

WEST JEFFERSON IN DAYS GONE BY

By Charlie Miller

Series 36

MEMBERS OF CO. A 40TH OVI: Known members from West Jefferson in Company A included,

Col. William Jones, Thomas Pearce, Wilson Burrows, Marion Simpkins, Andrew Garrabrant, George Ingalls, Albert Ingalls, Lawrence Englesperger, James Chambers, Jacob Englesperger, Levi Hann, George Olney, Wilson Olney, Charles C. Roberts, Fredrick Olney. There were more but are unknown.

154th REGIMENT: On May 9, 1864, three companies of the 154th Ohio National Guard were mustered into this regiment and Camp Dennison. These men served 100 days and were discharged.

Camp Dennison was a 700-acre Civil War camp located near Cincinnati, near I-275 just north of Milford, Ohio. During the war, 50,000 men passed through it. It eventually held 2,300 sick and wounded soldiers and was also used for training. It was named after Gov. William Dennison.

The following men from West Jefferson were in Company C of the 154th.

Capt. Alex Swanston

2nd Lt. Isaac Hambleton

Sgt/ James Arnett, Charles Putnam, Edward R. Hill, John Lewis,

Cpl. George Hann, David Lucas, Samuel Sidner, James Farrington, George Price.
Pvts. Elijah Bell, Lewis Johnson, William McCoy, Samuel Stickley, John Silver, and Thomas Timmons.

On the announcement of the surrender of Gen. Robert E. Lee at Appomattox, the people of Madison County became almost frantic with joy. All the bells in London, as well as other towns in the county, were brought into requisition, flags were displayed and the streets thronged with people congratulating each other at the prospect of the return of peace once more. At about 9 o'clock in the morning on the 10th of April 1865, the day the news was received, the businessmen closed up their establishments for the day. The evening of the 12th was set apart by the citizens as a season of rejoicing over the recent Union success. Shortly after dark nearly all of the houses on Main St. in London were brilliantly illuminated, and a six-pound cannon belched forth its thunder tones from a vacant lot on Main St. Then followed a long procession of torch-lights, parading the principal streets, after which a grand display of fireworks from the public square which lasted for more than an hour. The town was full of people from the adjacent country and everyone seemed jubilant and good-humored. The demonstration kept up until a late hour and nothing occurred to mar the proceedings of the evening.

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An interesting story is told in the book, "Civil War in Song and Story," about Gen. Steedman, who was commander of the First Division, which the 40th O. V. I. was a part of at Chickamauga.

"General Steedman won great praise for his gallantry on the field. His horse was shot from under him, and in his fall his hand became seriously injured. Upon rising he discovered some of the men straggling from his division when he commenced pelting them with stones, driving them back to their work, concluding that if words would not do he would try the virtues of harder material. For a long time, he held the Union Colors in his own hand in the heat of conflict."