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RECORD OF PERQUIMANS SOLDIERS  
IN THE WAR FOR SECESSION

From speech of Judge Clark at the unveiling of the Confederate monument at Hertford last week.)

Perquimans is not a large county

and when the war broke out it contained a large number of slaves so that it could not furnish a large number of men for the army. Besides for three years of the war the county was in the enemy's lines and men could not reach the Confederate army except at great hazard. Yet the county did its full duty. Besides scattering soldiers in other commands it furnished one full company—Company F, 27th Regiment, commanded by Capt. William Nixon and later by Capt. B. S. Skinner—and a large part of four other companies, to-wit: Co. A, First N. C. regiment; Co. F, 11 N. C. regiment; Co. L, 17 N. C. regiment of which Thomas Gilliam of this county was captain, and Co. A, 13th Battalion which was an artillery Co. and commanded by Capt. Lewis H. Webb.

Of the captains from this county, Capt. Jones and Skinner were both killed in battle, one at Bristow and the other at Reim's station.

Co. A, 1st N. C. regiment was at Warrenton, N. C., when that regiment was organized with Montford S. Stokes as Colonel. This company was commanded by Capt. Trim L. Skinner and then by Capt. John A. Benbury of Chowan. But Lieutenants John A. Morgan and A. R. Stamer were from Perquimans. The 1st N. C. regiment to which it belonged was in the "7 Days' Fight" around Richmond in June and July 1862 and suffered terrific loss. Both Capt. Skinner who had become Major of the regiment and Capt. John A. Benbury were killed. This regiment to which the Perquimans Co. belonged was in the first Maryland Campaign and was heavily engaged at Boonesboro, Maryland, Sept. 14, and again in Sharpsburg in one of the greatest battles of the war Sept. 17th, 1862 when General Lee, with 30,000 men and with his back to the river held back McClellan with 95,000 men. This has been called the "Soldiers' Battle" for there was no room for maneuvering. It was a square up, give, and take fight. In that battle the 1st N. C. regiment was part of the troops which under D. H. Hill held the famous peach orchard with men five feet apart. Just to their left was the 27th N. C. regiment, containing another Perquimans county company, at the Dunkard church, and immediately to their left was the 35th N. C. regiment commanded by Col. (afterwards U. S. Senator) M. W. Ransom, of which regiment I was at that time Adjutant, so that I was a close neighbor of the Perquimans men and with my own eyes saw the gallantry of the commands to which they belonged.

The Perquimans Co. in the 1st N. C. regiment was with us at First Fredericksburg in December 1862 when we drove back Burnside. It was at Chancellorsville and in that famous flank march when we put to flight Hooker's corps and would have cut off Hooker's army from United States ford and have captured that army and probably ended the war, but for the accidental fall of Stonewall Jackson who was shot by mistake by our own men.

This Perquimans Co. was in its regiment in the Pennsylvania campaign and as usual suffered heavily, in the great battle of Gettysburg. When Grant opened the fight on the 4th of May, 1864, this company with its regiment was at the front in the Wilderness campaign and at Spottsylvania. On that terrible day of the "Bloody Angle," May 12th, 1864 the greater part of this regiment and of the 3rd N. C. were captured. These regiments at that time belonged to George H. Stuart's brigade. The few that were left were assigned to Cox's brigade and as such fought in the battles when we were facing Grant down to the James. They made part of the corps which were detached under Early and marching up the valley of Va. crossed the Potomac and on Aug. 11th, 1864 were in sight of the dome of the Capitol at Washington. Returning to the army around Petersburg they served in the trenches in front of that doomed city and when our lines were broken on April 2nd, 1865, they were in the long retreat to Appomatox where they formed a part of the column in Cox's brigade, Grimes' division, which made the last charge of that historic army. Thus Perquimans county was in the 1st N. C. regiment and was in the last active hostilities of Lee's army.

