

A FEW LINES FROM THE CATTARAUGUS WELSH REGIMENT, 154th VOL. NEW YORK, by Gwilym Ap Ioan [William son of John]. **Y Drych** (January 24, 1863, p.19)

[Translated from the Welsh by Sarah Sterrett, Buffalo, New York, 1992.]

Mr. Editor,---It occurred to me that I should write a few lines for publication in your praiseworthy paper, if you deem them worthy.

I don't know exactly what to write, but perhaps you would be interested in hearing how we spent Christmas Day. Perhaps you know that the main purpose on the mind of a soldier is to get something into his stomach, at least that is how I shall be thinking as I watch us cooking, but I hope that we are not like those mentioned in the scriptures, namely that their stomachs have become their god.

On Christmas morning, one of us, that is, one of the few Welshmen here, (11 in number) suggested that we should have dinner together, and that we should have something different from usual. So, it was agreed that we should have plenty of potatoes and beef and pork, also sugar and coffee and hard cookies. After collecting everything together, we went a short distance from the camp to cook them, and after finding a suitable spot, a fire was lit. The next thing was to appoint a cook. It was decided that the three most experienced should go to it; to fry the meat and that the rest of us should take care of the potatoes and coffee.

I believe that if there were some young girls there watching us, they would have been amazed how handily things were going forward and how short a time it took to get the dinner ready and I believe that they would have been of the same opinion as those five boys of yore, that a man can live without a woman but that a woman cannot live without a man.

After getting everything ready, we all sat down and everyone ate his fill and I was afraid that we might not be doing justice to the "innocent."

After eating, several impromptu toasts were made, which I cannot remember now. Next it was suggested that Mr. William Charles give thanks to the Heavenly Father for His mercy towards us--which he did in English, short and to the point.

The next thing was to wash the dishes. It was proposed that two of the company do that. While this was going on, we had a happy time discussing things from the past and things yet to come--and how the day was being spent at home, etc. etc.

After getting the dishes ready, we returned to camp, after being satisfied beyond our expectations, and each one saying that he would never forget the Christmas dinner on the Rappahannock Hills.

Lest I should weary you with a tedious report I will end by saying that so far, we have enjoyed excellent health, through the mercy of our gracious Father and so that you may know who we are, I will give your our names:- William Charles, son of the old and respected faithful deacon, D. Charles. He is the Orderley Sergeant of the Regiment; T. T. Jones, D. J. Williams, Wm. M. Davis, B. D. Morgans, L. L. Jones, Richard Lewis, Samuel R. Williams, and W. Williams (two brothers). They have four other brothers in my Uncle Sam's Service. They are the sons of William J. Williams. W. P. James and William E. Jones, the son of John J. Jones (deacon in the Calvinistic Methodist Church in Freedom. From Freedom we came and it is for Freedom and Union that we are fighting.

Gwilym Ap Ioan
Falmouth, Dec. 26, 1862

[Note: I believe "Gwilym Ap Ioan" / William son of John to be the last man listed, William E. Jones, son of John J. Jones. From the research files of Barbara R. Henry, 21 Orchard St., Northampton, MA 01060.]