleven persons discharged from service, for disability from sickness and disease incident thereto, as follows: W. A. Bennett, Ed. E. Bigelow, T. Burdick, Ezra S. Carr, Charles Dains, Henry E. Fuller, Simon Fuller, William D. Hoard, Samuel Lusted, Thomas O'Brien, and James Ringer.

Thus, twenty-four men laid down their lives in their country's service; and nineteen more were injured by wounds or

disease,—showing that the volunteers from Lake Mills bore their due share of the loss and suffering caused by the war.

In this record of the soldiers from Lake Mills, it would have afforded me great pleasure to mention also those who went from the adjoining towns of Waterloo, Milford and Aztalan, but I could not well do so, it would have required too much time. I hope some one else will improve the first occasion to write up the history of the soldiers from those places; and that the example I have set, in this instance, will be followed in other towns in our State. Such records, collecting all available information while it may be most easily secured, will be of inestimable value in after years.

At the present time the war records of our State are in much confusion; and it is only with much difficulty that one can pick out therefrom the desired information. I am glad that I can, in this record of the Lake Mills soldiers, add something to the annals of our town, and preserve in its history the heroic deeds of our veterans for their posterity.

There are members of this Post who did not enlist from here, but later became identified with this town. There is Captain O. L. Ray, the adjutant of this Post, who then hailed from Waterloo. He was a gallant soldier, saw much hard service, and has a highly creditable army record; and he suffers to-day from a severe wound received in battle. Colonel Parsons, the accomplished and experienced commander of the Post, hails from some other corner of the Union, I know not where, but his friends are glad that he is here now. Charlie Keyes, my nephew, and Bennie Stevens, my brother-in-law, were early gathered into the cemetery. I saw the former, then a member of the Second Regiment, upon the Heights of Arlington, a few hours before the advance to the disastrous battle of Bull Run,—his knapsack upon his shoulders, and his musket in his hands, ready for the morning march. The telegraph reported him killed, but he survived that terrible defeat.

You should not forget, on this occasion, your old friend and companion in arms, Captain Gustavus H. Bryant. He was the first man to enlist from Lake Mills, and was a brave and gallant leader. He suffered severely from wounds received, but main-

tained his service until mustered out at the close of the war. He removed to another State, and, after a few years of suffering, died from the effect of his wounds. Wherever he may lie, some kind hand will lay flowers upon his grave to-day.

It may be interesting to know in what branches of the service these men were engaged. There were, in the Third and Fourth Cavalry, twenty-one; in the Third Battery, nine; First Regiment, Heavy Artillery, nine; First Regiment Infantry (three months' men), one, being Gustavus H. Bryant, in whose honor this Post is named. In the Second Regiment, one; Fifth Regiment, one; Eleventh Regiment, five; Fourteenth Regiment, three; Sixteenth Regiment, six; Nineteenth Regiment, five; Twenty-first Regiment, one; Twenty-third Regiment, three; Twenty-ninth Regiment, thirty-three; Fortieth Regiment, seven; Forty-second Regiment, fourteen; Fiftieth Regiment, one; First U. S. Sharpshooters, five; Twenty-ninth U. S. colored regiment, two; nineteen others were distributed among the other regiments and different arms of the service.

Of this number of enlisted men, those not included in the death or disability column were duly mustered out at the expiration of their term of service, or at the close of the war.

The records of the office of the Adjutant-General show that William K. Kaselka was the only man drafted into the service from Lake Mills; and also that substitutes were furnished by Joseph E. Fargo, Enoch B. Fargo, and Edwin H. Bragg respectively, as follows: Olney S. Edwards, Gabriel L. Bailey, and Samuel S. Farsen, residents of Lake Mills. The quota of the town during the war was filled, almost without exception, by residents of the place, and the required bounty paid to them accordingly. The records of the town show that there was paid in bounties to the enlisted men, or in support of their families, over twenty-five thousand dollars.

