

MAPLE HILL CEMETERY'S CIVIL WAR VETERANS

Evansville, Wisconsin's Maple Hill Cemetery is the final resting place of more than 130 veterans of the American Civil War. These men served in volunteer infantry, cavalry or artillery units from 9 different states, as well as in the regular U.S. Army and the U.S. Navy. Two of Evansville's most notable citizens, Dr. John M. Evans, Sr., in whose honor Evansville is named, and Allen S. Baker, founder of our oldest and largest local employer, the Baker Manufacturing Co., are included among these veterans.

The 13th Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry was recruited locally, and at least 19 of Maple Hill's veterans were members of that regiment. Dr. Evans was Regimental Surgeon of the 13th Regiment throughout the Civil War, and Dr. Charles M. Smith, Sr. served as Second Assistant Surgeon of the 13th toward the end of the war. A third Evansville physician, Dr. E.H. Winston, was First Assistant Surgeon of the 1st Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment.

Some of the most famous units in the Union Army are represented by Maple Hill's veterans, including the Iron Brigade, Berdan's Sharpshooters, the 1st Minnesota Infantry, and the 1st Brigade Band.

At least 8 of those at Maple Hill are veterans of the Iron Brigade, including Allen S. Baker and Theodore L. Sutphen. Baker and Sutphen were among 10 young men from Evansville who served in Company H of the 2nd Wisconsin Infantry Regiment. All 10 became casualties in the war. Theodore Sutphen was killed in action at Gainesville, Virginia on August 28, 1862, and Allen Baker was wounded in action at Gainesville and again at the Battle of Gettysburg.

The Iron Brigade had the highest percentage of casualties of any brigade in the Civil War. Its battle credits include First Bull Run, Second Bull Run, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, the Wilderness, Spotsylvania Court House and Cold Harbor.

Writing about the Battle of Gainesville, historian Alan D. Gaff quoted an after-action report which recorded: "Company H reported its captain killed and 36 others shot although its strength was only 46." Civil War historian Shelby Foote said of the Union soldiers at Gainesville, "Within a month they were calling themselves the Iron Brigade. Few men anywhere were inclined to question their right to call themselves by any name they might fancy."

Company H of the 2nd Wisconsin Infantry also suffered heavy casualties at Gettysburg. The 2nd led the Union infantry charge against advancing Confederates on the first morning of the battle. During a lull in the fighting at mid-day Evansville's Private Elisha Reed said of Company H: "Our orderly sergeant here took an inventory of stock and found we had ten left. We struck that charge with thirty-three men"

The 1st United States Sharpshooters (known as "Berdan's Sharpshooters") was another elite Union Army unit, composed exclusively of expert marksmen. It saw action in numerous engagements, perhaps most famously at Gettysburg. A monument on the Emmitsburg Road within the Gettysburg Battlefield

memorializes the Wisconsin soldiers of Berdan's Sharpshooters; two of those soldiers, Jerome B. Dimick and James Henry Elwood, are buried at Maple Hill.

The 1st Regiment of Minnesota Volunteer Infantry is represented at Maple Hill by Samuel S. Gard. The 1st Minnesota fought in every major engagement of the Army of the Potomac. It is best known for its heroic counterattack on July 2, 1863 against a vastly greater Confederate force, an act which has been credited with saving the center of the Union line from collapse on the second day of the Battle of Gettysburg. The regiment suffered an 82 per cent casualty rate on that date. On the following day, the 1st Minnesota lost another one-third of its survivors, in the repulse of Pickett's Charge.

Beaman W. Snow, whose fine tombstone is a landmark at Maple Hill, played 2nd Alto in the 1st Brigade Band (1st Brigade, 3rd Division, 15th Army Corps). The 1st Brigade Band served under Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman during the March to the Sea. The history of this well-known military band records a night-long "battle of the bands" between the 1st Brigade Band and a band assigned to a Michigan regiment, which was initiated while the 1st Brigade Band was performing a number for Evansville's Dr. Winston, of the 1st Wisconsin Cavalry. The 1st Wisconsin Cavalry subsequently became famous for its role in the capture of the fugitive ex-President of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis.

At least three Maple Hill veterans served in the U.S. Navy during the Civil War. Albert Mason was a member of the crew of U.S.S. *La Fayette*, an ironclad gunboat assigned to combat duty on the Mississippi River and other Western waterways. James R. Brown served aboard U.S.S. *Constitution*, the famous "Old Ironsides", which was used as a training ship throughout the war. Caleb E. Lee was an engineering officer aboard U.S.S. *Pocahontas*, a steam-powered sloop. *Pocahontas* attempted the relief of Fort Sumter while it was under bombardment by the Confederate batteries ringing Charleston harbor in April 1861. She also provided one of the most dramatic examples of brother vs. brother fighting during the Civil War. The commander of the Confederate forces at Port Royal was the brother of *Pocahontas's* commanding officer at the time the ship bombarded Port Royal.

Two of Maple Hill's veterans served in 2 different units. Henry W. Hamilton mustered into the original 1st Wisconsin Infantry under a 3-month enlistment. One month after mustering out, he re-enlisted in the 11th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment. Hamilton was transferred to the Veteran Reserve Corps after the Siege of Vicksburg, in which the 11th Wisconsin was heavily involved. Harrison Simmons was discharged, disabled, from the 7th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment on January 26, 1863, after the Battles of Antietam and Fredericksburg. Simmons re-enlisted as a veteran recruit in the 35th Wisconsin Infantry on January 5, 1864, and was subsequently promoted to corporal and sergeant.

Theodore Sutphen is the only Civil War veteran at Maple Hill known to have been killed in combat. Six other Maple Hill veterans died of disease while on duty during the war. The youngest of these, Horatio Patchin, died on June 19, 1864, after he had been in service approximately six months. He was 15 years old. His brother David, a member of the same infantry company, died of disease some five months later. At least five other Maple Hill veterans besides Harrison Simmons were discharged from the service, disabled, during the war.

We know of one other Evansville soldier who was killed in action in the Civil War. He was William Catlin, a member of Company H of the 2nd Wisconsin Infantry Regiment. Like Theodore Sutphen, Catlin was killed in action at Gainesville, Virginia, but his place of burial is not known. He may be among the 2,111 Unknown Union Soldiers entombed at Arlington National Cemetery.

Maple Hill also has its unknown soldiers. Three of the unknown individuals interred at Maple Hill are identified only as "Civil War Veteran."

-- John Decker