

# Sandwich and the Civil War

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## *The Sandwich Guards – 29<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Company D*

On April 12, 1861, the American Civil War began with the Confederate bombardment of Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina. The shelling rapidly escalated into a series of actions including President Lincoln's call for 75,000 troops to put down the rebellion. They were to be raised from the state militias to serve a term of 3 months of active duty; a clear indication that this would be enough time to put the Rebels in their place. It would soon become apparent that 3 months would not get the job done and that the enlistments would need to be extended for a longer time.

One week after the attack on Fort Sumter, the 6<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Regiment (organized in January 1861) was one of the first military units to respond to Lincoln's call for troops. It was comprised of men from the manufacturing towns of Lawrence and Lowell and they were ordered to Washington to defend the nation's capital from possible Confederate invasion. When the troop train crossed into the border state of Maryland and reached Baltimore, a violent incident occurred that would quickly involve the small glass making town of Sandwich, on Cape Cod. Because the rail line did not pass through Baltimore, horse drawn wagons had to take the infantrymen from one end of the city to the other. An angry mob of secessionists blocked their way forcing the soldiers to march through the streets and the jeering crowds followed in close pursuit throwing bricks and stones. The situation evolved into a full scale riot and when it was over; 4 men from the 6<sup>th</sup> were dead along with 12 civilians and scores were injured.

The news of the Baltimore Riot and the attack on the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment reached the outraged citizens of Sandwich the next day. With only a few hours notice, a very large meeting of residents was held on Saturday evening, April 20, 1861, in the upstairs hall of Sandwich Town Hall. The records show that it was called, "to devise ways and means for the raising a company of troops for the defense of the country". The meeting was called to order by Theodore Kern, the Superintendent of the Boston & Sandwich Glass Company. Dr. Jonathan Leonard, the town's physician, was chosen to preside. (Subsequently, Dr. Leonard would marry the widow of glass entrepreneur, John Jarves.) After appropriate remarks were made, the voters approved a \$20 bounty for each man who enlisted. The attendees pledged a sum of \$626 and a committee was formed to canvass the town and raise the balance of the bounty money.

In the meantime, recruitment progressed rapidly and by May 6<sup>th</sup>, the 100 man company was nearly complete. It was the practice at that time for each unit to name its officers and Charles Chipman was selected as Captain because of his leadership skills and because he had once served in the regular army as a Sergeant. The newly formed company adopted the name, "Sandwich Guards". Two days later, the Sandwich Guards were headed to Boston to make their way to Fortress Monroe in Virginia. Like the other newly formed forces, their enlistment was for only 3 months. A large crowd gathered at the railway station on Jarves Street to bid them farewell.

It was only the next day that they were shocked to learn that the rules had changed and they were told that they needed to volunteer for 3 years to be accepted as part of the US forces! Stunned, the men agreed that they had to return to Sandwich to make adequate preparations for so long a tour of duty. They arrived back in town that evening and immediately proceeded to the Town Hall where Captain Chipman called the roll and with only a single exception, all the men agreed to serve the new 3 year enlistment.

On Sunday, May 11, the voters were again summoned to Town Hall and they authorized the town to borrow \$4,000 to support the families of the men who would be left behind. A wife would receive \$2 per week; a wife and child, \$3; and 50 cents per week for each additional child. The town also voted \$500 to purchase the uniforms of the officers – the state paid for the clothing of the enlisted men. The ladies of the town equipped the soldiers with needles, thread, towels, undergarments and other necessities. Deming Jarves, owner of the Cape Cod Glass Works had a number of tenement houses in town and offered free rent to the families of those who volunteered for the war.

A week later the entire company appeared at Town Hall where they were given their new company flag which was donated by the owner of the Barnstable Patriot newspaper, Major Phinney. Part of the flag contained the words, "The Right Arm of Old Massachusetts", a reference to the geographic shape of Cape Cod, and below that was the motto, "God Speed the Right". They marched to the railway station and were escorted by the Sandwich Coronet Band and nearly the entire town. The men formed Company D and were initially made part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, but shortly thereafter they became part of the 29<sup>th</sup> Regiment and remained Company D, the Sandwich Guards.

They were the first all Cape military unit to be called to the front and the 29<sup>th</sup> participated in 29 pitched battles including Bull Run, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, Petersburg and Spotsylvania. They also took part in the 4 great sieges of the war, namely Richmond, 1862; Vicksburg, 1863; Knoxville, 1863 and Petersburg, 1864. In the spring of 1864, those not re-enlisting were transferred to the 36<sup>th</sup> Regiment and in June 1864, the Sandwich Guards were mustered out and they returned to a grateful Sandwich. They were given a royal welcome. Shops, stores and factories were closed as well as the schools and a great crowd gathered for the parade that was given them. A light meal was served at Town Hall and in the evening, they were presented with a Grand Ball. It was good to be home.

