



Seaside News



Johnny Clem

During the Civil War, boys under the age of eighteen were not allowed to join the military without consent from their guardian(s). Yet thousands of boys under eighteen enlisted as musicians such as drummers and fife players. In time, bugles were introduced to the military because they could be heard more clearly than drum signals.

Many boys signed up with a family member such as a father, brother, or uncle. The youngest drummer in the Union Army is said to have been nine years old. Most drummers ranged in age from twelve to seventeen.

Drummers were considered the heartbeat of the army for their drum signals and calls helped maintain order in the camp and on the battlefield. The drummers learned over a hundred drum calls and tunes. Each task soldiers performed had its own drum call.

The drummer began as early as 5 a.m. and could end their day as late as 10:30 p.m. In camp, drummers communicated the daily activities of the soldiers, such as meals, roll call, sick call, and drills. A drum signal could carry farther than an officer's voice making it essential during battle when the drum was used to relay orders to advance, halt, load weapons, fire, or retreat.

Drummers also performed chores and assisted officers, surgeons, cooks, barbers, dentists and grave diggers. They helped boost morale by playing patriotic songs. Drummers were always on call in case they were needed for special assignments such as signaling an imminent attack by the enemy. While drummers were not soldiers, they saw bloody battles, helped bury the dead and tend to the wounded. Drummers could die from illness while in camp or from a battle wound.

DRUMMER BOYS

H A D S U E E L G U B P M A C S B O J O
 C P C M F T U R H A E H Y O G K M F D E
 M R U I Z S Q D E U L N O F N S C V F F
 S I F C V Q R O N Q Y K E M D A W G G Y
 O B Z A A I F Q Q M S E C M M T F A N Z
 Z C V L L D L S J X A A H P Y O C P N E
 R L K L H R S G J B Z J O K G K O E L E
 L C S S M U D R U M M E R N L V M W I L
 P K X M O M N P T A R D E D G C D Z Q T
 O C D V P L U Z F B U L S S R Q L G B T
 O I X S E R O H C O K W C W G C B F A A
 E A D H H N W A U K U I B D D D U E P B
 X Y J D V N P Q D L L M E B S H R K V G
 P B O K J L X T L A H C L O I T O J C N
 G I O A I V C K M T Y E S B E N G D T K
 D Y O M Y F P F H X C C W R X J W D G F
 E P A H K W X E V A R G P I H L A P I P
 B C Z T Z S K Y H K W K A G A J R R E S
 P U Z J I H W G S I G N A L S V E Y J K
 Q T G L Q A F A W D U X W T R L W Q R Z

BATTLE	BUGLE	CALLS
CAMP	CHORES	CAMP
CHORES	CIVIL	WAR
COOKS	DIE	DRILLS
DRUM	DRUMMER	ENEMY
FIFE	FIRE	GRAVE
HALT	LOAD	RETREAT
SIGNALS	TASKS	WOUNDS

1. How old was the youngest drummer boy?
2. Name a job drummer boys did.
3. What daily activities did they communicate?

1. nine-years-old
 2. Tended the wounded.
 3. sick call, roll, call, meals, and drills.

JOKE OF THE MONTH

Why does it take pirates so long to learn the alphabet?
 Because they spend years at C!

