



DATE 25 Apr 02

FOR Sturbridge Board of Selectmen

FROM B. Burns

SUBJECT The 28th Man

cc. Sturbridge Historical Commission, Sturbridge Historical Society, Sturbridge Town Clerk, Sturbridge Veterans' Agent

Information has recently been developed to prove that William L. Blood of Sturbridge deserved a place with the 27 others on the 1871 Soldier's Monument, which was erected "in Memory of the Soldiers from this town who sacrificed their lives in defense of the Country during the late war of Rebellion." Both the construction of the monument and qualifying language were voted March 4, 1870.

Born in Sturbridge in 1841, Blood enlisted in Capt. Sardus S. Sloan's Brookfield company. Sloan's company was mustered in as Company F of the newly-formed 15th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment at Worcester on July 12, 1861.

The regiment's August 6, 1861, descriptive muster-in roll at the Massachusetts Military Archives clearly describes Blood as a Sturbridge resident and native, a shoemaker by trade, and unmarried.

Both his service file at the National Archives and regimental records at the Massachusetts Military Archives carry Corporal Blood as killed in action as a member of Company F, 15th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment, at Antietam on September 17, 1862.

Therefore, he meets the stark and simple 1870 definition for inclusion on the monument. He was both "from this town" and "sacrificed his life" during the war.

Ironically, two other Sturbridge men, William H. Clark and Alfred F. Russell, who enlisted in Brookfield with Blood, served with him in Company F of the 15th, and were killed with him at Antietam, are in fact named on the 1871 monument. Most probably, given the misfortune of the regiment in that battle, the three died within sight and within minutes of each other, and may well have been killed by the “friendly fire” of the 59th New York.

While we can only speculate on the causes of Blood’s inadvertent omission from the 1871 monument, it is certain that he met the period qualifications for inclusion. If Clark and Russell, then why not Blood?

Should you decide that this matter requires some action, I certainly do not recommend altering the present monument, which is itself an historic artifact. Rather, I suggest that the town place a small marker within the curbed square surrounding the 1871 memorial.

But . . . why bother, at this late date? After all, Blood has no direct descendants, and the town did belatedly remember to place him on the all-inclusive tablets to honor those “who enlisted from this town” which were erected in 1888 in the town hall.

I believe that there is a reason for action, if it is only to keep faith with a young Sturbridge shoemaker who volunteered to go to war and died in a patch of woods in western Maryland just after his 21st birthday. Without projecting too far, there is strong evidence that the boys of ’61 truly believed that they were undertaking a great task for which, should the worst occur, they would be ever remembered by their fellow citizens.

Also, recruiting in the Civil War was a deliberately local affair. The 15th was a Worcester County regiment, the 16th represented Middlesex County, and so on. In a very real sense, neighbors fought both alongside and for one another, and their mutual loyalty is a constant theme in Civil War literature. Though the 15th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment exists today only on faded paper, I think that Billy Blood still belongs with his townsmen Clark and Russell, the other Sturbridge men from Company F who also died on what has been called the bloodiest day in American history.

He survived Ball’s Bluff and Fair Oaks, Seven Pines and Savage Station, White Oak Swamp, Glendale, and Malvern Hill. William L. Blood deserves to survive in the memory of his community with the others who died beside him. In 1862, he earned the right to be the 28th man, and I hope that his town agrees 140 years later.

THE 28th MAN
A Remembrance of William L. Blood, 1841 - 1862
Corporal, Company F, 15th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment
"Who sacrificed his life in defense of the country during the late Rebellion . . ."

"Battle Hymn of the Republic"

INTRODUCTION
State Representative Reed V. Hillman

CALLING THE ROLL
Brian Burns

W.J. Allen, J.B. Blodget, C. H. Brown, J. Brigham, A. M. Bullard, W. Carter,
A.F. Child, W.H. Clarke, J.B. Cooper, W. S. Fuller, P. Gavin, J.A. Johnson,
G.C. McMaster, W.D. Marsh, J.F. Moore, T. O'Hara, I.G. Plimpton, R. Sharruck,
H. Smith, N.L. Stone, W.J. Stone, H.H. Ransom, A.L. Russell, A. Walker,
C.W. Whittemore, D. Wilson, N. Wright . . . and W.L. Blood.

SALUTE OF THE HONOR GUARD
15th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment

THE BELL TOLLS FOR 28 MEN
Sturbridge Federated Church

"Retreat"

Encampment and Honor Guard by the living historians of
the reconstituted 15th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment.

Music by David Emerick, Peter Emerick, Thomas Emerick, and Douglas Quitgley.

At 2 p.m. on September 22, 2002
Sturbridge, Massachusetts

04/17/2002

Name *Wood, William D.*
 Co. *5th Regt. Pa. Heavy Arty*
 Age *19* years
 Appears on
Company Muster-in Roll
 Roll dated *Aug 6* 186*1*
 Muster-in to date *July 17* 186*1*
 Joined for duty and enrolled
 When *July 17* 186*1*
 Where *Worcester*
 Period *2* years
 State Bounty paid \$
 Remarks
Des. Roll
Res. Sturbridge
Shoemaker
B. P. Sturbridge, Mass
Single
 J. H. [Signature]
 Copy

William L. Blood

Capt., Co. F, 15 Reg't Mass. Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

for Sept + Oct, 1862

Joined for duty and enrolled:

When July 12, 1861.*

Where Worcester Mass.*

Period ? years.*

Present or absent Absent

Stoppage, \$ 100 for

Due Gov't \$ 100 for

Remarks: Missing in action at Antietam Sep 17th

* See enrollment on card from muster-in roll.

Book mark

66 Parker Copyrt.

William L. Blood

Capt., Co. F, 15 Reg't Mass. Infantry.

Age 19 years.

Appears on Co. Muster-out Roll, dated

Worcester, Mass. July 25, 1864

Muster-out to date, 186

Last paid to, 186

Clothing account:

Last settled, 186; drawn since \$ 100

Due soldier \$ 100; due U. S. \$ 100

Am't for cloth'g in kind or money adv'd \$ 100

Due U. S. for arms, equipments, &c., \$ 100

Bounty paid \$ 100; due \$ 100

Remarks: Killed in battle of Antietam Sept. 17/62

Book mark

Hastie Copyrt.

* *W. L. Blood*

Capt., Co. *F.*, 15 Reg't Mass. Infantry.

Appears on Special Muster Roll

for *Aug 18*, 1862.

Present or absent *Present*

Stoppage, \$ *100* for

Due Gov't, \$ *100* for

Remarks:

+ *Appears in Column of Names*

Present: William L. Blood

Book mark:

W. L. Parker