
**WAR RECORD OF
FAMOUS ALBANY
REGIMENT OF 1862**

**HISTORY THAT WAS READ BY
DR. A. B. HUESTED AT THE
REUNION OF 100 SURVIVORS
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
CELEBRATION OF THE
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE OLD 113TH REGIMENT,
LATER KNOWN AS THE SEV-
ENTH HEAVY ARTILLERY.**

AUGUST 19TH, 1912

ON MONDAY, August 19th, 1912, one hundred surviving veterans of the Seventh Heavy Artillery, New York Volunteers, an Albany regiment that saw hard fighting throughout the Civil war, celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its original organization as the 113th Regiment of Infantry, New York Volunteers.

Dr. Alfred B. Husted, treasurer and historian of the veterans, at the banquet held in the evening at Keeler's hotel, read a history which was compiled by him from "facts taken from the letters written on the field by Surgeon James E. Pomfret."

It ran thus:

Comrades and Friends:

Fifty years ago to-day the One Hundred and Thirteenth Regiment of New York State Volunteer Infantry left this city for the seat of war.

A local paper of August 20, 1862, published the following:

Departure of the Albany Regiment.

Until 10 o'clock yesterday morning it was supposed the regiment would not leave before Wednesday, perhaps Thursday afternoon. At that hour, however, orders were issued for the regiment to move at 6 o'clock. With true soldierly alacrity, Colonel Morris promulgated the order and quietly gave his officers to understand that there must be no delinquency. The "Hendric Hudson" was telegraphed to come down from Troy, and at 3 o'clock was at the dock with two barges to transport the regiment. At 6.45 o'clock the march began, and at 20 minutes past eight every man was on board. The Governor

communicated to Colonel Morris the thanks of the War department (and his own) for the prompt manner in which he had responded to the order to march.

Ten thousand men and women lined the streets through which the regiment passed. No equally intense enthusiasm has marked the departure of any regiment, since the war began, and no finer body of men ever went to the tented field in any country. Major James L. Johnson, of the adjutant general department, had the pleasure of handing their commissions to Colonel Morris and Major Springstead, while the regiment was passing the Capitol. They will never be dishonored by either of them.

This regiment has been really raised in 20 days, for although recruiting was authorized 10 days previously, it was not until the 18th of July that recruiting was fairly begun. We cannot let this opportunity pass without complimenting the untiring zeal of the several ward committees, and our citizens generally. The committees have not faltered a moment, but have vied with each other in their devotion to the arduous and patriotic work assigned them. Without them Albany would have been disgraced. With them she is honored as the second district in the State to have sent her regiment to the field, and what these committees have so nobly begun, they will as nobly finish. Give them 30 days more and every man called for from the county will be voluntarily enrolled in the grand army of the Union. If this time can be given it should be. A draft would mar the noble position which the loyal north now occupies in the eyes of Europe. A million of volunteers in the field to defend the old flag and to preserve the Union would be a spectacle more sublime than the world has ever yet witnessed. The regiment was to be today at Jersey City, presented with an elegant regimental banner ordered by the Governor, and furnished with the

latest Springfield muskets. The banner was presented here in Albany by Governor Morgan to the regiment in front of his house on its way from the barracks to the boat.

Its First Officers.

The following are the officers of the regiment so far as named:

Colonel—Lewis O. Morris.

Major—Edward A. Springsteed.

Adjutant—Frederick L. Tremain.

Quartermaster—E. Willard Smith.

Surgeon—Dr. James E. Pomfret.

Assistant Surgeons—Blaisdell and Newcomb.

Chaplain—Humphrey L. Calder.

Sergeant-major—George H. Treadwell.

Quartermaster Sergeant—William Stevens.

Commissary Sergeant—F. E. Scripture.

Hospital Steward—Alfred B. Husted.

Line Officers.

Company A—Captain Murphy, First Lieutenant Sickles, Second Lieutenant Reed.

Company B—Captain Jones, First Lieutenant Kennedy, Second Lieutenant Orr.

Company C—Captain Morris, First Lieutenant Rodgers, Second Lieutenant Bell.

Company D—Captain McCulloch, First Lieutenant Schurr, Second Lieutenant Coulson.

Company E—Captain Moore, First Lieutenant Lockrow, Second Lieutenant Mount.

Company F—Captain Bell, First Lieutenant Wright, Second Lieutenant Mullen.

Company G—Captain Shannon, First Lieutenant O'Hare, Second Lieutenant Ball.

