The First Wave of Enlistment

The first MAC students to enlist in Confederate units during the spring and summer of 1861 were from seceding states Virginia and North Carolina. Three of the five did not survive the war.

Of the four others who enlisted during that summer, two more were lost, and two survived.

Private Junius B. Hodges, Co. B, 16th Virginia Infantry, of Nansemond County, listed his occupation as "student" when he enlisted on June 5, 1861. He was captured near Petersburg, Virginia, on October 27, 1864. Hodges died of pneumonia at Point Lookout Prisoner Camp for Confederates in southern Maryland in March 1865, and was buried there.

Private Raleigh W. Kirk, a native of Lancaster County, Virginia, mustered into Co. D, 9th Virginia Cavalry, on June 16, 1861, and died of disease at Ashland, Virginia, on May 6, 1862.

Private John Hill, Co. H, 9th Virginia Cavalry, enlisted on July 26, 1861. He was hospitalized for fever and later became a prisoner of war. Hill signed an oath of loyalty on April 23, 1865, and was allowed to return to his home in Prince William County, Virginia.

Captain William H. Henderson, Co. C, 40th Virginia Infantry, enlisted as a private with his father on May 22, 1861. He was promoted for his "peculiar valor and skill on the battlefield." Of the five former MAC students who enlisted during the spring and summer months of 1861, only his record is unmarked by disease, injury, or captivity.

Point Lookout Prisoner Camp

Confederates, where Junius B. Hodges died and was buried, was built on the peninsula of land where the Potomac River meets the Chesapeake Bay. The federal government built Hammond General Hospital there in 1862, in what had been a resort area. The associated prison camp, consisting of a large wooden pen, was established after the Battle of Gettysburg in July 1863. Within these walls, conditions were brutal, as captured in the sketches of prisoner John Jacob Omenhausser, a private in Co. A, 46th Virginia Infantry. Tents were the only shelter, and often there were not enough for the entire population, which ranged from 12,000 to 20,000. Over 52,000 prisoners passed through Point Lookout during its two years of operation, making it the largest prison camp, north or south. Besides Hodges, others associated with MAC imprisoned at Point Lookout include William W. Waring and his father, Colonel John H. Waring, William N. Bean, and Edward T. Paca.

The proximity of Point Lookout to the south made it a prime military target. General Bradley T. Johnson was headed there in July 1864, under orders from General Robert E. Lee, as part of a plan to liberate prisoners and restore them to the fighting ranks. Johnson had just received word that the planned raid had been aborted when his troops famously stopped at MAC on July 12, 1864.