THE TOTOKET HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

TRANSCRIPTION OF A CIVIL WAR LETTER OF ALLAN SAWYER

Transcribed

by

Eugene C. MacMullan (1995)

> Digitized by

Theodore Groom, Ph.D. Chairman, Technology The Totoket Historical Society, Inc. (2012) Introduction:

Along with the letter, which was written in pencil, were six tintypes, one of which we believe is of Allan Sawyer in his Civil War uniform. I thought it worthwhile to scan the items and save them as digital photographs. There were five individuals in addition to the tintype of Allan Sawyer. The identity of those individuals is not known. In addition to the six tintypes there were three other paper images, two of women and one of a man, also unidentified.

The tintype of Allan Sawyer is shown on the left below, roughly the original size, brightness and contrast. The original image showed just the barest hint of color so digital techniques were used to enhance the photograph. The result is shown in the photograph on the right. It appears that the original black and white tintype was colorized by hand tinting. Color was <u>NOT</u> digitally added to the photograph. It is not known when the tintype was produced.

Allan Sawyer is said to have lived in Northford. Searching the 1852, 1858 and 1868 maps of North Branford which show names for all of the homes indicated on the maps did not reveal any Sawyer living in Northford or North Branford.



Original



Digitally Enhanced





Allen Sawyer was born in February 1818 in Kent, Connecticut to Herman and Sarah Sawyer. He was married on April 20, 1845 to Sarah J. Lake in Kent, CT. I have not been able to find him in any Federal Census other than the 1900 Census where he is living in North Branford and is listed as a widower who owns his own farm. A copy of that document is shown below. It would appear from the names on the census pages prior to this one that Allen actually lived in North Branford, not Northford.

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The following statement was found in the North Branford Town Report for 1903.

State Soldier (Allen Sawyer) funeral expenses \$35.00

Whether Allen Sawyer died in poverty or it was the duty of the town to honor Civil War Veterans is unknown.

Theodore Groom Chairman, Technology The Totoket Historical Society, Inc. November, 2013

The Letter

Transcription of the Letter of Allan Sawyer to his Family August 23, 1864

Note: The transcription follows the format and spelling of the original as closely as possible. The upper half of the first page is much worn and difficult to read. Dashed lines indicate illegible words.

"Aug 23 1864 Distrabusion camp neer Alaxandra V Or Washington about half way between
My dear Frins As I begin to (think?)
I am settled once more for a time
I take the plesure
mediate and warr weI I am weI
will as yet all
they are
of the boys
that they sent away with me
7 or 8 of us started from new Haven
on Friday nite was carried to
N Y to a plais called Bedlows
Island Thair remained two
Days & two nights Thair I dropt a
line to you Then from thair

We was all sorted out & put in difrint camps They put us into a squad & sent to sitty point in Ritchman almost whare our battle was at coal harbor put out in an opin feald no shelter nor nothin to ly down upon & it rained 2 days & 2 nites not much to eat then took from thare and inspect to see what rigments & Corps we belong to & sorted out purhaps in all that was in our company that went from York was six hundred or more Then everyone was sent to thair own rigments Then the 6 Corps was sent to Alaxandra where we air now in this Distrabusion Camp four milds from Alaxandra

Menny of our boys are heer William Harrington _ has him the rounds with me Wall I like to travel and sea the world We brout from Ritchman four hundred rebs or johnnies they ware prisners They are fiting rapadly(?) in that plais or neer thare in Peters birg Our rigment is between harpers fary & Washington sumwhare they are not in the Six corps now but the 22 corps in difens of Washington Let me know if John is alive & all a bout nature of things I have not seen or hird from Arvil yet but live in hopes I may before long I have had no pay yet nor dont expect to be