

Roberta Isaacs Contributing In A Different Way

List Of Surry's Civil War Dead Compiled For Inclusion On Centennial War Memorial

By NANCY DAMRON
News Staff Writer

While a drive to raise funds for a war memorial in Mount Airy has generated financial gifts from community residents, one local woman has chosen to contribute in another way.

Roberta Isaacs, of Rt. 3, Mount Airy, has compiled a list of some 250 to 300 Surry men who served in the Civil War whose names will be in-

cluded on the memorial.

They were either killed in action or died from wounds or disease while in service, she explained.

"This is not a complete list. I want to emphasize that," said Mrs. Isaacs, a teacher at White Plains Elementary School.

"I know there are some who served in Virginia and others who were scattered around in different units."

The search for the names was

sparked by Mrs. Isaacs' search for her relatives who fought in the Civil War.

"I started looking for my own relatives and as I started finding them, it led back to others."

After gathering information on her family members, Mrs. Isaacs read where sponsors of the memorial's fund drive were seeking the names of Surry's war dead.

From there, she decided to include the names of all the Civil War casualties she could find.

"I thought it would help people identify with their past," the woman commented.

Mrs. Isaacs used several books in her research, including "A History of Surry County," by the late J.G. Hollingsworth of Mount Airy, which was published between 1935-37. The book contained rosters of all county men who enlisted in wars, from the American Revolution to World War I.

Mrs. Isaacs also located records in the "Roster of N.C. Troops from 1861 to 1865," prepared by order of the state legislature in 1881, and researched The Civil War Times, a magazine for Civil War buffs.

In addition, she consulted a volume of "The N.C. Troops," which lists the names of soldiers statewide, their home and their record during the war.

Mrs. Isaacs, a history major in college and an avid Civil War en-

thusiast, found that the county's men played an active role in several battles.

"Some of the men from northwest Surry County went to Grayson County to enlist in the cavalry since all the units here were infantry," she explained.

The Surry County soldiers, along with others from northwest North Carolina, played an important role, especially in the Virginia campaigns.

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Roberta Isaacs (Continued from Page 2A)

While doing her research, Mrs. Isaacs discovered that about 900 men from northwestern North Carolina were captured at Kelley's Ford, a skirmish site on the Rappahannock River in northern Virginia near Fredericksburg.

She also learned that about 400 men, including some Surry residents, were captured at Hanover Courthouse during a skirmish. Four Surry Countians were killed.

"We lost a lot of men at Gettysburg and Chancellorsville, but we also lost a lot in the small skirmishes," Mrs. Isaacs said.

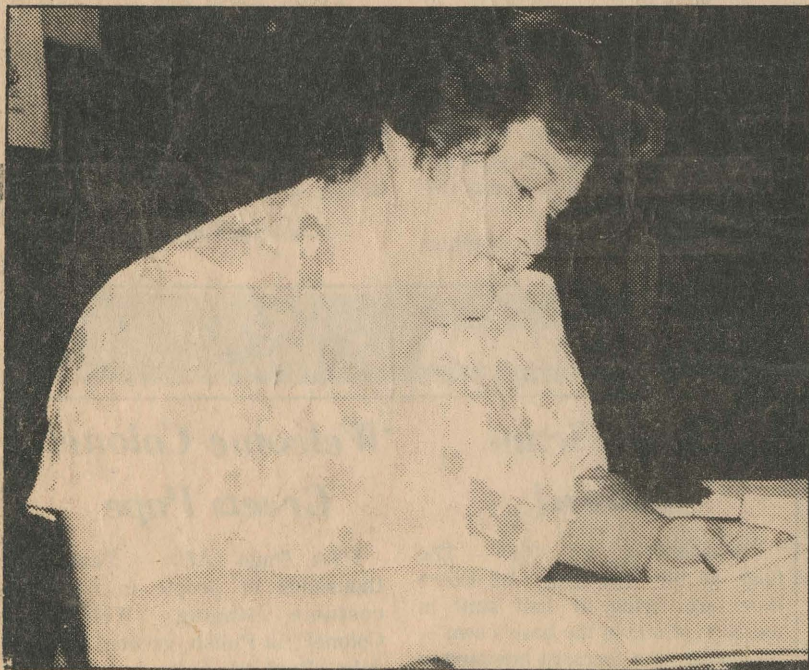
Ten Surry County soldiers reportedly were killed at both Gettysburg and Chancellorsville.

The information was sketchy and hard to get but it didn't present any problems for Mrs. Isaacs, who also enjoys genealogical research. She credits an administrator in the Mount Airy school system, Robert Holder — who taught her American History in high school — with sparking her interest in history.

"If you know what you're looking for, it's no problem," she remarked.

The White Plains teacher began by consulting the rosters in the Hollingsworth book and worked from there using other sources, including old letters passed down through her family.

"I learned a lot and it's been a pleasure," Mrs. Isaacs said.



Mrs. Isaacs works to complete project.