

Excerpts from "The Bethel Boys in Blue"

Read Memorial Day 1890 at Bethel M. E. Church

By HARRY S. BATES

Well, then, daughter, let your gran'pa, in his simple awk'ard way Tell ye,
kinder talk a little 'bo-ut this "Decoration Day."
Come, we'll sit down in the orchard, where the birds an' blooms an' bees,
With their life and love and gladness are just - floodin' all the trees;
They will sorter pour their glory, the rare life-tide of the May,
'Round us here, and mix up may be, once 'n a while, in what I say.
Yes, your blue eyes, they'd get rounder with an awful, sad surprise,
And your heart would ache and wonder, could ye faintly realize
But you can't, 'an it's a blessin, that the dreadful blastin' breath
Of that pestilence of anger, that cyclone of wrath and death,
With its murder and its anguish, with its sorrow and its pain,
Never'll blight thy heart and home, dear, never'll burn and sere thy brain.
From the troops of visions stragglin', broken rank, across my brain,
Shall I try to catch and capture for a moment, once again,
Scenes of battle, blood, and horror, visions of the prison pen,
Noise of slaughter, shrieks of dying, curses of despairing men,
Tattered banners, trampled bodies! No, blot out such fearful view!
There are other things that somehow have out-flanked those scenes a-field,
Or my memory is marchin' for awhile on orders sealed.
As I turn my glances backward on the track of thirty year,
Standin' out above all others is one picture sharp and clear,
There I see the church at Bethel, where my father used to pray,
Which my mother's faithful presence always graced on preachin' day:
Where us youngsters, in our Sunday go-to-meetin's did our best,
For to catch our special sweet-heart and to keep her from the rest.
But I mustn't ramble longer in these bye-ways of the past,
For those times of youth and gladness, was too happy long to last.
Now about the little chapel I can see a shadow cast,
As a dark cloud rises northward, thickens, deepens, widens fast.
Seems I hear a distant rumble and the mutterin' of fight,
And the shadow settles sullen, on the meetin' house one night,
As the "call" "three-hundred thousand men are wanted for three years.
To defend this blessed country from the rebel brigadiers!"
Rang along the roads and hill-sides, rang at every farm house door,
Echoed 'round the house of worship, "send three hundred thousand more"
Then we gathered there at Bethel, hundreds of us, young and old,

Male and female and we listened, while the dreadful news was told.
Then the coals that slept within us, blazed and burned in every vein,
And the fever fiercely bounded, firing blood and heart and brain --
There, there, daughter, did I scare ye? Don't cry darlin' that's all done;
Those things happened way back, dearie, in the fall of sixty-one.
'Twas the second of September when the muster roll was signed,
Just the finest blood of Bethel, though there was some left behind.
For to finish up the harvest and help get the fall work done,
But they were picked buds of promise volunteers of sixty-one.
All we boys that enlisted, at the meetin'-house, that day,
Joined, right off, the fifty-seventh Pennsylvania, comp'ny K,
Who was there? Why all the boys had a hand in that there fun,
Some got home, some didn't, darling, but no Bethel boy run.
Now I'll tell ye who enlisted at the call of sixty-one.
Peter Farrington and Joseph, better known as Dick and Joe.
I remember, Dick was captured, and to Libby had to go;
And the Thompsons, John and Dolphus -- John, he lives at Hydetown still,
But his brother taken prisoner, starved to death in And'sonville;
Horace Sweet, he too was murdered famished in that rebel hell;
Carey Slaton, saw the finish and came through alive and well;
The Kerr boys, Jap and Henry, -- Henry, dead, at Fair Oaks fell;
Ruland served and re-enlisted; and the Whitfords, Charles and Hi,
Hi got home, but Charlie laid down in a hospital to die;
Theodore Catlin, you know, everybody calls him 'Thode,'
He was wounded, but he's livin' yonder on the Spring Creek Road;
Poor Joe Hummer at Charles City Cross-roads fell to rise no more,
Jim came home and re-enlisted to pay back the rebel score --
How the faces and figures of the dead they haunt me here,
But I'd hardly know the livin' if I wasn't always near -- There's a desperate
sight of changin in the course of thirty year.
But the honor roll at Bethel I have only just begun,
When I name the fifty-seventh, and the boys of sixty one.
There's another band of Heroes, just as brave and just as true,
Who responded from these hill-sides to the call of sixty-two.
All the dreadful thrill of danger that vibrated in the air,
Served to rouse them and awaken all their will to do dare,
Ah! They never flinched at Bethel for weren't no cowards there.
There was Zepheniah Baugher, Steven Carroll, Levi Jones,
They got back to Pennsylvany, mostly with unbroken bones;
Garrett Hummer, taken pris'ner, in October sixty-three,
Died in prision; and three others met the same sad fate as he --