Company H—Captain Pruyn, First Lieutenant McEwan, Second Lieutenant Hobbs.

Company I—Captain Maguire, First Lieutenant DuCharme, Second Lieutenant Pettit.

Company K—Captain Anable, First Lieutenant Barclay, Second Lieutenant Krank.

In a local paper of August 21, 1862, it was stated:

"The One Hundred and Thirteenth Regiment reached Jersey City yesterday about noon. They were immediately provided with Springfield muskets (the best arm in use) and at 5 o'clock transferred to cars and moved off to Washington, where they have probably arrived ere this. This dispatch is highly creditable to all concerned."

It is not for me to give a detailed report of its journey to Washington, its assignment to the defences of Washington, its change to the Seventh Regiment, New York Heavy Artillery, and its life there for nearly two years. That is familiar to all of you. It was expected when leaving the city that the regiment would be sent directly to the front, and some were disappointed because of the delay in experiencing active service. On May 15, 1864, the long delayed, and at this time somewhat unexpected, march to the front was begun, reaching Bell Plains on Sunday, where it remained over Monday and Tuesday night marched to Spottsylvania, arriving about midnight or after. Wednesday and Wednesday night were spent in front of the enemy and on Thursday moved to the left of the line. At this place, Spottsylvania, sometimes called Po River, on Thursday, May 19, the first experience of real war was had. Here the regiment lost 9 killed, 60 wounded and 7 missing. This battle began towards night by the rebels making an attack on the fourth division of the Second Corps. Captains McCullock and Morris were killed and Captain Bell wounded.

Again on the March.

On Friday the 20th, 60 rebel dead were buried and two to three hundred prisoners sent to the rear. That night a march began which lasted all night and all day Saturday until dark, with

no time given to cook even coffee. The evening was spent digging trenches and fighting. Sunday the rebels were driven from the railway and the Mattaponi river, which was crossed. On Monday the 22nd, we marched to the North Anna river where on the 23rd we were engaged with the enemy, losing four killed, 24 wounded and four missing. On the 25th Lieutenant Orr was seriously wounded and died on June 2. On Friday the 27th, all sick and wounded were sent to the rear, indicating a move, which began that night, and continued all day Saturday and a good part of that night. A stop for camping brought digging for entrenching, which was Grant's method of protecting his men and securing his army from defeat and retreat, if attacked. Sunday the 29th dawned bright and peaceful and as our correspondent expressed it "To-day is a day for Sunday to make the heart glad. I can imagine myself at home: the breeze just stirs the leaves; the birds are singing sweetly; there is no noise in the streets; the bells peal out their notes of warning. What a contrast! I had to make a good deal of inquiry to satisfy myself that it was Sunday. Long lines of men, miles on miles are coiled and wedged into the space of a few miles. Thousands and tens of thousands of bristling guns, hundreds of cannon, thousands of horses and whole towns of hospital and supply trains. Anything but Sunday. And yet to-day thus far (12 noon) not a shot has been fired; we are resting.'

May 30, at night the regiment was ordered to take a line of works from which the enemy had annoyed us all day. The charge was made in gallant style, and the works taken but with serious loss. The records state 24 killed, 71 wounded and 12 missing.

On June 1 our correspondent states, "this is a fierce hot day. There is one good thing, we can have no more long marches unless we are defeated, which does not seem likely.

From this point we shall have to fight our way to Richmond foot by foot. Every hill is contested and every road fought for, but we are steadily advancing. Yesterday we drove the rebels from the roads necessary to hold communication with our base of supplies at West Point. I find the officers see a great change since Grant took command. An order has this moment come to be ready to move, and I just heard one officer say to another, "When shall we go?" The other replied that he did not know, that no one knew now where or when they would move, as they used to. In the battle or skirmish, rather of yesterday, we lost 20 killed and 58 wounded. I very much fear that Scripture has been taken prisoner. His train has come in without him, and no doubt some guerilla has gobbled him and taken him to Richmond in advance of our army.

In Line of Battle.

