



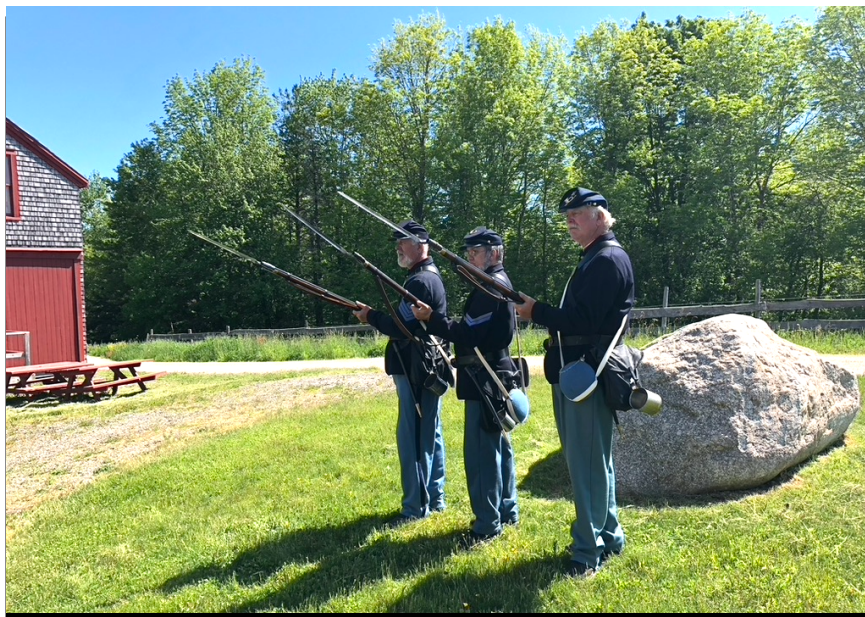
# Battle Lines



**Newsletter of Co. H, 5<sup>th</sup> Reg't. New Hampshire Vol's.**

• *Mustered-in March 17, 2002* • *Issue No. 54* • *March 5, 2023* •

## **2023: Working to Grow Company H**



Company H, 5<sup>th</sup> New Hampshire does good work. There can be no question about that. Through our commitment to gaining a better understanding of history, both American and Canadian, and through our ongoing quest for a higher level of authenticity and knowledge of Civil War drill, we educate the public about this critical and fascinating era of history that had such far-reaching consequences on both sides of the border. How many times have we heard from members of the public, “I didn’t know that,” or “I learned something new today”? Just watch as visitors crowd around the horrifying tables of our Hospital Steward

and listen to his descriptions of mid-nineteenth century battlefield medicine. Watch also, as visitors maneuver to get that perfect photograph of a volley of musket fire. These scenes alone speak volumes about the interest and importance of what we do as reenactors.

But, there is often something missing at our displays, drills and encampments, and that is a sufficient number of reenactors to truly make that volley fire memorable, or the rows of tents in camp come alive with “nineteenth century” human activity. As Bruce Barber of Co. I, 20<sup>th</sup> Maine has often said, “In reenacting, numbers are everything.” Seeing four muskets fire in a perfectly-timed volley, the white smoke drifting on the breeze above, is surely a picture-worthy event. Seeing 15 or 20 muskets (or more) firing by volley is amazing, and, for some, a memory of a lifetime –for both the public and the reenactor.

With this as our focus, let us all work together in 2023 to move toward improving our membership and participation numbers. We all recognize that personal, family and work commitments are priorities, and that no one is expected to attend all events. Travel takes time and money, and those commodities are often in short supply, but it is amazing how an event improves when even just two or three additional members are in attendance. So, how do we improve both our membership and participation numbers? There are, at least, five paths that will help us get there:

1. We need to retain present members.
2. We need to encourage and facilitate some present members to become more active.
3. We need to recruit.
4. We need to be more visible, and, lastly;
5. We need to build our relationships with regional Civil War, and other living-history organizations.

Let’s examine each of these five paths:

### **(1) Retaining Present Members**

The membership of any group is going to change. Life happens, so people come and go. Priorities change, as do health, financial and location considerations. That is a given, but we must work at making our group and our events enjoyable and valuable experiences for present members. Even if a long drive is involved, a member having an enjoyable time at an event sees it as worthwhile, and he or she goes home with the satisfaction of having spent time, energy and money on something worthwhile, something fun. How do we do that? To start, we must all treat each other with respect and with friendship – the cherished “camaraderie” spoken of by Civil War veterans. We do these things well already, but we must be diligent in always being a welcoming group. Yes, we should be serious about drill for reasons of authenticity and safety, but we can also have fun.

Ask questions. Who hasn’t had the lonely experience of feeling like the only kid in a math class who doesn’t get the concept being taught? A member or recruit who doesn’t understand a drill step or maneuver should feel free and comfortable to ask questions – at an appropriate time, of course. We want everyone to learn, for it benefits us all. We must also value all ideas put forward at meetings, in emails or at informal gatherings. A person who feels that he or she has no voice will quickly lose interest.

