

troops saw heavy fighting in Virginia and proved that white soldiers had no monopoly on bravery. Of the "colored" troops, Colonel Henry C. Ward, commander of the Thirty-first regiment, wrote the following in his final report:

Before closing this report I beg leave to speak briefly as to the character of the troops I have had the honor to serve with....I am convinced that, in all the essential qualities of good soldiers, they fully meet all requirements, and are equal to the standard of any service I ever saw.⁶⁵

At least twelve of Windsor's native or adopted residents enlisted to fight in the war, including one or two who fought with a Rhode Island regiment, and one that fought with the Massachusetts Fifty-fourth regiment that was featured in the recent movie, Glory. A couple of the soldiers have left no record of ever having lived in Windsor, although they enlisted from this town. They may have been southerners who joined the regiments when they were in training in the South. The following men are Civil War veterans with a Windsor connection⁶⁶:

Twenty-Ninth (Colored) Regiment Connecticut Volunteer Infantry:

William Chase, a native of North Carolina or Pennsylvania, enlisted from Windsor on December 23, 1863 and was mustered into Company G on March 8, 1864. Seven months later, on October 1, 1864, he was wounded at the battle at Chapin's

Farm, Virginia. He was discharged a year later, on October 24, 1865. He and his wife, a native of Washington, D.C., lived in Windsor in the early seventies, although they may have come to Windsor earlier.⁶⁷

Wallace Sands was born in Granby in 1841 or 1844. A farm laborer in Granby before the war, he enlisted in the 29th Infantry from that town on December 4, 1863. He was mustered into Company C on March 8, 1864 and discharged on March 5, 1865. He married Susan Marie Elkey of Granby in 1883 but was widowed by 1900 when he rented a house in Windsor with another widower and Civil War veteran, Travis Babcock. In 1902, he married Mrs. Elizabeth Philips and lived on Pleasant Street near Windsor center. A teamster in his later years, he died August 20, 1918 and was buried in Windsor's Riverside Cemetery.⁶⁸

Virgil Simmons, born in Windsor in about 1845, was the brother of Charlotte Simmons and probably the son of Harry. Nearly a century later, his great grandnephew, William H. Best, became the first black policemen in the town of Windsor. Virgil enlisted in the 29th Regiment in October 1863, but he was not mustered because of illness. He died in Knight Hospital at New Haven, Connecticut January 28, 1864.

Charles Percy, a native of Granby whose father and two older brothers were soldiers in the Civil War, lived in Windsor in

a white household when he was thirteen in 1860. He enlisted in the 29th from Granby.

Thirty-First Regiment United States Colored Infantry:

William Giddy was a brickmaker from Maryland. According to the information on his tombstone, he served in Company C of the 31st Regiment.⁶⁹ Unlike William Chase, Giddy married a Windsor woman and spent the rest of his life in town. He died May 31, 1904 and is buried in Riverside Cemetery.

The only record of William Harris's being a resident of Windsor is that he enlisted in the 31st from the town on March 16, 1864, before the troop was sent to Virginia. He was mustered on the same day into Company D. On July 30, 1864, he was wounded in a battle at Petersburg, Virginia, but he was not mustered out until November 7, 1865.

Richard Miller, as was William Harris, can only be connected to Windsor by his military record. He enlisted from the town and was mustered on March 19, 1864 into Company F. He died five months later on August 14, 1864.

Samuel Thompson, did not come to Windsor until after the war. Born in New York, probably Long Island, he enlisted in the 31st and was mustered into Company D.⁷⁰ He and his wife Emeline Anderson from Greenwich or Stamford, Connecticut,

moved to Windsor in about 1872. The first treasurer and a charter trustee of the A.M.E. Zion church in town, he was a farm laborer who owned his home free of mortgage in the Hayden Station area of town. He died March 5, 1917 at age seventy-five and is buried in Riverside Cemetery.

William Sharp was the son of early Windsor/Granby settler Thomas Sharp. He and black Granby residents Austin E. Elkey, George H. VanAllen, and Ira B. Way, enlisted in the Rhode Island Colored Heavy Artillery.⁷¹ William enlisted on August 21, 1863 and was mustered into Company F of the 14th Regiment of the Rhode Island Heavy Artillery.

Travis G. Babcock was the son of Windsor resident Benjamin E. Babcock. He did farm work most of his life, although he was listed as a carpenter in the 1900 census. Very likely, he supplemented his farm income with carpentry work. Widowed by 1900, he boarded with fellow veteran Wallace Sands. He was struck and killed by a train ("killed by cars")⁷² in 1910. Buried in Riverside Cemetery, he tombstone reads that he served in Company F of the 14th United States Colored Artillery. Perhaps this was actually the same troop in which William Sharp served. The state troops were sometimes combined with those from other states and became United States troops.

Abraham Thompson was born in New York in about 1829. He enlisted in the Fifty-fourth Regiment of the Massachusetts Volunteers and was mustered into Company F. Though he was not recorded in a federal census, he apparently lived in Windsor. He died in a burning building in Windsor in 1899, when he was 70 years old. He is buried in Riverside Cemetery.

George Richards was born in Hebron, Connecticut. Though his regiment in the war is not yet positively identified, he died in the Soldiers Home at Darien, Connecticut in 1906. Since his death is recorded in the Windsor Vital Statistics, he surely was a resident of Windsor. His son was an active member of the local A.M.E. Zion church.

Impact of the war on the immigration to Windsor.

Even before the massive black migration north that became "The Great Migration," Windsor's black immigrants in the sixties and early seventies demonstrate that southern blacks were moving north immediately following the war. With the end of slavery, they were freer to move away from the prejudicial and frequently abusive treatment that blacks received.⁷³ The competition for work after the war also discouraged blacks from staying. For example, Greene and Woodson describe the situation for black brickmakers: "[B]efore the Civil War," they wrote, "the brickmaking trade