

Persons Liable To Military Duty

by Lynne Belluscio

Last week while I was looking for the records of three missing Civil War veterans, I spent a little time with the LeRoy enrollment records of "Persons Liable to Military Duty" dated 1864. The first effective draft was signed into law on March 3, 1863 by President Lincoln. The actual drafting was the responsibility of the states which usually used a lottery system. The draft riots of New York City resulted in more than a \$1 million of property damage and many people killed and wounded.

When the government issued a call for more troops, each state was given a quota to fill based on its population. The number of volunteers was subtracted from the quota and the difference would be drafted. Some states considered it a matter of pride to fill their quotas without having to resort to the draft.

In 1864, it was necessary to issue a call for 500,000 more men. In Genesee County, Batavia was expected to produce 135 men, Stafford 50 and LeRoy 85. All tavern keepers or keepers of boarding houses were expected to provide the names of boarders who were to be enrolled. If the tavern keeper did not comply, the fine was \$10 – for each omission.

There were four copies of the enrollment list. One to be filed with the Town Clerk; one to be filed with the County Clerk; one to be filed with the Adjutant General's office and the last to be filed with the enrolling officer. All the men enrolled were considered members of the National Guard. According to the Prevost Marshal's Office in August, LeRoy had 2 "credits" (men already enlisted). It was possible to pay a man to be a "substitute" and to serve another man's service. By September, LeRoy was the only town in Genesee County that had filled its quota - - with a few extra. Ninety one men had volunteered, but 32 of them – over a third – were substitutes.

On the first Monday of September each year, the members of the national guard were expected to "assemble in their



several company districts armed and equipped as provided by law, for parade and inspection." Those who did not show up were fined \$1. So far I haven't been able to find any announcements for the inspections, so I'm not sure where the militia was inspected.

The enrollment list included the name, residence (by town), age and profession of each person. In LeRoy, there were many farmers and laborers, but R. Auger, age 41, was the superintendent of the railroad. Archabald Alexander, 25, was a mechanic. Charles Anning (Annin) was a "gentleman." (I'm not too sure what a gentleman did for a living, but there were several gentlemen in LeRoy.) James Ball, 40 years old, was listed as an "artist." Actually he was one of LeRoy's early photographers. Jackson Benjamin, 20, was a cabinet worker; Alexander Baxter, 38, was a gardener, William Doyle was a blacksmith, Michael Maury was a stone cutter. Eighteen year old Corwin Osborn was listed as a telegraph operator. Nathan Rockwell, 40 was a broom maker

and Untona Schimely was a teamster. Chauncey Smith was listed as a "physician" and John Wiss was an inn keeper. Ugene Vanhoosen, 27, a clerk was listed as exempt, as was E.E. Stanley 44, who was "too old." Of the 477 men listed I could find no other men listed as exempt. Two hundred and forty two were between 31 and 45. The rest were in class one, between 18 and 31 and of that group, 29 were under 20 - many of them students.

New York State provided over 370,000 soldiers during the war. More than half of them were under 20. This was 21% of the male population. Eight hundred and thirty four officers were killed; 12,142 enlisted men perished; 27,855 died from disease; 7,235 died from wounds after the war and 5,766 died in prison. New York State sent 27 regiments of cavalry, 15 artillery regiments, 8 regiments of engineers, and 248 infantry regiments into battle.

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