

REMINISCENCES IN THE LIFE OF  
JONATHAN WILDER WELLINGTON BOYNTON

Civil War Soldier

Enrolled 18 August 1862  
Discharged 10 July 1865



This copy from the original prepared by Richard Wellington Boynton, in November 1980, grandson of Jonathan Wilder Wellington Boynton. I know of no more agreeable duty than to place on record the history and the incidents of the lives of our forefathers.

Written in the left side margin of page 7, appears.

E. F. Lawrence was a Smyrna soldier.

Written in the left side margin of page 8, appears.

Smyrna men ( H. S. Montgomery, George W. Hills, and A. D. Ferris. )

Written in the left side margin of page 27, appears in the hand of Fannie Mitchell Boynton, wife of Jonathan Wilder Wellington Boynton.

When they let him loose they gave him a kick, which he being such a kindly man didn't put in his article.

Smyrna above mentioned is, Smyrna, New York, Chenango County.

RICHARD W. BOYNTON  
LIBERTYVILLE ROAD  
P.O. BOX 404  
SUSSEX, N.J. 07461

December 2, 1980

Dear Reba R. Young :

I am pleased to enclose a copy of the Reminiscences in the life of Jonathan Wilder Wellington Boynton.

This copy is from an old ledger as he wrote it.

A cousin of mine is in possession of the original, I will speak to her to see if it could be placed at Andersonville. I feel that this would be a very appropriate place for sharing this bit of the past.

I have enjoyed having prepared this copy, it is my hope that many will have found something of interest in it.

Sincerely,

*Richard W. Boynton*  
Richard W. Boynton

DEC 8 1980

ANDE NHS	Rece	Act.	IMB	Date
Supt.				12/8
Sect.				
Asst.				
Eng.		✓		
Tech.				
Mtnc.				
File				

I was on duty in the fort until Feb. 18th when the regiment went by boat and landed fifty miles from the city of Charleston, S. C. We arrived, soon after the United States had captured it, in the city.

### Thrilling Experience in Charleston, S. C.

When we arrived in the city we were allowed to select our own quarters. Olinwood and I received permission and accepted quarters with an aged couple by furnishing coffee as their compensation. Whether they were Rebel or Union I can not say and do not believe they had any choice. Their chickens had for their roosting place the top of the cupboard in the kitchen and the rooster woke us early with continuous crowing.

We had no duty to perform while in the city but just to amuse ourselves in seeing the sights and having a good time. The sea wall fronting the bay was three miles long and thirty feet broad made of cut stone with iron railing on both sides. This was a

delightful place for a stroll and hundreds of people were there every pleasant afternoon. A comrade and I were enjoying a promenade on the battery one afternoon and we introduced ourselves to two southern girls who seemed much pleased to form the acquaintance of two Yankees. The one who had all smiles for me was a Mrs. Jonstone, a widow of a Rebel. She informed me that she was Union and hated Rebels.

We were invited into the house and went in and passed a pleasant evening and on our bidding them good-night were invited to call again. I made one or two calls on Mrs. Jonstone. The day we received orders to move the next morning at 8.00 A. M. she invited me to be her escort to a party in a friend's house in the northern part of the city. I accepted on condition that I invite two comrades to go as a body-guard, to which she more than gladly consented. Nathan Eldridge and R. D. Fuller of the 157th regiment accepted the position as guards and we left for the party at 5:00 P. M. The party was a success and we

all enjoyed the southern style of entertainment. The music was furnished by an ex-Rebel, a deserter, and he certainly could make a violin talk. At 1:00 A. M. we bade our host good-bye and good-night and left for the lady's home.