Robert Henderson, and Thompson, Tommy Thompson, and Sloan,
Think Manassas was his first name; Garrie Shelmadine, alone
Lived to reach his home, a shadow, from that Libby of despair,
Lived to look on hill and meadow, just to die while gazing there;
Sgt. William David Hasbrouck was in the 111th Pa. volunteers from
November 3, 1861 until July 19, 1865.
Hasbrouck John and Kerr, J. Wesley, both got through it safe and sure,
Brother John lives here at Bethel, Wesley holds fort at Kinzua.
There's another Kerr called David, David G., he's with us still;
Matthew D. survived the war-time, but he sleeps now on the hill;
Harrison K'niskern; Doyle Johnnie, murdered after all;
Farley Hummer-Brandy Station's where his comrades saw him fall-
Conover, poor Rafe, fell fightin', killed at Brandy Station too;
Samuel Jam'son lives at Hydetown, proud as ever of the blue.
They was cavalry, eighteenth Pennsylvania, comp'ny D.,
And as fine a band of riders as you'd often wish to see.
Would I like to see them vet'rans get, once more, in marchin' line,
And across the time-scarred faces see the war-light just once shine?
See the fight-fire gleam and glisten, just a moment in those eyes?
See them shut their jaws and clench them, as a man does when he dies?
Would I like to hear the music, played on unseen strings in air.
While the shot and shell and minnies, just once more,
Just one breath of yell and clamor, just one crash an' jar and roar,
Just one glare from War's red furnace, burning, blasting as of yore?
No, indeed! Let "home guard heroes" yearn for glory guns and gore!
No! The glossy butter-cups, sweet, and the dandelion's gold
Suit me better than the buttons on my uniform, of old.
And the johnny-jump-ups, peeping from their emerald ambushade,
Beat the other sort of Johnnies that the trouble for us made;
While the bayonets that please me, are the grass-blades in the sun,
And I'd sooner mark a corn-row than to p'int a battery gun.
Yes, the handles of the plow they seem to fit me better yet,
Than the handles of a stretcher with the blood of comrades wet;
So I'll march behind the cattle, findin' mighty little fault,
Till the captain of all forces, whispers, "weary pilgrim, halt!"

Then with reverent hands and tender, we will cover, cover deep,
With the reddest, whitest, bluest, all the sod where soldiers sleep.
And when grandpa he surrenders, and lays down his arms at last,
Then he asks you, blue-eyes, mind you, when life battles all are past,
When you seek his grave, in May-time, plant upon that quiet spot,
All a Union Soldier asketh, just a blue forget-me-not.

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Too often flaming cooks cook their own goose.

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HONOR ROLL

Civil War

Zepheniah Baugher
Steven Carroll
Theodore Catlin
Rafe Conover
Johnnie Doyle
Joseph Farrington
Peter Farrington
John Hasbrouck
William David Hasbrouck
Robert Henderson

Farley Hummer
Garrett Hummer
Jim Hummer
Joe Hummer
Samuel Jameson
Levi Jones
David G. Kerr
Henry Kerr
Jap Kerr
J. Wesley Kerr

Ruland Kerr
Garrie Shelmadine
Carey Slaton
Manassas Sloan
Horace Sweet
John Thompson
Tommy Thompson
Charles Whitford
Hi Whitford

World War I

Claude Bagley
Navy Hospital Corpsman
George Hummer
ROTC
Harry Hummer
304th Battalion Tank Corps, AEF
Clarence Kerr
Army Pvt., 23rd Infantry

Fletcher Kerr
Sgt. Co. A, 5th Engineers
Earl Stewart
313th Machine Gun Battalion
Edward Stewart
Wilson Stewart
Warren Vosburg
2nd Yeoman School

