



Battle Lines



Newsletter of Co. H, 5th Reg't. New Hampshire Vol's.

- **Co. Mustered-in September 9, 2018** •
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Spring Drill: A Call to Arms!



An announcement was made in time for Issue No. 29 of "Battle Lines" that our first drill of the 2021 season would be held on Saturday, May 15 in Sussex, New Brunswick; beginning at 12 o'clock noon. No objections to the date or location were received from members. Instead, several people offered that Sussex is a good central location for drill. Suggestions for other locations were sought, but none were received.

The drill date is tentative and, of course, subject to weather cancellation, so members should check emails regularly as we approach May 15. Also, if spring brings us good weather and good drying conditions prior to this date, an earlier drill may be called.

Now is a good time to check your equipment: inspect the thread on uniform buttons, inspect leather for cracks, inspect your musket and clean your brass.

Based on emails received, we have a lot of people anxious for drills to begin and, luckily, you have an officer and NCO's who are eager to oblige!

Nick Skinner and His Knives

Nick Skinner first came to the attention of Co. H in an email from Leigh Gavel back on May 21, 2020, when Leigh wrote: "I was just talking with an old friend of mine who used to reenact a few years ago. He gave it up when he and his wife moved to Alberta. He says they're moving back to NS in a couple of months. I asked him about joining the 5th NH, and he said that he'd love to. He would be a great addition as a member because, among his many talents, he builds and repairs muskets." Nick's name was placed on our email list and newsletters and correspondence have been exchanged ever since.



Then, on January 24, 2021, an email was sent to Leigh to discover if he knew whether Nick had, indeed, returned to Nova Scotia. Leigh replied that he had. Following that information, emails were exchanged between Lindsay Titus and Nick Skinner over the next few days. Among the information shared was this from Nick: "I'm getting my business off the ground and am swamped with orders, which is a good thing. I'm a full-time cutler, making Civil War-era knives for the American market. Presently on my bench [are knives] for a Reb campaigner. The others all went to members of the North-South Skirmish team and various Indian wars guys. There's a number of other ones that are all like the coffin handle ones too that I haven't included pics of, that went to various cowboys and Civil War enthusiasts through the states from Virginia right around through Texas and up the other

side of the country and across." Dave Adams reports that he has seen Nick's name numerous times on the website of the "Authentic Campaigner".

Included in some of Nick's emails were photographs of some of his impressive work. When asked if some of the photographs could be reproduced for "Battle Lines", Nick responded: "Certainly, go ahead and use one or two. I suggest the one of the Sheffield dagger and Bowie, or the one with the fan of three Bowie's. Those are my trademark pieces that I make the most. I can't make enough of them. Every time I'm nearing completion of one, there's another one ordered. I'll join [Co. H]



regardless; attendance might not happen till this bloody virus let's up though. I'm a thread counter these days so I'll discuss gear with Leigh when I can."

We indeed hope that Nick will become a member of Co. H; clearly his many talents can only enrich our group. Nick has a new website. Find him at southmountainforge.ca. We also join Nick in wishing this "bloody virus" to be a thing relegated to the history books. Thank you, Leigh, for your recommendation, and thank you to Nick for sharing some of your skills with us. [Update: On Monday, March 1, Nick joined Co. H as a member. Welcome, Nick!]

A Time of Caution

News reporters in the United States are often heard these days, to say that the country has not experienced division like this since the days of the Civil War. Deaths and demonstrations in the streets; the violent and destructive storming of the Capitol Building in Washington, DC; two impeachment trials; disturbing statements and actions both by government leaders and members of the public; Congressional splits along strict partisan party lines – all in the midst of a year-long, deadly pandemic – have pushed the United States into some very dark and uncharted places. It is all so sad to see.

So, in the midst of these seemingly endless reminders of the Civil War: the repeated quotations of Abraham Lincoln, the removal or defacing of Civil War monuments and the waving of Confederate flags, including inside the Capitol dome, where does this divisive atmosphere leave us as Civil War reenactors on the Canadian side of the border? It puts us in a place where each of us must navigate with great care.

One thing we can do is go into a first-person impression and talk only of things as they are known in 1861 or 1862, like Bull Run, Yorktown or Antietam; we can feign ignorance of the situation; or deflect a response to another member; or, possibly, one can try to dodge a difficult question altogether.