### *Major Charles Chipman*

Captain Charles Chipman of the Sandwich Guards had performed ably during his service and in early 1864 he re-enlisted for another tour of duty. He had been promoted to Major and was temporarily transferred to the 14<sup>th</sup> New York Heavy Artillery as its commanding officer and was awaiting his papers appointing him to the rank of Colonel. By the middle of 1864, he and his men were engaged in the siege of Petersburg, Virginia just south of the Confederate capital of Richmond.

Late in the afternoon of August 7, 1864, Rebel forces opened a furious line of fire on the 14<sup>th</sup> New York. Major Chipman was in his tent writing a letter to his wife when the firing began. He quickly left the tent to take command of his troops and almost immediately was mortally wounded by the fragments of a

large Rebel mortar shell which exploded near him. Major Chipman was moved to a field hospital, but died the next morning.

His body was embalmed carefully and returned to his home in Sandwich where it was received by his wife Elizabeth. The burial services began at the Unitarian Church on Main Street. Out of respect, the businesses in town were closed and the flags were flown at half mast. It took more than an hour for the saddened townspeople to file past his casket at the front of the church. The funeral procession walked down Main Street to the Freeman Cemetery where he was buried.

Charles Chipman was born and raised at 211 Main Street in Sandwich and he graduated from the Sandwich Academy. He married a local girl, Lizzie Freeman Gibbs and they had 3 children. He worked as a mechanic before the outbreak of the Civil War. He was the highest ranking officer from Sandwich to lose his life during the war. In 1882, the Grand Army of the Republic, a Civil War veteran's organization, approved Post 132 for Sandwich and it was named the Charles Chipman Post in honor of the slain officer. Its headquarters was on the second floor of the dry goods store at 3 Jarves Street which is presently the wine shop of the Brown Jug.

The Sandwich Glass Museum proudly displays an elegant knee length oil portrait of the Major. It was donated to the museum in 1939 by the Major's grandson, Francis E. Jones. The painting has an interesting provenance. It was part of a collection called the, "Gallery of Fallen Heroes". There more than 100 paintings in the collection of men who had died in the Civil War. They were originally on display at a Boston gallery owned by a German who called himself Count Schwabe. He lost possession of them as a result of personal bankruptcy and the paintings were sold at auction. Major Chipman's portrait was generously purchased by Sergeant Samuel C. Wright, a Medal of Honor recipient, who served in the 29<sup>th</sup>, Company E. His intention was to present it as a gift to the Chipman family, however the veteran's Association insisted upon sharing the cost and in a fitting ceremony on May 14, 1873; the painting was presented to Lizzie Chipman and her 3 young children.

### *Service and Sacrifice*

The men of Sandwich rallied to support the war effort and many joined other military units after the Sandwich Guards were formed in 1861. Approximately 300 townsmen joined up to fight for the Union cause and Sandwich provided more fighters than any other town on the Cape. Included in the town's recruits were about 75 workers from the glass factories. The glass operations in town lost so many workers that it would take about a year for the operations to return to pre-war productivity. Glass making is a coordinated effort by a team of skilled workers and it took a while to restore the precisions of the teams.

The American Civil War lasted for 4 long, terrible and bloody years. By the time the war ended, 625,000 service men had lost their lives from disease, wounds and battle deaths To put that number into perspective, it is more than the total US deaths in World War I, World War II , the Korean War and the Vietnam War, combined.

Sandwich did not escape the tragedies of the war. This small town of 4,500 people, 54 soldiers lost their lives, including 13 glass workers. A record of those dead is shown below.

### *Civil War Monument*

Beside Town Hall, there is a Civil War Monument that was erected in memory of the Soldiers and Sailors from Sandwich. It was dedicated 50 years after the war began and 100 years ago on May 30, 1911. It was the gift of a wealthy and kind businessman from Brockton, Massachusetts named William Eaton.

Mr. Eaton was not always a rich man. In fact he was desperately poor in 1856 when he went to work at the Boston & Sandwich Glass factory at age 8. His father, a glass worker, had died and young Billy had to become the head of the family. He overcame obstacles, persevered and ultimately prospered. William Eaton donated the 30 foot monument in memory of his father and to all the Soldiers and Sailors from Sandwich who served in the Civil War. He knew many of them from his early glass factory days including his first cousin, Joseph Warren Eaton, who died in 1869 from wounds suffered in the Battle of the Wilderness. He was a member of the Sandwich Guards.

It should be said that without William Eaton, there would be no Civil War Memorial in Sandwich for town records show that a committee was formed in 1867 to explore the proper way to honor the Civil War dead, but the town ultimately voted to indefinitely postpone the enterprise and nothing was ever done until Eaton donated his monument in 1911.

Martha Hassell, former Curator at the Sandwich Glass Museum, captured the meaning of Eaton's monument in an article she wrote 30 years ago. She said, "Although it was particularly those men whom Eaton was honoring in erecting his monument, he was also remembering all the workers of the Boston & Sandwich Glass Factory who had played such an important role in his life. Therefore, it seems appropriate that the monument should be placed not only near the town, but also facing the Sandwich Glass Museum where so many beautiful pieces of Sandwich glass are on display".

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