On the night of June 1 Grant moved to near Gaines' Mills, marching all night. The morning of the 2nd the regiment was in line of battle, but there was very little fighting that day. Early on June 3rd the battle opened fiercely and raged until about 10 o'clock, when it ceased, until about sun down. Then the rebels made an unsuccessful charge on part of our lines. The 7th made a charge on two lines of breastworks, and took them, capturing two brass guns, which they turned on the enemy, but the rebels made a desperate rush and our boys had to come in. It cost us terribly. I can give you no estimate of the number killed. Our regiment must have lost two or three hundred killed and wounded. Colonel Morris said that night, "I am nearly gone up. We have marched all day and fought all night, or marched all night and fought all day, since we joined Grant's army," and once I am very much pained to say (our last battle before this) needlessly. The rest of the line

got orders not to go in. The orders did not reach us in time and our brigade alone charged the rebel line, gained and held the position until daylight, only to be ordered back again. It cost us 24 killed and 52 wounded. To-night after a fight which must have cost our army 10,000 killed and wounded (if all the army fought and suffered as we did) each party holds its own ground.

This was the terrible Cold Harbor fight. The record of killed is 76, wounded 248 and missing 116. Early in the morning of June 4 as Colonel Morris was looking at the line, he was shot by a sharpshooter, and at five minutes past 1 he died. For several days there was comparative quiet for the Seventh regiment. On the 7th a flag of truce was granted, so that the dead and wounded between the lines might be buried and succored. The ground had been charged over by both armies for two days and the dead and wounded lay on the field during this time. Colonel Porter of the Eighth was killed while leading a charge, and he lay in plain sight of his regiment between the lines. Many attempts to bring off his body failed until a rope was procured, and one man rushed out, hid himself behind the body, while attaching the rope, then rushed back and the body was drawn in. Lieutenants McClure and Read were killed on the 3d, Colonel Morris and Lieutenant Barclay on the 4th, and Lieutenant Evans on the 5th.

This was the period when the two armies, in the vicinity of Cold Harbor and the Tyler House were lying opposite each other in rifle pits, at distances from each other varying from 30 to 100 yards. The two armies lay this way for about 10 days, and everything appearing above the works was almost sure to be hit.

Only a Halt for Breakfast.

After dark on the night of June 12, Grant began one of his flank movements, by the left, stealing away from

the enemy's front. Our correspondent states, "on we trudged through the weary night, tramp, tramp through dense woods, through swamps, over new roads that made short cuts until 8 o'clock Monday morning, the 13th, when we halted for breakfast. Then in line again along the margin of the Chickahominy creek, until we came to the Chickahominy river, over which we passed on what is laid down on the map as long bridge; then we marched through a large swamp, through vast woods of primitive oak and pine, wearily, wearily mile by mile, until as we rose the crest of a hill, tired, hungry, covered with dust and thirsty, I saw gleaming in the distance the magnificent James river."

Arrived at Wilcox landing the night of June 13, and at night of the 14th expected to be ferried over the river, but it took all night to get started, and not until 1 o'clock on the 15th did the regiment get over and begin the march. It was sultry, the roads dusty and all were tired, but the march continued till dark, on till midnight, and at the gray dawn, over the hills, the spires of Petersburg gleamed. The waiting and marching for two nights and a day was very trying, and as if that was not enough the regiment was pushed to the front, to build breast-works. The march from the rifle pits to the James river was remarkable in that it was honored with the presence of Generals Grant, Mead, Hancock and Barnard of the Engineers.

On the 16th a general attack was ordered along the line which was only partly successful. On the part of the line assigned to the Seventh, it was unsuccessful. They charged right up to the works, were in the ditch, were then flanked and ordered to surrender, Major Springsteed with a part of his battalion succeeded in making his way back to the regiment, Major Pruyn and almost all of his battalion were taken prisoners. After dark Burnside's corps made a charge on the same works and were not dis-

covered until they were at the works. They took it handsomely and 500 prisoners. Lieutenants Yearly and Moss were killed June 16, and Captain Maguire on the 22d.

Heavy Loss at Petersburg.

The regiment at this fight lost 35 killed, 105 wounded and 364 taken prisoners. After the assault at Petersburg it was rather quiet with the Seventh, but almost daily some wounded, killed or taken prisoners until the 25th of June when a march began towards City Point, leading the men to think they were to go back to Washington, but after a time turned due north and crossed the Appomattox river on pontoons about an hour after dark. The troops reported to General Butler, who sent guides, and we were ordered to march by the light of fires built at sight distances along the track. This was one of the most interesting marches we ever made. There was no dust, it was pitch dark, we marched quite rapidly, work evidently on hand, and the red fires gleamed, sometimes you could see one, sometimes a dozen ahead, like irregular lamps on a crooked streeted city. We were ordered to march in silence, through swamps, through woods where tall slim pines threw their overhanging branches across the road, 40 or 50 feet above our heads, illuminated by the gleaming fire lights,—looked like some solemn old cathedral with a never ending roof. The march was due north, directly across Butler's command, until we struck the James river at Jones' neck. The river was crossed on pontoons, noiselessly, and the march continued through a small camp in the Nineteenth corps, two companies of which the rebels had gobbled the day before, and who were in a direct range of a rebel battery which swept the river and shelled General Foster's headquarters. A halt was made until about 4 a. m. when a line of battle was formed. Soon the shells began

