

Thomas Jefferson Horton
21 May 1829—8 April 1893

The Civil War service of Thomas Jefferson Horton, previously mentioned on Grandma's Cabin, has been more thoroughly researched by Wayne Horton of Erin, N. Y. Wayne, a genealogist, compiled the information gleaned from his research and wrote a comprehensive essay about his great-great-granduncle Thomas Jefferson Horton.

We are indebted to Wayne for sharing this information with us and offer him a sincere "Thank You".

Thomas J. Horton was born May 21, 1829 and died April 8, 1893. Married on November 25, 1854 to Mary Ann Greek in Altay, Schuyler County, N.Y. at the home of Mary Ann's brother, David H. and Laura Greek, by Rev. Edward Royce. Mary Ann Greek was born 1833 and died December 2, 1917 in Savona, Steuben County, N.Y. Thomas is buried in the Monterey Cemetery, Monterey, Schuyler County, N.Y. Thomas' pension records state that Mary Ann is buried in Monterey, N.Y. Thomas is a Civil War veteran.....

Thomas participated in the Civil War. The Civil War was started in April of 1861 when Confederate forces fired on Federal forces located at Fort Sumter, South Carolina. The original rush to volunteer for service in the Union Army was overwhelming. In fact, anticipating a short three month war, many of the volunteers were turned away. But, after a year and one half of conflict, in August of 1862 President Lincoln called for more volunteers to enlist in the service. It was at this time August 12, 1862 that Thomas enlisted in the service at Elmira, N. Y. He joined the 86th N. Y. S. Volunteers, Co. I, commanded by Amos Sherwood.

By the time Thomas joined the 86th it had been assigned to Ward's Brigade of the Third Corps, Army of the Potomac. The first battle that Thomas might have been involved was the Battle of Fredericksburg where the 3rd Corps was not prominently engaged although under a heavy fire; still, its casualties amounted to 145 killed, 837 wounded and 202 missing; total 1184, over half of which occurred in Ward's Brigade of Birney's Division. After the battle the Corps returned to its quarters at Falmouth where it spent the winter of 1862-63. General (Daniel) Sickles was promoted to the command of the Corps and General Hiram Berry to that of Sickles' Division. On May 1, 1863, the Corps broke camp and marched to Chancellorsville, an eventful field in its history; a battle in which the brunt of the fighting fell on the Third and Twelfth Corps. The Third Corps took 17568 men, including non-combatants, on that campaign, losing 378 killed, 2634 wounded and 1090 missing; total 4102. Generals Berry and Whipple were among the killed. The 86th participated in the Battle of Brandy Station on June 6, 1863.

At Gettysburg the Third Corps took a prominent part in the battle of the second day and, although forced to fall back from its untenable position on the Emmittsburg Road, it did not do so until it has exacted a fearful price from its assailants. Its losses at Gettysburg were 578 killed, 3026 wounded and 607 missing; total 4210 out of less than 10000 actually engaged. The

morning report showed 11924 present for duty equipped. It was at Gettysburg that Thomas was wounded during the unit's action at Devil's Den—a description of which follows from “Historical Sketch of the 86th by Maj. Samuel H. Leavitt”:

About 1 o'clock p.m. on July 1, 1863, our division of the Third Corps halted for dinner on the outskirts of Emmittsburg, Md., and about twelve miles from Gettysburg. The fires had been barely kindled when the bugle sounded “pack up”. The booming of cannon could be heard in the distance, and we were hurried off at double-quick. The hot July sun was blazing down on us, and many fell by the wayside from the effects of the heat. We took position that night on the battlefield of July 2nd, near the historic “Wheatfield”. Some firing could be heard near the village of Gettysburg, and an occasional shell exploded rather near to us. Early in the morning of the 2nd we marched to the south and in rear of the rocky cavern known as the “Devil's Den”. About noon our Brigade (Ward's) was advanced to its position in line of battle, our regiment taking position in the woods beyond the Devil's Den, with the One Hundred and Twenty-Fourth New York on our immediate left, and the Twentieth Indiana on our right. Between 3 and 4 o'clock p.m., the enemy (Robertson's Brigade of Hood's Division), who had been pressing the right of the Third Corps, which was now advanced to the front, moved forward in solid column, halting for a moment when they had reached the edge of the woods in our front. They immediately advanced again, rapidly and with fierce yells; but our ranks pouring out a deadly fire checked them, and they were driven back. The enemy had pressed the brigade back from the Devil's Den and had attacked Round Top. Our left flank had been turned and we were forced to fall back, which we did in good order. Our losses in this battle were 11 killed, 51 wounded, and 4 missing.

Sometime, during this action, Thomas was felled by a musket ball in the left arm above the elbow. He was sent to the hospital at Fort Schuyler, N.Y. where he stayed until January of 1864, then to David Island, then back to his regiment. On April 15, 1864, near Culpepper, Virginia, while on picket duty he suffered an attack of rheumatism in both legs just above the ankles. He was sent to Alexandria, Virginia, to Portsmouth Grove, Rhode Island, back to Fort Schuyler and to his regiment. He was taken sick again with fever and sent to Lincoln Hospital, Washington, D.C. where he remained until his discharge on December 11, 1865.

After his discharge he spent some time in Campbell, Steuben County, N.Y. and then to Monterey, Schuyler County, N.Y. He suffered severely from his wound and rheumatism. Finally, in the mid-80s, unable to work or walk he applied for a pension. Testimony, in this matter was given, among others, by George Bennett and George Kels of Monterey. George Bennett stated “it is almost impossible for him to walk across the floor” and “his sufferings are beyond description; he requires the constant attention of his wife”. George Kels wrote “he has not been able at any time to do a day's work” and “his general appearance has been since I knew him more like a living skeleton than anything I can compare it to”.

Thomas spent the rest of his life in the Monterey area and is buried in the Monterey Cemetery in town.