And, you can be sure that questions will come, or comments. They could come from talk around the campfire by one of your "pards", or unexpectedly from a member of the public who walks into camp and asks, innocently, "What do you think of what's been going on in the United States?" Someone will want to talk about the situation south of the border. How, then, will you react? As an adult, you have the responsibility to make adult decisions, but the time to consider your response is now, while you have time, and while your head is free and clear from the pressure of the moment.

Membership in Co. H brings with it both privilege and responsibility. By wearing the uniform, you represent all of us in what you say or do. You take on a dual role, actually, of representing the present-day members of Co. H, while also representing the veterans of the original regiment. With membership comes responsibility.

So the advice here, if advice you seek, is to think first, and consider your response in a careful, caring manner. Our *Company Regulations* (Article 2.4, Section 2 "Interactions") state that "when representing Company H, members shall exhibit respect and courtesy toward members of the public, event hosts or representatives, members of the community, members of fellow-living-history organizations and fellow-members of Company H." It goes on to state: "While in uniform or otherwise serving as a member or representative of Company H, Fifth New Hampshire, members should not initiate interactions with the public, event organizers or government representatives of a modern political nature, as these topics are often of a sensitive nature and the existence and growth of the Company depends on the goodwill of the people, of event organizers and of government. And lastly, the *Regulations* tell us: "Members need not avoid modern political topics should they be initiated by someone outside the Company, but should temper responses with caution and good judgment." The *Regulations* continue: "Members should be aware that we do not know the reasons why an individual has arrived at a given point-of-view, and should therefore always maintain a position of respect." Further, "after-hours 'campfire' discussions of any nature should respect the point-of-view of all persons in camp; and "after-hours 'campfire' discussions should be calm, without undue profanity and should be respectful of those trying to sleep."

Your point-of-view on political topics – on either side of the border – is your own, but by giving measured and largely neutral responses, and by avoiding the web of political entanglements, you abide by our *Regulations*, and you protect yourself, the image of all members of Company H and the honour of the original regiment.

In Command (4 of 6): The Fifth New Hampshire at Gettysburg

- ♣ **July 1-3, 1863**
- ♣ **Army of the Potomac** – Major General George Gordon Meade
- ♣ **II Corps** – Major General Winfield Scott Hancock
- ♣ **1st Division** – Brigadier General John Curtis Caldwell
- ♣ **1st Brigade** – Colonel Edward Ephraim Cross (m/w: 7/02/63); Colonel Henry B. McKean (to 7/04/63); Colonel Nelson A. Miles
- ♣ **5th New Hampshire** – Lieutenant Colonel Charles E. Hapgood

Arthur H. Perkins: The Last Survivor of the Regiment

Arthur H. Perkins of Co. I, Fifth New Hampshire, was the last surviving member of the regiment, according to information found in the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. Perkins enlisted on October 19, 1861, and mustered-in as a private on the same day. At the time of his enlistment he was living in Danbury, the place of his birth. His age at enlistment was 19, according to Dr. William Child's regimental history, but the Library of Congress gives his birth year as 1844, meaning he was actually just 17 in 1861. Child's regimental history says that Perkins was appointed 2nd Lieutenant on November 1, 1863, but he was a 1st sergeant at some point before that, as a close examination of the middle photograph (*below*) shows. Lieutenant Perkins was discharged upon the completion of his 3-year enlistment on November 6, 1864; His postal address was given as Danbury, New Hampshire. Lieutenant Perkins died in 1936, having been a witness and participant in some of the fiercest fighting of the Civil War.



From left to right, the first photograph shows Perkins as a private; the middle picture as first sergeant; and the third is as an older man, possibly taken in the year of his death. On the reverse side of the third photograph, it is identified as having been taken by Currier Studio of Franklin, New Hampshire. Many thanks to Chris Benedetto of Co. A, 5th New Hampshire, who sent links to these images to "Battle Lines" in an email back in November 2018.

"Rally 'round the flag, boys!"



- **School of the Soldier** – Sussex, NB – Saturday, May 15
- **Rally for Norlands** – Livermore, Maine – June 5-6
- **Kings Landing Pre-Muster** – June (*date to be determined*)
- **Military Muster** – Kings Landing – June 18-20
- **Air Show Atlantic** – Debert, NS – August 28-29
- **Honouring General Caldwell** – St. Stephen, NB – Sept. 17
- **Charlotte County Fall Fair** – St. Stephen, NB – Sept. 18-19
- **Tomlinson Lake Hike to Freedom** – Carlingford, NB – Oct. 2
- **Queen Charlotte Armoury** – Charlottetown, PEI (*tentative*)
- **Halifax Citadel** – Halifax, NS – (*tentative*)
- **ACMHA Events** – *We're invited!*
- **20th Maine, Co. B Events** – *We're invited!*

! A Call to Arms !