We also need to have events in a variety of communities, so that travel is more or less equitably shared among members. Company H represents Atlantic Canada, so we must accept that travel to the different regions is a part of what we do, as our personal conditions allow. Further, travelling together whenever possible brings additional memories that can be life-long, as they are so often full of laughter.

Lastly, be involved in the decision-making of the group. Come to meetings, take part in on-line discussions, and respond to email and newsletter proposals, comments or questions. Help shape the future of Co. H – after all, it’s your company!

### **(2) Encourage Present Members to be More Active**

Our number of members has been growing, but it is often that we have only 6-7, or even 3-4 people at events, and they are frequently the same ones at nearly every event. Hurrah for them, but how good it would be to see some of our present members become more active. As already said, we all understand that family, personal and work commitments come first, and that travel can be expensive and time-consuming. However, for some, it may be just a matter of hesitating to get involved because of a worry of not knowing the basic skills of drill, military decorum, group expectations or the history of the period, or of the regiment. Most of us have had such worries. It’s just getting beyond those initial concerns of the unknown that is the obstacle for some.

For others, it is a matter of not having some, or any kit. For events such as drills, that is not an issue. If you show up in jeans, sneakers and a tee-shirt, the important thing is that you’re there. Plus, we are compiling “loaner” uniforms and accoutrements, and so can outfit new members or potential recruits, at least up to a point, and our list of loaner equipment will continue to grow. We know that uniforms and equipment are expensive, but we always allow newcomers lots of time to put their kit together. When getting started, interest, enthusiasm, a willingness to learn and good people-skills are the keys to improving your impression, not whether you have the correct shoes!

Finally, always be on the lookout for potential events and locations in your area, and create new encampment ideas, too. New ideas can add so much to an event. Seeing ideas come to fruition only adds interest. If our schedule permits, and if members are interested, we’ll add it to our calendar, and if not this year, then perhaps next.

### **(3) Recruiting**

Third, is the recruiting of new members. In real estate, the key ingredient for sales is often said to be “location, location, location”, but in reenacting, it is “recruit, recruit, recruit”! The best way to do this is to be visible – to be at a variety of events at a variety of locations (*see No. 4, below*). We, as a group, get “discovered” in many ways, and although it is most often at events, there are other ways to get noticed.

Greater mainstream and social media coverage is something we need to explore and develop.

We also need to inform potential recruits that other military and non-military roles are available to portray. This makes reenacting more available to people of different interests, and allows families to participate – another key to gaining and retaining members.

Still, visibility is our top recruiter. We gained an unprecedented eight prospective recruits at Air Show Atlantic in August 2022, and our presence at Kings Landing last June was impressive enough for a representative there to give Dave Bottos our contact information. That's the way these things happen, but it's important to recognize that had Dave not enjoyed his reenacting experience years ago, he probably would not have sought us out, so, in reality, all these "paths" are intertwined. So, we need to be visible by having good numbers of present members participate in a variety of events in a variety of places. That makes us visible, creates excellent goodwill with communities and the public, and makes it all the more fun for members and prospective recruits.

Then, there are our personal methods of telling people about us. Leigh Gavel often wears a kepi out in public in the chance that someone will ask him about it. Lindsay Titus often wears a 5<sup>th</sup> New Hampshire hoodie with a large, red II Corps trefoil on the front, in the same hope that someone will ask about it. Talk about us, spread the word. Let people know who we are and what we do. Years ago, Lindsay Titus met Lily Adams at a meeting of school principals. She told her husband about our Civil War conversation, and we soon gained long-time member, Dave Adams. Years ago, a photograph of Bruce Barber in uniform in the Saint John *Telegraph-Journal* prompted Captain Titus to become a member of Co. B, 20<sup>th</sup> Maine. Sometimes, that's all it takes.

Imagine if we had forty members and only half could attend an event – that's still 20 members in attendance, in uniform or period-clothing. That would be impressive, and that's the best way to recruit. Still, we can each do our own part each day, by talking about who we are and what we do, and encouraging others to join us at a drill or other event, to discover what Civil War reenacting is all about.

#### **(4) *Visibility***

Next, as already stated, we need to be visible. As a group representing the Maritimes, we need to participate in a variety of events in a variety of communities in all three Maritime provinces. Encampments are at the top of our list, but parades, displays and presentations all play a role in gaining recruits and creating goodwill within communities and with government. We have little problem in filling our annual schedule. It is generally strong and fulfills the need to be visible, but untapped resources abound. We have done little in recent times in many Maritime communities. In New Brunswick, untapped resources include Edmundston, Woodstock, Bathurst, Miramichi, Fredericton, Moncton, the Kennebecasis Valley and Saint John. In Nova Scotia, Halifax, Amherst, Truro, New Glasgow, Sydney, Digby, Yarmouth and the Annapolis Valley remain largely untapped. In like manner, in Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown, Summerside, Montague and Kensington, along with other smaller communities, are yet to be visited. These are all population centres in their respective provinces, and require our attention. Our schedule is already busy – full, in fact, but we must be vigilant and look to explore other events, as we did in 2022 by adding Ross Farm and Air Show Atlantic to our schedule.

