

The Henry County Historian

The Newsletter of the Henry County Historical Society

The Henry County Historical Society – Bishop Hill, IL. 61419 ph: 309-927-3528

Winter 2015

WAR IS COMING!



*Picture from CORN,
COMMERCE, AND COUNTRY
LIVING.*

On May 9, 2015, Bishop Hill will be hosting both Union and Confederate soldiers. This will be in honor of the 150 year celebration of the end of the Civil War. Tents will be erected, actors will wear their uniform of choice, and visitors will be free to meander through the park participating in the event.

Patriotic fervor will be evident in this quaint and quiet Henry County town. The norm will be historical chatter, questions, answers, and Civil War memorabilia.

Just west of the water tower you will find the Henry County Museum. One of the highlights of the day's events takes place as you step back in time and view Civil War hats and weapons. [Jeanne Schultz Angel](#) will be the museum's featured speaker.

Jeanne will be speaking about the prominent role the state of Illinois played, during the anti-slavery movement, in the mid-nineteenth century. According to her speech promo she will discuss anti-slavery, radical abolitionists, and the Underground Railroad.

This celebration, of the end of the Civil War, promises to tickle your historical curiosity. If you are a Civil War buff, this is a must see! We hope you will attend.

REMEMBER

WAR IS COMING

MAY 9, 2015

ILLINOIS REFLECTION

CIVIL WAR POEM

Early in the county's history,
Men responded to the call;
When the nation needed soldiers,
They were there to give their all.
Since the birth of our great nation,
Henry County's done its share,
Every war our county entered,
Men have heard the trumpet's blare.
The National Guard in Henry County
Has been active all the way –
In Geneseo, Company B,
And in Kewanee, Company K.

Corn, Commerce, and Country Living
A History of Henry County, Illinois
Desaulniers and Company, Moline, Illinois 1968

“By the end of the Civil War, Illinois had organized 150 regiments of infantry, seventeen regiments of cavalry, two regiments of light artillery, and eight independent batteries. These units represented a military contribution of 260,000 men, a total exceeded only by New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. One need hardly mention that the state also contributed the President and, in Ulysses S. Grant, the greatest of Union generals.”

Prairie State, Paul M. Angle

How many fought in the war?

About 2.75 million soldiers fought in the Civil War – 2 million for the north and 750,000 for the south.

THE CIVIL WAR A LITERARY TREASURE

Walt Whitman once accurately stated that, “A great literature will... arise out of the era of those years.” He was talking about our nation's Civil War period. We now have more than 60,000 books and articles proving the above statement true.

The suffering of a nation divided and then reunited, has provided much insight and inspiration for all subsequent generations. Fortunately, this literary legacy will continue for our posterity.

Abraham Lincoln, a man of profound words and wisdom, is a literary mainstay. Who could forget his words when he summed up the future by saying that the reunited sections of the United States comprised, “the last best hope of the earth.” Then there is his statement at Gettysburg: “that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain – that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”
Encyclopedia Britannica, 1973.



VIVID CIVIL WAR RECOLLECTION

Aaron Charlson of Andover enlisted in the First Illinois Light Artillery, Company H, to serve in the Civil War. At the age of 85, in 1930, he gave an interview to the ROCK ISLAND ARGUS. It is from that interview that the following excerpt is taken.

“We were riding toward Vicksburg with the cannon and musket balls flying thick and fast around us. We were a sorry looking sight. Not one of us had a shave or a haircut in a year. One musket ball clipped my shaggy curls and unconsciously I turned to dismount, when I realized that this was war and that there was no dismounting to be done unless it had been the order or unless one was hit.

Luckily for us, we were ordered to dismount and our cannon was put into action. The siege lasted until July 4, the same year. . . .

Mule and horse meat were delicacies and I recall a song that we chanted at that time, the chorus of which ran- -

**‘Mule meat young,
Mule meat old
Mule meat hot and
Mule meat cold.’**

“The chief amusements of the soldiers then and now,” Mr. Charlson went on to say, “was gambling, either by cards or by dice. Punishment was often the forfeit of a month’s wages, \$13, but that seldom prevented anyone from indulging in the pastime, for the corn of all colors and bits of sole leather served the purposes of money admirably.”

Mr. Charlson recalled his last battle. “I had just looked after my horse and went to the front line to view the location when I was abruptly jerked down behind the breastworks, just as a cannon ball sped over my head.

‘Beg your pardon corporal,’ said the soldier responsible of this quick and brave deed.

‘No need, no need,’ I replied.”

Corn, Commerce, and Country Living



Photo from HCHS Civil War Exhibit

THANK YOU!

The key to our success has been, and always will be you! Your generosity has brought us this far. Every time someone tours our museum and states, “You have a wonderful facility here,” it warms our hearts with thoughts of you! As a non-profit organization we are totally dependent on the kindness of our contributors. You have made such a difference! Henry County’s heritage will not be forgotten. Once again, thank you! Oh, and by the way, **“KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!”**

HENRY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Be a part of history. . .

SUPPORT THE HENRY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Henry County Historical Society and its museum exist solely through memberships, donations, and the support of its volunteers. We hope you'll join us in supporting our efforts to preserve and promote the history of Henry County.

SINGLE: \$20

FAMILY: \$25

SPONSOR: \$50

PATRON: \$100

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