! Kings Landing • Military Muster • June 18-20 !

The Uniform – Part 2 – The Sack Coat

The four-button sack coat was the common fatigue jacket issued by the army. Its simple “sack-like” design made it easy to cut and sew and thus, cheaper to make. This should be your coat of choice.

Recent research shows that over 70% of sack coats were lined. Reproduction lined coats are readily available, but are more expensive than unlined versions. Lined coats have the advantage of being more historically accurate, maintaining their shape better, and keeping wearers a little warmer in cool weather.

Members who serve both as a private and as a non-commissioned officer (NCO) must be prepared to purchase a second coat: one with stripes to accurately portray their rank, and one without, for serving as a private. This is important, too, when falling-in with other units. It is presumptuous to arrive at their event as an NCO. Bring both coats. Let them decide if they want you to serve as an NCO; you will be viewed with greater favour that way.

Before buying on-line, ask if coats come with buttons. Some sutlers require that buttons be purchased separately, or charge a fee for sewing them on.

It pays to spend a little more money on a quality sack coat. Cheaply-made coats will turn purple over time when exposed to the sun. Like everything else, you get what you pay for.

If you choose to own a second coat, the enlisted man’s frock coat is an excellent selection. It is a longer coat, features more buttons and has smart-looking sky blue (infantry) piping. It was the standard choice of selected regiments, such as the Iron Brigade. The frock coat is a great-looking coat, and is perfect for formal (dress) occasions.

! News of the War in the East !

- **Group Invitations** – Invitations have gone out to a number of groups to participate in the Military Muster at Kings Landing, scheduled for June 18-20. They are Co. B, 20th Maine; Co. I, 20th Maine; Co. A, 3rd Maine, elements of Danks’ Rangers, and Delancey’s Brigade. Additional Revolutionary War groups will be contacted by Steve Fowler of Delancey’s Brigade.
- **Individual Invitations** – Invitations to the Military Muster at Kings Landing were sent out in late January to some individuals as well. They include Graham Nickerson, Kevin Baker and Lonny Ryall. Graham and Kevin are friends of Co. H, while Lonny is a former and long-time member of Co. I, 20th Maine; Co. B, 20th Maine and the Columbia Rifles. In addition, Co. H member Joe Gee may participate in uniform, or to promote Black history and the Tomlinson Lake Hike to Freedom.
- **Kings Landing News** – In an email received on February 8, Kings Landing CEO, Mary Baruth, reported that they have had a lot of interest in the Friday educational day on June 18, part of our Military Muster.
- **Scenarios Wanted!** – Don’t forget to submit emails of suggested interactive scenarios for Kings Landing. They should be both entertaining and informative for the public. Sgt. Gavel has already submitted some excellent ideas. Thank you, Leigh!
- **Ferry Season is Cancelled** – On Monday, February 1, the Government of Nova Scotia announced the cancellation of the catamaran ferry service for 2021 between Yarmouth, Nova Scotia and Bar Harbor, Maine. This, sadly, tells us something about the expected state of the international border for some time to come.
- **Emergency Information Cards** – A slightly revised medical information card for Co. H members has been completed, and emergency information for the 2021 season will soon be sought from members. The card was revised to be slightly smaller, so as to be a better fit inside members’ cartridge box pouches.
- **“Lincoln: Divided We Stand”** – “Lincoln: Divided We Stand” is a six-part television series about the life of Abraham Lincoln. It airs on CNN on Sunday nights, with the premier episode shown on February 14 at 11 PM, Atlantic Time. The series investigates the highly complex life of the sixteenth president, and intertwines his complex political life with his equally complicated personal life. The program is narrated by actor Sterling K. Brown, known currently for his portrayal of Randall Pearson in the acclaimed television series, “This Is Us.”

Canadians in the Ranks of the Fifth New Hampshire

Anthony Gorham of Co. C was born in Canada and enlisted at age 21 on August 24, 1864 as a substitute. He was mustered-in as a private on the same day; his name being credited to Fitzwilliam. Private Gorham was missing at Farmville, Virginia on April 7, 1865, very near the war’s end. He was returned from Confederate hands and mustered out with the regiment on June 28, 1865.