

## FORWARD

James Emmons was a soldier in the 154th New York Volunteers. His home was in a small town in the state of New York called Charlotte.

Jim was 21 when he signed up. He enlisted for a time period of 3 years. Jim enlisted during the early days of the regiment. This was June 11, 1862, in Jamestown, New York. He became a member of the 3rd Artillery Division, Eleventh Army Corps, First Brigade. There were about 700 men in his outfit. His regimental flag was a triangular-shaped pattern with a dark blue background and a white moon crescent placed on the left end.

We know that Jim's regiment fought in the battles of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. The battle we know Jim fought in was Gettysburg. We also know for a fact that during this battle Jim's division had to retreat from the battlefield.

The regiment was mustered out of service in accordance with orders from the war department on June 11, 1865.

The 154th regiment was a real outfit during the Civil War. The facts I have given about it are all true. The main content of the book is all fact from the letters we studied from the real soldier, James Emmons. Through parts of the book had to be made up on account of missing information, as you read this book, think how Jim must of felt for Jim Emmons on the battlefields, fighting for his fellow men in the army.

## FAMILY LIFE

Jim, being the youngest of the family, was always picked on by his older brothers and spoiled by his mother who felt sorry for him. Jim's mother was always hovering over him to protect him. If it was not for Jim's father's stubborn, pig-headed goal to make Jim a tough outdoorsman. Jim's father, John D. Emmons, was a real character, a real tough guy. John could drink anyone under in the western half of New York.

Unfortunately, from Mr. Emmon's point of view, Jim was much more similar in his actions, to his mother. In other words, he was not wild and untamed like his father.

Jim and the rest of his family lived in a rough form of what is known as a colonial house. This house consisted mainly of one large living room, a dining room, and a small kitchen. Upstairs, there were three bedrooms, one for the parents, one for the eldest children, and one for the rest of the children. Adjoining the kitchen was a small building where the food was stored. The house was actually a mile or so from the town of Charlotte.

Charlotte is a very small town and is not marked on some maps and was much like a western town around 1880, with its general store, a bar (saloon), a couple odds&ends stores, and a blacksmith and a livery stable.

There was one school in the area, about five or six miles from Charlotte, and every morning one of the local male citizens would pick up the children early and provide transportation to and from school. They each took turns day by day. This school was one of the many set up and organized by Governor George Dewitt Clinton.



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FATHER

Unfortunately, Jim quit school in the eighth grade, giving him a limited education of reading very simple writings, being able to write and very little basic arithmetic. This all happened much to his mother's disagreement with his father.

Jim's mother, which I neglected to mention before, was one of the high fashion, high society type people from New York city. How or why she ever came way out to Charlotte no one knows. She was brought up in high society with a good education and being very stubborn, did not want to change her ways. After she married John D. Emmons, though she discovered that this man was even more stubborn and more pig-headed than she was, she loved him and decided to put up with at least some of his ways.

Jim being fairly strong and very well coordinated did not have that reckless way of living life like his father did. Jim's older brother, however, was a spittin image of his father. Jim and Ann, his sister, were very much alike in their actions.

Jim was the youngest in the family. His sister Ann had an uncommonly cunning way of handling the English language. She could get just about anyone to do just about anything she wished them to do by her control with words. Jim and Ann always got along together; much better than with John. Mrs. Emmons always was feeling sorry for Jim because he was always being picked on, therefore Jim gradually became spoiled by his mother.

One day in the life of Jim might have gone something like this: About six or seven o'clock Mr. Emmons would wake up all the children and hurry them down to breakfast which usually consisted of eggs, milk, and some form of bacon made out of any meat. Mrs. Emmons, every once in a while, put Jim back in bed when he didn't look much awake until



Mr. Emmons missed him doing the chores. Mrs. Emmons was always complaining that Jim's chores were too hard for a small boy of twelve years old. After breakfast, the chores were done quickly and Jim was hustled off to school until he quit school. School got out at 2 o'clock and Jim was home by 3 o'clock. Jim would then do something with his mother until his father got home and at that point his father would take the two boys out and do some shooting or a little trapping.

Jim was not as "tough" as his brother and could not put up as much endurance. When I said Jim was not as "tough" I didn't mean to imply that Jim was a coward. He was fairly strong and well coordinated, but he just was not built like a rock.

After coming in from the trapping or shooting, they would eat and afterwards Jim would do what studying he had and much against his father's wishing, would then do whatever he wanted, because his mother let him. Whenever his father tried to interfere with this Jim would throw a fit and make so much trouble that he forced his father to forget that idea.

The only remaining facts from now on are a diary of his mother's and some letters he wrote to his sister while Jim was in the Civil War.

"Today Jimmy left despite my frequent efforts to keep him at home. I guess he had to go but I still think he could have waited another couple of months. A few days ago he kissed me for about the first time in a year. He said that he would write to me once a week but at the rate he writes now I doubt that his promise will ever come true. Aunt Gloria is coming over tonight and I am praying that she will not bring up the subject of Pa's drinking."

This last paragraph is a segment of a diary of Mrs. John D. Emmons. She wrote this from the time of Jim's leaving the home and for a year

or two afterwards. However, for some strange reason she stopped it suddenly. Therefore it is only possible to guess what happened after that; but we can guess with reasonable accuracy.

From the beginning of Jim's service, the diary shows fits of longing for him and the like. However, toward the end of the diary she drops this feeling and barely mentions him. It is hard to say why, but it is reasonable to think that he did something to disgrace his family, but in his letters he does not mention to that extent. For about a week after Jim left, her diary consists of nothing but worrying about him. She mentions how he slept and how linely it is without him. Then for about a week after this she tells about house life. However, periodically she brings in the subject of his leaving but as it goes on she brings this in less and less. As time passes she and Pa get into more and more arguments. Pa, unfortunately, is involved in all the things that you would not want to be in. As was shown in the first paragraph, he drinks quite a bit. He also was at one point accused of stealing, however he was not convicted. The indication in Jim's letters was that he was never told this, but I think that he knew something was amiss. Pa also got into such arguments that it is extremely hard to comprehend how they were ever broken up. The things they argued about were not so petty. One such instance occurred when they were not sure where to plant some beans so they had a running fight for a least 6 days. In all of Jim's letters it is very strange how he never mentions his parents. Pa, however, had as his characteristics may be, manages to keep his family alive. After one of these fights Pa got so angry that he left home, and only after a month did he return. Fortunately, none of this was mentioned to Jim or who knows what would have happened. However the situation did not improve, in fact I would say

it got worse. Pa would get drunk nearly every night and the fights would increase. Unfortunately, it is here that her diary ends. Just before it does though, she gives an indication that their food is running short. If it is true and family affairs continued it is very probable that they may have split up. This is, of course, only a guess but is the most feasible of any idea. This would make Jim, the hero, a loser in the long run.