World War II

- Charles Anderson
Air Force
- Lawrence Anthony
- Guy F. Bimber
Navy, Pacific Carpenter, 2nd C
- Elmer Brown
Army Tech. Sgt., Army Ordinance,
28 months in Europe
- Clarence Burrows
Army, Staff Sgt.
- Harold Davison
- Joseph E. Eldred
Army, Pfc., European Theater ...
France, Germany, Luxemburg,
wounded in Belgium,
19 months in hospital
- Charles Fitch
Army, Pfc., Pacific
- Obert Fitch
Army, Pfc.
- Robert Fitch
Navy, Fireman, FC, LST
- Arthur Goodwill
- Gerald Harvey
Navy, killed in action
- Mark Harvey
Navy, CB
- Paul Harvey
Air Force
- Arthur Hicks
Army, Pvt.
- Ray Hicks
Army, Pvt.
- Gladys Hummer
Army / Air Force,
Physical Therapist, 20 years
Lt. Col., U.S., Germany and
Alaska
- James K. Hummer
Navy Reserve, Ensign, U.S.S.
Leonard F. Mason
- John Hummer
Army, Cpl., 3rd Army under
Patton,
Forward Hdq. of 15th Corps,
Forward Artillery 1½ years,
Omaha Beach, France & Ireland
- Donald Johnson
Marines, Cpl.
- Robert Johnson
Army, Staff Sgt., shot in the head
March 15, 1945 in the German
woods near the Remagen Bridge.
Arrived in hospital in England
and was plated, returned to
Kennedy Hospital in Memphis,
Tn., and discharged December
1945.
- Lloyd Joslyn
Army, 66th Infantry Division,
4 years in France, Germany,
Belgium, T-5 Tech. Lineman
- Wayne Joslyn
Army, 1st Lt., Artillery 4 years.
Battle of the Bulge, Omaha
Beach, Silver Star
- Albert Kaster
- Fred Kaster
- Andrew Kerr
Army, Pfc., Saipan
- Garrett Kerr
Army, Pfc.
- Richard Neil Kerr
Navy, Machinist Mate
- Dwight King
Air Force, Pilot, B-17, 3 years.
Shot down over Frankfurt,
Germany, P.O.W. Released
Nuremberg under Patton.

World War II

*Clarence Kunz

Army, 1st Division of First Army.
Bronze Star. Purple Heart with
Oakleaf Cluster. Wounded in
Hurtgen Forest, participated in
Battle of the Bulge, and capture
of the city of Bonn, and the
crossing of the Rhine. Spent 13
months in hospital in Germany,
France, England and U.S. after
being wounded by a civilian
German sniper

Mac Lorenz

Army, Infantry

Harley Lorenz

Army Pfc.

Gerald W. O'Conner

Navy, Second Mate, (in Korean
conflict too)

Bertram Ongley

Francis Ongley

Kenneth Ongley

Robert Phillis

Infantry, (killed in action
Sicily)

George Schwab

Army/Air Force, Pfc., 1 year,
Alabama

Rexford Shorts

Willis G. Shorts

George Stevens

Daniel Sutton

Army, (killed in France)

Lawrence Sutton

Navy, CB, Pfc.

John Watson

Navy Air Force, Airman FC

Arvin Wescoat

Pfc., Killed in Normandy
invasion . . .

buried in France

Fred Wieland

**Thoughts about Memorial Day written by Clarence Kunz can be
seen on the Bulletin Board and also in the picture album.*

SAW SERVICE IN ARMED FORCES Korea . . . Vietnam . . . 1970's

John Atkinson

Army, V

Richard G. Bimber

Army, V

Ronald Burrows

Army, SP5

Charles Castelluccio

Navy, V

Alton (Johnnie) Eldred

Army Sgt., V

John P. Fink

Army, 82nd Airborne, K

David Harger

Army, Spec-4, V

James Harger

Airman, 521 ABC FC

Jerry Harger

Navy, 3rd C Petty Officer,
Marshall Islands

John Harger

Army, E-8, V

Thomas Harger

Army, E-4, Germany

George Hasbrouck

Paratrooper Corps, K, 4 years,
Purple Heart, Bronze Star, 2
Combat Jumps. Has given
25 gallons of blood since.

