

## Artillery Practice for Civil War at Chase Lake

July 4, 1861 was unusual for a Fourth of July celebration at Chase Lake. Besides the sports, swimming, boat rides and picnics, a cannon was hauled from Lowville to the lake. Bales of hay to be used as targets were set up at the tip of Finger Point. The cannon fired solid shot from near the Bergstrom cottage knoll on the North Shore. The gun probably belonged to the Third Battalion of the Black River Artillery located in Lowville. Evidence of this target practice was retrieved from the bottom of the lake by one of Jean Burns' sons - Bill - years ago in the form of a six pound cannon ball. Can you imagine the "boom" echoing across the lake from such a cannon?

Perhaps Tim Chase was at the lake when the cannon was fired which may have been a contributing factor in his joining the 3rd Battalion of the Black River Artillery in July of 1862 at Watson. After enlisting in Company C, Tim quickly became a sergeant. During the following two years Tim served in various forts surrounding and protecting Washington, D.C. The 3rd Battalion then became part of the 5th New York Heavy Artillery and Tim was promoted, "for dedicated service" to 2nd Lieutenant in 1864. On orders of General Grant, Tim's regiment was removed from the relative safety of Washington, D.C. and transferred to infantry duty in Virginia and West Virginia in 1864. The regiment sustained heavy losses at Snicker's Ferry and Cedar Mountain. In July of 1865 the 5th New York Heavy Artillery was mustered out of service, completing a three year tour of duty in July, 1865 at Harper's Ferry, Virginia. Tim returned to the Chase Lake area and resumed civilian pursuits of lumbering and farming. The son of Charles Chase and grandson of Reuben Chase, who were among the earliest settlers in this area, Tim had roots deeply embedded at Chase's Lake. He died in 1921 at the age of 83 and was buried in the Lowville Rural Cemetery following a long and active life.

*Submitted by Chuck Bunke, Lake Camper, and Town of Watson Historian.*