One reenactor in a different group once said that we've been around long enough so that people should know we are here, and if they were interested in joining, they would have contacted us already. I disagreed with that statement then, and I disagree with it now. Even during the recent summer of 2022, I heard more than one visitor to our camp say that they didn't know we existed as a group, or "Why are Canadians portraying the American Civil War?" We need to be out there, letting people know who we are, what we do, and what we represent. To do this, we need to be ever-watchful for potential new events that will place us in view of the public eye, and, we need to publicize those events.

#### **(5) *Building Relationships***

Lastly, in our greater geographic region are several Civil War, and other reenacting organizations. Civil War groups include companies B and I, 20<sup>th</sup> Maine; Co. A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Maine, and perhaps others. In addition, Co. B has affiliations with Union artillery (6<sup>th</sup> Maine Battery) and with Confederate reenactors (15<sup>th</sup> Alabama). There is also our brother-company – Company A, 5<sup>th</sup> New Hampshire – located in that state. Also, here in Canada, are the Greys and Blues of Montreal; and, of course, there is our membership in the New England Brigade, allowing us access to 25 Civil War organizations located throughout the northeast. We are not alone, and it would serve us well to tap into those resources and friendships. Find the YouTube video of the recently re-created charge of the 1<sup>st</sup> Minnesota by the Liberty Rifles at Gettysburg to see how 262 reenactors look, first in column, then in line of battle. Magnificent! We can, if on a smaller scale, share in such a moment by fostering our relationships with people who share our interests and our passion – the other Civil War reenacting groups of Canada and New England.

Let us not forget, also, the reenacting groups in our region that portray other eras. Many of us have friends in groups such as Danks' Rangers and La Milice de Beaubassin (both French & Indian War) and DeLancey's Brigade (Revolutionary War) – all based in New Brunswick. There is a variety of other groups throughout Atlantic Canada, other parts of Canada and in the United States. Working in concert with those groups can lead to other contacts, other events and other potential recruits for Co. H. It's a matter of making the effort – the commitment – to reaching out and participating in events with these reenactors.

None of this is intended to criticize; instead, it is a celebration of what we already do and who we are. But, perhaps, there are ways we can do things differently, and by doing so, make them better.

### **In Five Days! The Atlantic Outdoor Sports & RV Show**



Our first-ever appearance at the Atlantic Outdoor Sports and RV Show is set for the weekend of March 10-12. The event is being held at the Halifax Exhibition Centre, located at 200 Prospect Road (Route 333) in Goodwood, near Halifax, on the way to Nova Scotia's South Shore.

Thus far, we have five Co. H members who have indicated their ability to participate in the Show. For the weekend, they are Leigh Gavel, Loran Gavel, Stephen Halliday and Lindsay Titus, and Dave Bottos will be there on Saturday. Steve Cochrane and Bob Keretschko are also possible participants. Thank you to those who responded to the Call to Arms.

The three-day event is expected to draw thousands of visitors. First Sergeant Gavel described the event as “wall-to-wall people”, so this is seen as a potentially rich recruiting event. Public hours are from 10 AM to 8 PM on both Friday and Saturday, and from 10 AM to 5 PM on Sunday.

Come in uniform and bring your musket. Although there will be no drill or firing, “photo-ops” will no doubt abound, so we need to look our part. We expect to also have a variety of items on display, including reproduction newspaper accounts of the *Chesapeake* Affair with its Halifax connections, and a dog tent. It should be a fun and busy way to “kick-off” the 2023 season!

### **La Milice de Beaubassin**

Stephen Norman and Lindsay Titus met three members of the Acadian Militia (more correctly, Milice d'Acadie) at the Charlotte County Fall Fair last September at the Ganong Nature Park, near St. Stephen. On January 30, in an email about the upcoming Military Muster at Kings Landing, Paul Flowers of Moncton informed us that they are now called the Milice de Beaubassin, and that he is their commanding officer. Paul and his wife, Ashley, were two of the militia members we met at the CCF, the third being Paul Menard. As you might guess, they portray Acadians from the French & Indian War (Seven Years War) era, and are considering coming to Kings Landing this June. Along with the boys from Danks' Rangers, they were great campfire comrades, so it is hoped we will meet up with them again, this time at Kings Landing.

---

### **! News of the War in the East !**

- **Getting Ready for Kings Landing** – A telephone call was held on January 24 between Lindsay Titus and Amanda Stairs, the Director of Visitor Experience at Kings Landing. This call was in preparation for our Military Muster at the site, to be held June 16-18. Steve Fowler of DeLancey's Brigade also held a phone call with Amanda the week before. A face-to-face meeting is planned for May.

#### **Canadians in the Ranks of the Fifth New Hampshire**

John G. Sutton was born in Barnston [most-likely Quebec], Canada, but resided in Lancaster, New Hampshire when he enlisted at the age of 22 on September 23, 1861. He was mustered-in a month later, on October 23, as a corporal in company B. Sutton re-enlisted and was mustered-in from Berlin on January 1, 1864. He was captured on June 3, 1864, at Cold Harbor, Virginia, but was paroled in November. He was discharged for disability on May 27, 1865 in Bristol, Pennsylvania, giving his postal address as Lancaster, New Hampshire.