Richard Hasbrouck

82nd Airborne, Pfc., Fort Bragg

SAW SERVICE IN ARMED FORCES Korea . . . Vietnam . . . 1970's

Thomas Hasbrouck Army, V, Pfc., Paratrooper, 82nd Airborne	John Reynolds Army, E-5, 6 years Army Air Defense Comm., Alaska
Dennis Kerr Navy, V, Store Keeper, 2nd C	George Schwab, Jr. Army, Germany
Elwin Kerr Army, SP-4, K	James Schwab Army
Frank Kerr Navy, Lt. Comm., Career	John Smith Navy, Radioman, 4 years, Cuban Crisis
Gerald Kerr Army, Cook	Bruce Staskiewicz Army, E-4, 3 years
John Kerr Navy, K, R.M., 2nd C	Donald Staskiewicz Navy, South Pole with Admiral Byrd
Kenneth Kerr Airman, 2nd C, K, 1 year, North Africa	Robert Stewart Marines, Sgt., 3rd Marine Division, FMF, K, 3rd Engineer Battalion
Lewis W. Kerr USAF, SSGT, Career	Arthur Sutton Army, K
Ronald Kerr Army, K, Tank Commander Corps	Gordon Sutton Army, SP 4
Charles Knapp Army, E-5, K, 13 months	Robert Sutton Air Force, Airman FC
Harold Knapp Air Force, K	Benjamin Walters Army, Engineers S-4
Howard Knapp III Army, E-4	Judson Walters Army, Engineers, Pfc., K for 2 years, Military Police
Merlin Kunz Army, K	Melvin Wescoat Army, Cpl., K
Ron Laing Air Force, Crew Chief	
James Lingo Army, V	
Bernard Matteson National Guard, V	
Weldon McCalmont Army, Staff Sgt., K	
Stewart Paul Air Force, K	
Merle Proper Army	

AND LATER YEARS

Arthur Brunst, Jr.
Air Force
Debby Harger Clark
Air Force, Airman
FC, 4 years Alaska
Rhonda Kunz Delao
Air Force, Career
Timothy Harger
Marines, Sgt.
Air Traffic Controller
Rick Hensley
Navy, 35th Division
Timothy Hicks
Navy, 35th Division

James Hummer
Army, West Point, Capt. 10 yrs.
Allen Morris
Marines, Cpl.
Richard Morris
Marines, Cpl.
Samuel Rust
Navy, Pvt.
Brian Smith
Air Force, 4 years,
Heavy Equipment Operator

GULF WAR

Arthur Bimber
Air Force
Kenneth Eccles
Army, Spec. E-4, (discharged
December 1991)
Daniel Fridley
Coast Guard, Health Service
Tech., Petty Officer, 3rd C

Craig Harger
Army, Sgt., Patriots Tel Aviv
Wayne Harger
Air Force, Sgt., Saudi Arabia
Brian Hasbrouck
Navy, Petty Officer 2nd C,
5½ years
Jill Roberts
Air Force

*All of the names on the Honor Roll have been provided by the communities of Bethel, Rometown / Vroman and White Oak.

Bethel Church Service Proved Very Successful

(Rev. Bloomster was minister at the time)

The closing services of the series of meetings held the past ten days at Bethel M. E. church were full of interest. Saturday night was family night, and many families were represented in spite of the rain and muddy roads. Frank E. Kerr's family received the prize for the largest entire family present.

Rev. C. H. Bloomster preached on "The Judgement" and Prof. Welsh sang. Prof. Welsh handed the singing book he had in his hands to Mrs. Frank E. Kerr.

Family Histories

The following family histories are by no means complete. It was impossible to get all of the descendants located. That is the reason for the extra page in the book. Each family can write in the particular family that it is interested in, and have room to keep it up to date. We were mainly interested in getting a complete record of the families now living in the Bethel Community. Any omissions are unintentional.



Guy F. Bimber Family

Guy F. Bimber, son of Arthur G. and Elsie Rigby Bimber, married Dorothy L. Penney. Dorothy was a daughter of Thompson and Sara Evans Penney. They were married in the Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S. C. Guy died in 1996.

Their children are Richard G., Arthur T., and Robert D.

a). Richard married Sarah E. Swint.

They had one daughter, Penney E.

b). Arthur married Catherine L. Barker.

They have two sons, Kevin J. and Shaun A.

c). Robert married Faith E. Geist (div.) and they had three sons, Tyson L., Jason R., and Eric M. He is married to Kimberly Ann Morton now.



Oscar and Lucy Harger Family

Oscar was born in West Virginia and moved to Titusville when he was a young child. He later worked in Warren, Ohio where he met Lucy who was a school teacher. They married and moved to the Bethel area around 1933, and lived on the Windfall Road just up from where Gerzina's now live. (The old Schwartz farm). The house and barn are no longer there. In 1951 they moved to Petroleum Center. In 1961 they moved back to the Windfall Road where the Farl Hummer and Jacobson leases were and lived in the "tin shanty" beside the plant building. In 1963 they moved to the Harger Road. Jim and Janet bought a double wide trailer and Oscar and Lucy bought a double wide trailer and lived there until their deaths. Lucy died in 1983 and Oscar in 1991. They had nine children:

1. Gerald "Jerry" married Barbara Marvin from Oil City. They lived on Cloverdale Road near Basil and Margie Hummer.

Jerry and Barb had four children: Gary, Tim, Rhonda, and Shawn.