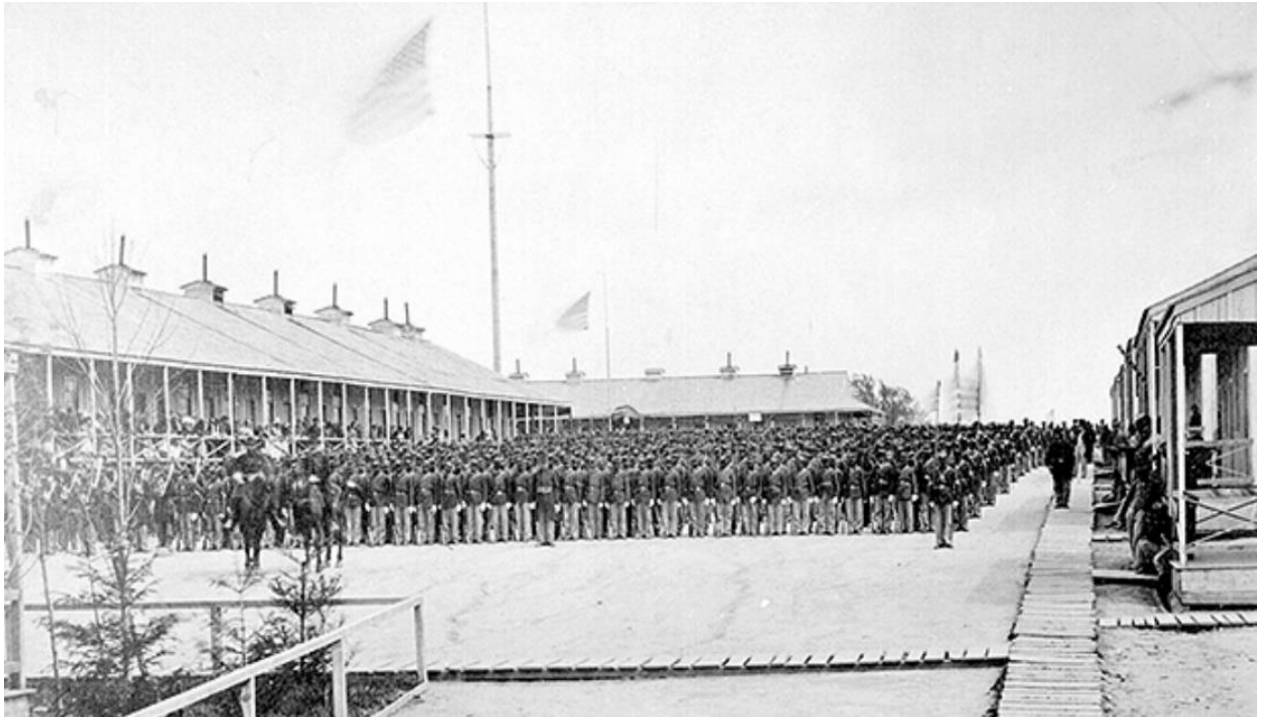


The Orroy Rose Story

By Bill Poray, Perinton Town Historian

Piecing together the stories of our early citizens can be difficult, even with access to town and village documents and records, census reports, and newspapers. The facts are often more elusive when researching the stories of minorities. I've been attempting to learn all I can about an African-American man named Orroy Rose, a Civil War soldier born in Perinton.



Orroy Rose was a member of the 26th United States Colored Regiment, seen here on parade at Camp William Penn in Cheltenham Township, north of Philadelphia.

A roster of men who enlisted from Perinton to serve during the Civil War has been in the town's historic archives since 1865, when it was handwritten by the town clerk, John H. Ives. The list of 151 names does not include Orroy Rose, and probably many others as well. Rose was born in Perinton in about 1837, ten years after slavery had been abolished in New York State. He was likely the son of former slaves. Facts are hard to come by, but it appears his parents died when he was young, leaving at least three children, Orroy, and a younger brother, Henry, and a sister, Julia. For a few years some or possibly all of the Rose children continued to live with the family that had once owned their parents as slaves. They each eventually ventured out to earn a living, although they were years away from adulthood.

When Orroy Rose was about ten or twelve years old, he found work on the farm of Rufus Darrow in the town of Greece. From about 1850 to late in 1863 he remained on the farm and living with the Darrow family. On December 3, 1863, the United States Department of War authorized the establishment of regiments of African-American troops, resulting in the 20th and almost immediately following, the 26th and 30th Regiments, United States Colored Troops (USCT). Within a few days of their creation, Orroy Rose left the Darrow farm in Greece and went to Rochester, where he enlisted for a period of three years.

Military documents listed Private Rose as 26 years of age, and five foot, four inches tall. His occupation was listed as “farmer.” Although he signed up for three years, Rose lived little more than six months after his enlistment. His death on June 28, 1864 was the result of typhoid fever, “in the Regimental hospital at camp, near Beaufort, South Carolina.”

Perinton’s Orroy Rose is listed among more than 209,000 soldiers from 175 regiments of the United States Colored Troops. He was laid to rest with honor at Beaufort National Cemetery, Beaufort, South Carolina.

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