GREEN MOUNT SOLDIERS’ LOT

Vermont at War

On April 23, 1861, eleven days after Confederate forces assaulted Fort Sumter in South Carolina, Gov. Erastus Fairbanks asked Vermont legislators to help fund the federal response. “The United States government must be sustained and the rebellion suppressed,” he said. After a brief debate, the state legislature appropriated $1 million to the Civil War effort. Montpelier raised only one regiment, but Vermont’s capital city was home to one of the state’s three U.S. General Hospitals.

Sloan General Hospital, the smallest but most modern of the three, opened in June 1864. Vermont Surgeon General Samuel Thayer Jr. chose the site on a hill near a good spring and with access to the railroad. The hospital’s 496 beds were divided among twelve buildings. The complex included an administration building, dead house, and chapel. It opened after the Battle of Cold Harbor, Virginia (May 31-June 12, 1864), and was among the first hospitals to care for more patients with battle wounds than disease.

During the Civil War, Vermont’s three general hospitals cared for 8,574 patients. Sloan closed in December 1865. In just more than eighteen months, 1,670 patients were treated here. Of the 174 who died, some were buried in town.

Soldiers’ Lot

Green Mount Cemetery was established in 1854 on 35 acres in Montpelier. The city deeded 450-square-feet in this cemetery to the federal government on March 28, 1866. The Lot 324 reservation, located along the front of the cemetery, is identified by square granite corner markers inscribed with “U.S.”

Two graves containing Union soldiers were here in 1868, and the number doubled in 1874. The eight interments recorded today make it one of the National Cemetery Administration’s smallest soldiers’ lots.

The graves are marked by standard, round-topped government-issued marble headstones. This design was approved by the secretary of war in 1873 to mark the graves of known Union soldiers.