

## ENLISTING FOR THE WAR

### Fifty Years Ago

Several articles have recently appeared in some of our county papers relating to the first two companies organized in this county for service in the Civil War. All of these articles are interesting but most of them more or less mixed historically considered.

It may not be possible to write from memory of events so long past without error, but it is my purpose to rely principally on records in my possession for the facts and cut out most that is of a purely personal nature in this and any subsequent articles I may write relating to the history of Companies H and I of the 37th Rgt. N. Y. Vol. Inf.

Company I, under the name, "Cattaraugus Guards," was enrolled at Ellicottville, May 9th, 1861, and organized and mustered into the State Service, May 13, with the following officers: William T. Clark, Captain; George W. Baillette First Lieut; Constant S. Trevitt Second Lieut; and Wiliam Bird, Jr., First Sergeant, all of Ellicottville. The other members were nearly all from Ellicottville and nearby towns, many having served in a company of National Guards having headquarters at that place.

Company H under the name, "Chamberlain Guards," was enrolled at Allegany, May 15th, and mustered into the State service May 17, by Lieut. Col., D. G. Bingham of the National Guard, with the following officers: Luke G. Harmon, Captain; John R. McConnell, First Lieut. both of Allegany, and Patrick H. Jones, Second Lieut., and Byron A. Johnston, First Sergeant, both of Ellicottville; The other members were from Allegany, Great Valley, Portville, Salamanca, Randolph, Leon, Franklinville, New Albion, East Otto, nine went with me from Humphrey and three at least came from Ellington, Chautauqua County.

It has often been said with much truth that Company H was composed chiefly of lumbermen and company I of school teachers, and in the two companies were representatives of many if not most of the historic pioneer families of the county.

Both companies were soon ordered to Elmira, Company I going the 20th and Company H the 21st of May; soon after they were ordered

to New York, arriving, as I remember it, May 26th, the day of Col. Ellsworth's funeral, and the following day we were assigned to the 37th N. Y. Vol. Inf., sometimes called "The New York Irish Rifles." Judge, John H. McCunn, a Tammany politician, of subsequent unsavory impeachment fame, had got together eight Companies of New York City Irishmen under the name of "The New York Irish Rifles," and our two companies completed the regiment.

We were quartered for two days somewhere down town and then moved to some hastily constructed barracks in an open space between 99th and 101st streets until June 4th when we moved down to the "Battery," taking the place of the First N. Y. Vol. Inf., sent on to the seat of war the morning of that date as I remember it now.

Here we were mustered into the United States service as the 37th N. Y. Vol. Infantry for the period of two years, on June 7th, 1861, fifty years ago yesterday.

Marvin S. Cole,

Late First Sergt.,

Co. H, 37th N. Y. Vol. Inf