

*Historical Notes* to accompany letter dated:

12/27/61:002

### *Historical Notes*

It has long been said that a soldier's ability to fight is directly related to the quantity and quality of his nourishment. Within this letter's comments upon "genuine soldier life" and "frank and beans for supper" appears a major theme - food - which will appear in many of New Berlin/Pittsfield's Lt Cyrus Hardaway's "letters home." In addition to his continuing commentary on food, Hardway's letters also indicate an interest in weather patterns consistent with a young man who has been raised on a Pittsfield farm and concerned about those clouds appearing over the hills to the north and west.

In this letter Hardaway refers to an enclosed picture "for Libbie." In addition to his step brother, Augustus Jessee Beardslee aged 24, and half brother, Nathan Summers Beardslee aged 13, Hardaway often refers to his older step sisters, Elizabeth "Libbie" Beardslee and Mary Cornelia Beardslee. Elizabeth Beardslee Moore married Albert Moore, son of Jonathan Moore of Morris, New York. Mary Cornelia Beardslee, the oldest of the the children, married Adrian Foote. Lt. Adrian Foote will play a prominent part in Hardaway's life and his letters home during the war. In 1863 Cyrus Hardaway will transfer to Chenango County's 114th New York Regiment then stationed in Louisiana. One of the primary reasons is that Adrian Foote, married to Hardaway's step sister, is a quartermaster for the 114th. Many modern *Gazette* readers can trace their lineages through these two individuals.

The picture sent home to "Libbie" has unfortunately been lost in the intervening 136 years. Fortunately, and appearing as a part of this column, is a picture of an older and more mature Cyrus J. Hardaway. Presuming that Hardaway is approximately 40 years old, it would have been taken in approximately 1878. This copy was obtained from the United States Military History Institute at Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

There is little doubt that Cyrus Hardaway is homesick despite his protestations that "I shan't be." Without knowledge of where he will be and how his loved ones might communicate with him, he requests the local newspaper.