

of May 2, 1863, the 154th New York, as part of the 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, 11th Corps, stood and fought their baptism of fire until they too in turn were overwhelmed. Alfred D. Babcock of Co. B took the time to pick up a souvenir, a fife dropped by some musician, at some point during that eventful day. Sometime later, in camp, probably to relieve the monotony often experienced by the soldiers, Babcock carved into the fife: "Flute Found at Battle of Chancellorsville, VA, May 2, 1863 by A.D. Babcock, Co. B, 154th Regt. N.Y.S. Vol. Inf." (Figure 6)

Members of the regiment often carved items to wile away the boredom of camp life. Emory Sweetland, a private in Co. B, was assigned to the hospital as an attendant. (Figure 7) When there were few sick or wounded to care for he had alot of time on his hands so Emory started carving. In a letter to his wife on Sunday afternoon, March 13, 1864, he discussed his pipe carving and sales: "I am still whittling & have much better luck than I expected in selling my pipes. I wish that you could see one. They are made of Laurel Root & are about the collar [sic] of the veneering on our bureau. I finish them up very nicely and carve the words Lookout Mountain, Hooker, 1863 upon them. I can sell all that I can make from \$2

to \$5 apiece to officers." (Figures 8, 9, and 10) This particular example went to Dr. Henry Van Aernam, surgeon of the 154th, who years later added the engraved top piece.

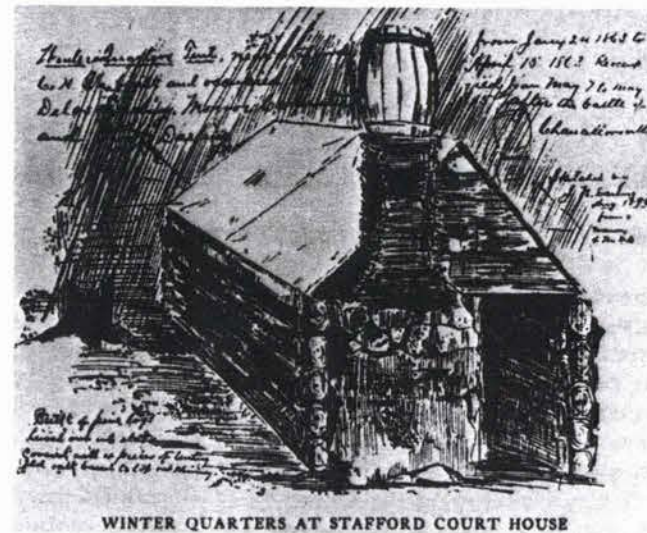
Besides carving pipes, Emory Sweetland also carved rings, a cane and a salt cellar and made corps badges from ten cent pieces. He and Dr. Van Aernam also made items from shellfish that were taken from the Tennessee River. Emory mentioned in a letter from Chattanooga, February 28, 1864, "I will try & get you a ring out of the pearl oyster that are found in the Tenn.



(Figure 2 - Above) Captain John Griswold, Co. F, 154th Regt., N.Y.S.I.V. As a First Lieutenant in 1862 he wrote to his wife describing the regiment's first camp in Dixie. (Courtesy Ruth Griswold and Margaret Green.)

(Figure 3 - Left) "Martin's Soldier's Record" of Company F. (Collection of Mark H. Dunkelman.)

(Figure 4 - Below) "Ding" Darling's drawing of his father's log hut at Stafford Court House, Virginia. (Courtesy University of Iowa Libraries.)



WINTER QUARTERS AT STAFFORD COURT HOUSE

River they are very nice," and Dr. Van Aernam wrote to his wife from Lookout Valley, April 30, 1864, "I enclose the little buttons for Charlies collar that I have worked out of muscle [sic] shells found in the Tennessee River."

That Emory Sweetland was quite a collector is evident from comments in the letters he sent home. For instance, he wrote to his wife from the 154th's camp near Stafford Court House, Va., February 27, 1863, "I have an extra dress coat that I found at our last camp. If it was cleaned up it would be about as good as new. I shall send it home. If you can sell it, you may, it is worth 5 or 6 dollars. When our troops march they throw away a great deal of clothing I shall try and save some if I remain in the hospital so that I can get it carried." Later he sent a piece of stone from a gold mine near United States Ford and some cotton bolls from Chattanooga.

