

An Interesting Program May 8 At LeRoy House

by Lynne Belluscio

Sue Conklin, the Genesee County Historian will be the guest speaker on Tuesday, May 8 at the Annual Meeting of the LeRoy Historical Society. The meeting is open to the public and since the Little League will not be holding a game that evening, we will have plenty of parking. Sue will be presenting a program on the Genesee County Pensioners from the War of 1812. I can guarantee that it will not be a boring program.

Sue spent several days in Albany at the State Library gathering information. The pension records - at least some of them, survived the tragic fire that broke out in the Assembly room on March 29, 1911. At that time, the library was in the same building and 450,000 books were destroyed and 270,000 manuscripts. Sue told me that as she opened some of the folders, she could still smell the smoke from the fire.

There are some interesting situations that she discovered. One story involved Mary Black Squirrel whose husband was a Seneca from the Tonawanda Indian Reservation who had fought on the side of the United States. Black Squirrel died in 1876, but widows were not allowed to claim their husband's pension until 1878. Mary hired a lawyer to plead her case, but it wasn't ruled in her favor until 1892, three weeks after Mary died at the age of 102. The court awarded her \$1,987.

According to a list that I have in our files, there were several LeRoy soldiers who applied for a pension, including: Alexander Anderson, Alpheus Barrett, George W. Blodgett, Hezekiah Coon, Stephen Doty, Oliver Fuller, Nathaniel Goble, William Halbert, Simon Law, Miller Mills, Samuel Mills, Dougal McDougal, John McPherson, Moses Parkinson, Simon Pierson, Page Russell, Henry Seward, Amos Schumway, Robert Sixberry, Stephen D. Sloan, Henry Taggart, Lawrence Timmerman, Loomis Walker,



Consider Warner, John Webb.

Sue gave me a copy of George Blodgett's pension claim. In 1854, George applied for his pension. He was fifty eight. He had served for one year and three months and received a land warrant for 160 acres and an additional \$65. He also claimed an additional \$250 for his clothes and equipment. This included \$3 for a hat, \$2 for the feather & plate, \$4 for a military cap, \$15 for a military coat, \$10 for an ordinary coat, \$2.50 for a vest, \$5 for a pair of pantaloons, and 50 cents for his "stock" or neckerchief. He also listed \$100 for a saddle, \$8 for the breastplate, \$10 for a pair of pistols, and \$4 for the holsters, \$10 for sword and belt.

In the margin of the pension papers, are handwritten notes that list Blodgett's service. "His first service was under Captain Marvin in the Light House for three months. The next was under Captain Freeman, Col. Dobbin in the Infantry, six months. He later served under Colonel Dobbin as President of a Board of Court Martial for six months and upwards."

George Blodgett is listed on the Soldiers' Monument on Trigon Park with the names of

58 other men who served in the War of 1812. Donna Barefoot was at LeRoy House today and told me that until yesterday, she didn't realize that her ancestor Amos Spring was listed on the

Soldiers' Monument.

He and his wife Reliance had come to LeRoy with an ox-team and one horse in 1810. They settled on 100 acres of land four miles south of LeRoy and built a log cabin with puncheon floors. When the call came to report for the militia, both Amos and his brother, Darius reported. Darius was killed in Canada. Amos and his wife had five sons and five daughters. Donna is hoping that Sue might know if there are pension papers for Amos Spring that might tell more of his story.

The program at LeRoy House will start at 7:30 with some light refreshments, and a short business meeting, which includes the election of Trustees. Accepting the nomination for a three years term are Shelia Furr, Ann Frew, Bob Collette, Teresa McMullen, and Dan Cote. Immediately following the elections Sue will share her stories and research. Please join us for an interesting evening.

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