We had gone but a short distance when to our dismay we saw the patrol coming directly towards us. We halted, that is, Mrs. Jonstone and I. My brave guard in the rear had disappeared. We were placed under arrest, marched a short distance and placed in a dark guard-house, in front of which a sentry was pacing back and forth on the walk. Mrs. Jonstone and I were in total darkness but the door was not locked. I said, "I must escape from here." "Mr. Boynton, if you go, I'll go too," she said. "The danger is great," I replied. "Don't care," she persisted, "if you go, I will go." The sentry walked about fifty feet and when he was farthest away, I opened the door and we ~~immediately~~ and escaped. We had proceeded but a square or two, however, when again the dreaded patrol barred our path.

Now was my last chance and Mrs. Johnstone consented for me to leave her and run for it. I scaled a low fence but was detected in the act and an officer followed with a drawn sword and I said, "I surrender."

He delivered me to a corporal who marched with me to a building with broad stone steps in front. Up the steps we went and into the building. I walked into a room, a key turned in a lock, and now I realized that I was a prisoner in Charleston jail. I lay down on the floor and was soon enjoying a much needed rest. In the morning I was called out and with twenty-four other men, the worst lot of human beings I ever saw together, marched to the citadel, the headquarters of the provost marshal and all of us were placed in the guard-house.

The corporal delivered me into the presence of the provost marshal, General Stewart Woodford of New York who gave me a pass to go out and into the citadel until further orders. I went to the cook-house and had breakfast and dinner at

the same time, then went to the wharf. The steamer, however, had left on time with the whole regiment but myself. I called on Mrs. Jonstone and she exclaimed, "Well, Mr. Boynton, I thought you were killed, sure." We laughed over our thrilling experience but both agreed that we did not care to try it again. She certainly was the bravest woman I ever saw.

I left for Georgetown in about five days and went to the quarters of company 7 which were in a boot and shoe store on the main street. Our duties here were light. The sixth day of April General Potter with 3000 men of whom were seven companies of the 157th, including company 7, left Georgetown in light marching order. The tenth day of April we were advancing towards a woods in four ranks, when boom! boom! from artillery was heard and a shot passed over the regiment. If it had been aimed lower, there would have been great loss of life. The boys sprang out of that road and through a rail fence on quick time. Another shot, but no one hit. We went

through a swamp by what is called a flank movement for half a mile and formed in line, charged, and captured a battery of two pieces and killed the commander of the battery. Later I learned that his name was McQueen and that his home was in Sumpterville, S.C.

We camped in Sumpterville two nights and while there I was on picket duty. We penetrated into the state as far as Camden, S.C., burning cotton and destroying the railroad. At Camden Ellinwood and I were entertained by a Mrs. Page who was a rabid Secessionist but who gave us a bountiful supper for our furnishing the coffee. One night at Camden and then we returned by easy marches to Georgetown.

On our march back we learned of Lincoln's death and Lee's surrender, so that we believed that our soldiering days were drawing to a close.

We left Georgetown about the 25th of June and landed at Mount Pleasant, S.C., where a camp was established and our discharges made out, dated July 10, 1865, but not delivered



at that time. My stay here was very pleasant. I visited the ruins of Fort Moultrie on Sullivan's Island and made one visit to the city of Charleston. I called at the home of Mrs. Jonstone and found to my surprise that she was married and was introduced to her husband, a Mr. Percival, an ex-Union soldier.

In August we were all on board a U. S. transport and sailed out upon the broad Atlantic. In due time we landed in New York City and the same day we landed I went by boat up the Hudson to Albany and then by cars to Syracuse, where I remained ten days. I was then paid and received my discharge from the army.

We came to Smyrna overland by the way of Woodstock, Georgetown, and other towns. George Scarritt and I remained in Smyrna village over night. I was entertained in the home of Alfred Eastman.

I marched toward home in fine spirits and, when I was seen coming towards the old schoolhouse in school district No. 11, the teacher came out and

I was once more clasped to the heart of my sister Mary Aramitta. Oh towards home I walked and up on the porch from which three years before I had left as a soldier and to which I had now returned as a citizen. My mother came out and I was clasped to her heart once more.

Home at last. The end,  
August 23d, 1865.