I think that few, if any, towns in the State can show any better record in the war, than did Lake Mills, as its population at that time was only about 1,500, including village and town. All honor to the patriotic people, that stimulated and encouraged so many to go out in defense of their country. It was a large number of men, fit for service, to be taken from the ag-

gregate population. The records of this Post show that thirty-six, of the men whose names I have given, have passed over the silent river, and joined the great majority beyond. Being scattered as they are, in the different states of the Union, it is probable that many other deaths have occurred of which no record has been received.

During the war Lake Mills was not a railroad or telegraph station; but our people's anxiety for news from the front was so overwhelming that a special messenger was sent daily to Jefferson, the nearest point at which the latest tidings of the war could be obtained; and his return signaled a gathering of every one in the village and vicinity, to learn the good or bad news he might bring.

There are many interesting incidents still vivid in the memories of those who were prominent in the events of those years long ago. If I had time I might recount many; but I will only mention briefly two or three. One was a flag presentation upon the shores of yon beautiful lake, to the boys of the Twenty-ninth. The presentation speech was made by Mrs. Dr. Dubois; it was a most interesting occasion and the feeling of patriotism among those present was at high tide. The flag was given by the ladies of the town.

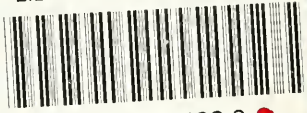
I beg leave to quote from a letter which I have received from a patriotic lady of those days,—one of those brave women who did so much to fill up the ranks. In speaking of the recruiting for a company in the Twenty-ninth Regiment, she says: "There was a call for a meeting at the Methodist Church; after the preliminary organization, a few, who had made up their minds before that evening, came forward and volunteered. They were greeted by cheers and remarks, that led one after another to come forward and offer their services. The scene was one never to be forgotten. There was applause from the men, and sobs from the women; and sometimes, when the men would get up, their friends would cling to them trying to hold them back, not from lack of patriotism, but loth to give them up to almost certain death. But the excitement of the time, and example of others already enlisted, would prove too much for them, and they would soon break away and go forward." She also alluded

to the Soldiers' Aid societies in village and town, at work weekly while the war lasted; to the numerous meetings in all the school-houses to arouse the people, when volunteers were called for; and to the effort made to raise funds to meet the expenses of the Sanitary Commission.

The women of the nation performed a mighty work in sustaining the soldiers in the field, and caring for the sick and wounded, not only in hospitals, but also upon the march. These ministering angels were here, there, and everywhere that duty called them. Many of them yielded up their lives to the cause in which they were engaged; and, if one will take a look among the graves in the cemetery at Arlington, where so many thousands of our soldiers are at rest, he will notice frequent headstones with the names of women placed thereon, who were nurses in hospitals, and there they were given a resting-place among their buried brothers. There are well authenticated instances where wives and sisters were imbued with such irresistible patriotism that they were determined to enlist with husband or brother, and to engage in active service. In this town there were a brother and sister named Mason and Sarah Collins; and the brother had made up his mind that it was his duty to enlist. His sister Sarah, a brave and courageous girl, was determined to accompany him, thinking that she could disguise herself in man's apparel, and, in company with her brother, be mustered into service. She was a strong, masculine-appearing girl, possessing robust health, with the bloom of the roses upon her cheeks. Her brother entered heartily into the scheme, overcome by the persistent importunities of his sister, that she might go and share danger with him. Preparations for the deception were made; her raven tresses were cut short, she put on man's clothing, and for some time she endeavored to accustom herself to her strange and unnatural apparel. She accompanied her brother to the rendezvous of the company; there, notwithstanding her soldier-like appearance and the air of masculinity surrounding her, her sex was at last detected, while in barracks — as it was said, by her unmannish way in putting on her shoes and stockings; and poor Sarah, disappointed beyond

measure at the failure of her efforts to become a soldier, with tears in her eyes was obliged to return to her home, and her brother, Mason, went to the front without her. The facts in this case are so well authenticated, by the memory of so many familiar with them at the time, that there can be no doubt about them.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 016 098 422 3 ●