The next company was part of Co. F, 11 N. C. regiment which was also composed of men from Perquimans and Chowan. This regiment was commanded first by Col. W. J. Martin. In 1862 it served from Franklin, Va., to Wilmington, N. C., and was in the battle at Whitehall near Kinston in December, 1862. It was in Gen. D. H. Hill's expedition in April, 1863 against Washington, N. C. In May 1863 it was sent to Va. and assigned to Pettigrew's brigade and as such had a share in the immortal charge on the enemy's lines on the 3rd day at Gettysburg. Gen. Pettigrew was killed at Falling Waters or the retreat and it then became Kirkland's brigade and afterwards McRae's. As part of that brigade, the Perquimans Co. in this regiment was at Bristow Station in Oct. 1863 when by a blunder of Gen. A. P. Hill that brigade and Cooke's (in which were the Perquimans company in the 27th regiment) attacked Warren's corps lying behind a railroad embankment, and were repulsed with terrible loss. It is said that Gen. A. P. Hill was intoxicated. This was but one of the many instances during the war in which brave men were slaughtered on account of the drunkenness of the commanding officers. Gen. Lee's remark when he arrived on the battlefield was sufficiently curt. He said, "Gen. Hill there is nothing left to do but to bury your unfortunate dead."

The 11th regiment, with the Perquimans company, was at Mine Run on Dec. 2nd, 1863, which soldiers will remember as the coldest weather of the war. It was with Lee on May 4th, 1864, when Grant opened his fight in the Wilderness and at Spottsylvania and all the way down to Richmond. It was in the trenches around Petersburg. It was in the splendid fight at Reim's Station Aug. 25, 1864, which is known as the "North Carolina Victory" when the three N. C. brigades of Cooke, McRae, and Lane, drove Hancock's corps out of his breastworks, capturing 2,000 prisoners and 9 pieces of artillery. Gen. Lee telegraphed his congratulations to Gov. Vance on account of the magnificent fighting of the N. C. troops on that day. The 11th N. C. was in the trenches around Petersburg during the weary months of that fall and winter until our lines were broken on April 2nd, 1865. They were in the long retreat to Appomatox which has been appropriately called the Funeral March of the Confederacy and laid down their arms only when that historic army passed into history, April 9, 1865.

The next company from this county was a part of company L, 17th N. C. regiment commanded by Capt. Lucius J. Johnson and after his promotion to Major, by Capt. Thomas H. Gilliam of Perquimans. This company was captured at Hatteras in August, 1861 and was sent North. After being paroled and exchanged the regiment was placed in Martin's brigade. It served in Eastern North Carolina till the campaign of 1864 opened when it was sent to Virginia and was at the great battle of Second Cold Harbor June 3rd, 1864. It was in the battles around Petersburg and in the trenches till December, 1864 when Hoke's Division to which this brigade belonged was sent to Wilmington. It was at the battle of Southwest Creek near Kinston, March 8th, 1865, when we attacked Schofield's army which was coming up from New Bern and captured 2,000 men. They were also in the great three days' battle at Bentonville, March 19th, 20th and 21st, 1865. In these two battles, I was in the same division, and saw them show their splendid qualities under fire. We were in the long retreat together under Joseph E. Johnson and were paroled near High Point, on May 2nd, 1865, nearly three weeks after Lee's surrender.

The next company from the county was a full company, F, 27th N. C. regiment. This regiment was in the battle at New Bern March 14th, 1862. In May, 1862, the regiment was assigned to J. C. Walker's brigade but afterwards Col. Jno. R. Cooke of this regiment was promoted to Brigadier General and commanded the brigade till the surrender. The brigade was not actively engaged in the "7 Days' Fight" around Richmond but it and Ransom's brigade were formed into a small division and as such they were in the first Maryland campaign and at Sharpsburg where it fought at the Dunkard church immediately on the right of Ransom's brigade, and at first

(Continued on page Three)

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