to buzz uncomfortably all around us. Our corps and division were in the front, but the brigade and regiment (the Seventh) were in the second line and none of the regiment hurt. The First brigade marched as skirmishers and took a battery of four splendid parrott guns, 20-pounders, limbers and caissons to match, with the gunners who were using them. The action lasted only 15 minutes with only one killed and 21 wounded.

This was on the 27th of July. The next morning the lines were advanced and the heavy guns began pouring forth their murderous fire. This was the action at Strawberry Plains, but the loss from the regiment was comparatively small.

Tramped All Night.

On Friday night, the 29th of July, the order came to pack up, and at 10 o'clock the army turned its face south on the way to the old camp in front of Petersburg, marching all night and the early part of Saturday. The weather was hot and close and there was much straggling. As soon as we arrived before Petersburg one of the most furious cannonades of the war commenced and a tremendous explosion shook the ground. It thundered and volleyed and pealed and from where I stood I could see the shells burst in the very heart of Petersburg. The troops made a charge and took the enemy's lines but as has so often happened, they did not hold them, so our hopes were again deferred. I believe the only piece of line we held is the fort itself, and I am not sure of that even.

After the explosion at Petersburg on July 30 nothing exciting happened, and no move was made until Friday, August 12, when orders to break camp came and we began to march towards City Point. No one knew the destination; some guessed Washington and the wise ones made no guess. It was a hot, dry march, dust so thick you could not see across the road. Went

into camp about midnight, and at 4.30 Saturday morning were on the way again, going to the wharf at City Point. Boats were taken and by the middle of the afternoon all were embarked. It was soon learned we were on the way to Deepbottom, which we reached in the night. As before we were at it by daylight, but not in real earnest. We lost time. We showed our strength. We struck off to the right until our men were as near Richmond as the rebels ever were to Washington. How they swarmed into the works! Bye and bye came the news. General Warren had attacked the rebels in front of him and had taken and held, with small loss, the Weldon railroad. This is the most important thing we have done since we came here. Our movement meant nothing, it was only a ruse, and while we took some hundreds of prisoners and killed two generals, we lost a thousand men—300 in our division and about six in our regiment. (Some say 4 killed, 14 wounded and 4 missing.)

As soon as it was sure we had a large rebel force in our front, and Warren had had time to fortify, we began our preparations for returning. The army left Deepbottom at dark Saturday night and reached the old camp in front of Petersburg by daylight and went into camp. Rapid firing was soon heard and before breakfast was fairly finished, orders to move were received, and a march was made to the support of Warren, as five charges had been made on him, to retake the railroad, but without success, and with horrible slaughter to them.

On Monday, the 22d, the division was ordered out to Dr. Gurley's, on the Weldon railroad, to destroy it, which was effectively done for about 10 miles. The ties piled in heaps, the rails put on these and fire then set to the ties, thus bending the rails and making them useless.

The Havoc of War.

Our correspondent writes:

"Headquarters are established in what has been a substantial two story house, and from what is remaining, I should judge a well furnished comfortable home. It is now defaced and injured sadly. The mahogany stair rail is torn up and destroyed, the blinds are gone, doors broken, a mahogany clothespress, a splendid one, is ruined, so of tables and bureaus. I write this on a mahogany card table, one leaf of which is gone, in the parlor, on whose white walls are various charcoal inscriptions: 'Hurrah for Grant, for Pres. Abraham Lincoln, for Vice. Pres. Andrew Johnson.' The mantle, nicely marbled, is broken, and indeed everything that can be broken is broken. It seems to me that this is an unnecessary addition to the horrors of war. It does no good, it must do harm, and it gives the southern people a false idea of the northern army. I have not heard any officer that has not condemned it."