From Savannah, Emory wrote on January 25, 1865, "I send some articles from different battle fields, all labeled." In the same letter he asked, "Darling did you receive the star that I sent you from Atlanta just as we mooved [sic] away." On March 17, 1865, he wrote, "Ben Bently (our cook) captured a double barrel shot gun which he gave me," and from Alexandria, Va., on

May 23, 1865, Emory told his wife, "I shall express a small box containing all my surplus clothing, books & shot gun etc. as they would be a perfect nuisance [sic] to me if we were dalling [sic] along the road two or three weeks."

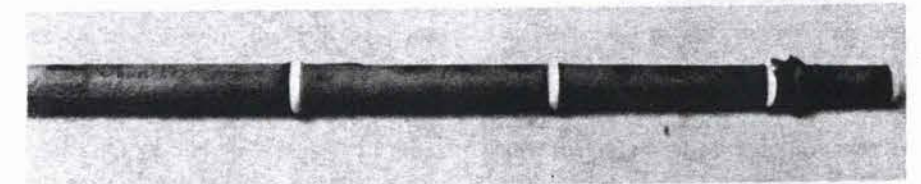
Surgeon Henry Van Aernam, (Figure 11) Surgeon-in-Chief for the 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, 11th Corps and 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, 20th Corps (after the 11th and 12th Corps' consolidation into the 20th Corps in April, 1864), who Emory Sweetland worked for, left a good group of relics. These, however, were dispersed and have never all been tracked down. His material was found in an attic of an old house about to be torn down in western New York. An antique dealer (who was not too careful) saved some letters, his commission, sword and uniform, but many letters that were soiled or water stained were thrown away! The sword and uniform were sold, but to whom, the dealer did not remember. The letters were retained for years at an enormous price until Alan Sessarego of Gettysburg was able to "deal" them away. Dr. Van Aernam's letters to his family reveal a man who did not like soldiering and who wanted only to be back home. (Figure 12) They form a part of the more than 500 wartime letters of members of the 154th that have been located and copied by the authors. Dr. Van Aernam received a discharge for disability on November 5, 1864, and three days later was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Henry was a good politician and was re-elected three times over the years. As soldiers and veterans, the men of the 154th loved and respected him for the care and attention he gave them. The Ellicottville, N.Y., GAR post was named in his honor.

A young school teacher enrolled as a private in Company B, on September 24, 1862. Edgar Shannon had let the war go by the first year but as Abraham Lincoln called for 300,000 more soldiers and the men of the North saw the war effort making little progress and the stigma of the draft an unwelcome possibility, hundreds of thousands left their trades and professions to swell the ranks of the still failing Union armies. (Figure 13) Edgar was a good soldier. He was wounded at Chancellorsville and missed the Gettysburg Campaign but by November of 1863 was back with his company and wear-

ing sergeant's chevrons. Four months later he sported first lieutenant's straps on his uniform and began his duties as regimental quartermaster of the 154th New York, the position he would hold until the end of the war.

Sometime during his service, Edgar had an identification disc made, stamped with his name, county, company and regiment; the other side featured a bas-relief of President Lincoln. Over one hundred years later this identification disc was advertised for sale in a military antiques dealer's catalog. The disc now belongs to one of the authors, who will cherish it as a fond memento of the "Hardtack Regiment." (Figure 14)

Another item which has an inscription on it identifying it as a relic of the 154th New York is a tribute to heroism on the battlefield. The "Hardtack Regiment" left its camp in Lookout Valley, near Chattanooga, Tennessee, the afternoon of May 4, 1864, at the start of the Atlanta Campaign. Four days later found them facing Confederate General Patrick Cleburne's graybacks on the crest of Rocky Face



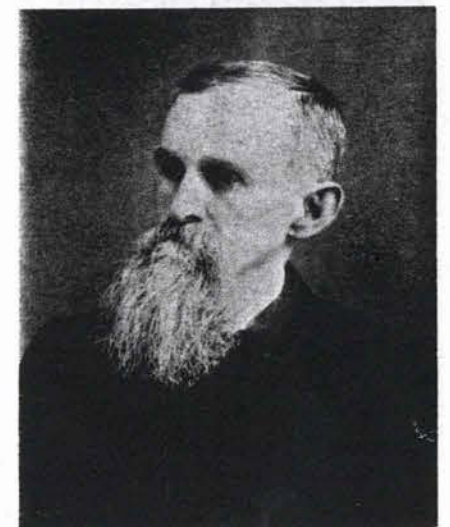
(Figure 6) Fife picked up on the Chancellorsville battlefield by Pvt. Alfred D. Babcock of Co. B, 154th Regt., (Courtesy Cattaraugus County Historical Museum.)

Ridge, at Dug Gap, near Dalton, Georgia. The regiment did its best to assault the crest and stormed the palisade of rocks and planted its colors on the heights. However, they were outnumbered as well as worn out by the climb, and their stay on the mountaintop was short lived. In the hasty retreat which followed, Corporal George Greek of the color guard was left behind, severely wounded in both legs.

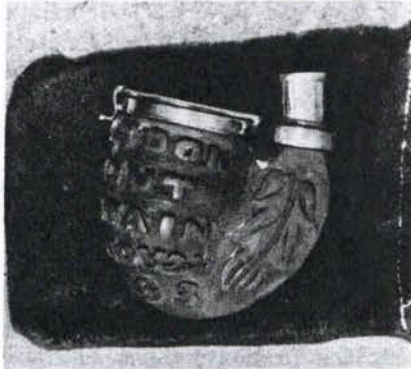
Halfway down the mountain, the remnants of the 154th stopped for a breather. Major Lewis D. Warner noticed Corporal Greek lying between the lines and sent Sergeant Stephen Welch and his tent mate, Charles McKay, back up the mountain in a rescue attempt. Both left accounts of the venture. A Welch family story goes that the two used frying pans as protection against the lead hail that greeted their mission of mercy. They managed



(Figure 5) Marcellus W. Darling, Co. K, 154th Regt., N.Y.S.I.V. He described his log hut for his artist son to draw. (Courtesy of University of Iowa Libraries.)



(Figure 7) Emory Sweetland, post-war photo, a collector of souvenirs during the war. He served with Co. B. (Courtesy Lyle Sweetland.)



(Figure 9 - Above) Left side view of laurel root pipe carved by Emory Sweetland. Courtesy R.L. Farnham, Jr.)

(Figure 8 - Left) Right side view of laurel root pipe carved by Emory Sweetland. (Courtesy of R.L. Farnham, Jr.)
 (Figure 10 - Right) Top view of laurel root pipe carved by Emory Sweetland with silver engraved lid presentation from Dr. Henry Van Aernam to Rev. D.C. McVean and Mrs. McVean Swinton to C.D. Van Aernam, Dec. 25, 1895. C.D. Van Aernam was Dr. Van Aernam's son. (Courtesy of R.L. Farnham, Jr.)

to roll Greek onto either a blanket (according to Welch) or a piece of tent (McKay) and carried him back into the Union lines. For this heroic act both Welch and McKay were each awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for "Voluntarily risking [his] life in rescuing under fire of the enemy a wounded comrade who was lying between the lines." Welch's medal is pictured here. (Figure 15) Within two weeks of his heroic deed Stephen Welch was commissioned a first lieutenant. (Figure 16) His M1850 foot officer's

sword, lacking its scabbard, remains in his descendant's family. (Figure 17)

Following the fight at Dug Gap, the 154th moved on to battles at Resaca, New Hope Church and Lost Mountain. On June 23, 1864, near Culp's Farm, Private Martin D. Bushnell of Co. H took a rifle ball in the foot. As the surgeons were amputating, the field hospital was shelled and the canvas torn away from above it. The attendants all fled, leaving Bushnell in a helpless condition. When the fighting was over he was carried away from the

exposed position, but the flaps of the amputated foot had grown cold and soon began to slough off, making an extremely bad case. (Figure 18)

The surgeon in charge of the General Field Hospital of the Army of the Cumberland, Dr. Woodworth, was a relative of Bushnell's. He contracted with a southern lady, Mrs. Fannie Jackson, to be a special nurse for Martin. Over the period of two months which Mrs. Jackson attended Martin Bushnell and he responded to her tender care, she provided him with a robe

(Figure 11 - Below Left) Surgeon Henry Van Aernam, Surgeon-in-Chief for the 1st Brig., 2nd Div., 11th Corps and 2nd Brig., 2nd Div., 20th Corps. (Courtesy Wm. C. Welch.) (Figure 12 - Below Right) Several letters of Henry Van Aernam to his wife. (Courtesy of Alan Sessarego.)