After destroying the railroad, some three miles south of Reams Station, a little village of about a dozen houses, the troops, on the 24th, moved back to the defences at the village, and the next morning expected to move back further but did not. It was whispered that the enemy was around us in force—two divisions strong, our corps had only two divisions present, but we were inside of intrenchments, and felt confident, but I did not so fully share this confidence. The place was a dead flat, haviny only one shallow gulley, not deep enough for protection, and the defences were in the shape of a horseshoe, contracted nearly to closing of the free ends. A woods came close to our lines on the west, and the enemy were in force on the south and west of us. Our main forces were some eight miles away. About 10 o'clock on this Thursday morning, August 25, the rebs made a feint on the south line of our works, occupied by the second division of our

corps and later made a real attack on the Third Brigade of our division (to the west of our works), and were handsomely repulsed.

In about two hours they made another charge and were again repelled with great slaughter; hardly any loss on our side. About 10 minutes after five they made a third attack and it was a most fearful one. The enemy emerged from the woods in front of the Third and Fourth brigades, and notwithstanding the grape and canister with which they were treated, with the deadly volleys of musketry, our men gave way in the Third Brigade, and in the end the whole position had to be given up and a new line formed. The new line ran north and south, across the pike to Petersburg, and partly behind a woods and swamp, was naturally strong and the rebs did not assail it.

Charging the Rebs.

At the time of the last charge, the rebs opened on us with heavy batteries and the woods were filled with exploding shells. The bullets whistled, the shells hummed, and with the wildest yells the rebs charged and the line gave way in utter confusion. It is said this is the first time the Second Corps was ever driven out of earth works, but the works were bad, the position poor, and it is said that the Seventh New York Infantry gave way, it having been just filled with green troops. Our regiment lost heavily in officers. Major Springsteed is wounded, I fear fatally, and a prisoner; Captain Wright is killed, shot in the breast, left on the field; Captain Kennedy wounded, said in two places, and a prisoner; Dan O'Brien wounded and missing, no doubt a prisoner; Lieutenant Requa and, I fear, one or two more. Kreps is unhurt; so is Murphy. I think there is one major and five lieutenants present with the regiment. Our regiment covered itself with glory. It remained in the works until every other regiment

had left. General Miles was in command of our division. He fought bravely. It was grand to see Hancock standing where the shells flew so thickly around. But it was a bad day for the First Division and for the Second Corps. The position we lost was worth nothing; we had done our work, and I do not see why we were not withdrawn in the night, as we might have been.

On the 27th the corps moved back to its old position in front of Petersburg with headquarters in the house we have mentioned. The final report of losses at Reams Station was 7 killed, 12 wounded and 83 missing; total, 102. I am glad to be able to write that the Seventh did itself justice in our last fight; they fought heroically and retreated in good order. When a battery of light pieces was left by the gunners, Lieutenant McClellan and four men of our regiment manned a gun, and fired several rounds into the advancing rebs, doing terrible execution.

Regiment in the Siege.

After the fight at Reams Station the regiment was with the army in the siege of Petersburg until February 22, 1865. During the greater part of this time, that is until in December or January, some of our men were being wounded almost daily on the lines. This gradually ceased, however, and in January, 1865, deserters from the rebel army began to come into our lines almost daily or rather nightly, by twos and threes, or sixes and sevens, and peace rumors began to fly about camp thickly. The deserters from the rebels admitted that the jig was up. January 16 our correspondent writes:

"Deserters continue to come in in squads. Seven came in last night in a squad, all old soldiers, and all said they were glad to get back to the old flag. There is no fighting on our front; no picket firing. One of our videttes walking out a night or two ago, was halted and 'to who goes there,' said,

'Yank.' 'Go back, Yank,' said Johnny, 'you are too far out.' 'Go back, yourself,' said Yank, 'you are too far out.' 'No, I am not,' said Johnny, and he was right. Yank had to go back. Our men and the enemy cut wood in the same lot. A day or two ago one of their men hallooed to our men and asked them to lend him an axe. 'Come and get it,' said our men. So over he came and got it and went back, cut his wood and then returned with the axe, but he said it looked so well on our side of the line that he thought on the whole he would not go back and he didn't. Yesterday our men cut a large tree near the line and tried to have it fall on our side, but it fell the other way, the top reaching nearly to the rebel rifle pit. They claimed half, so our men gave them the top limbs and we took the butt logs."

This is the way times went until about February 22, when because of the severe losses the regiment had sustained, it was withdrawn from the Army of the Potomac and sent to garrison Fort McHenry at Baltimore, where it remained until mustered out in detachments during June and August, 1865.

After the reading of the paper, Joseph Lentz, one of the veterans present, stated that he remembered well the incident of the abandoned light battery at Reams Station, as he was the one who directed the firing of it at the rebels, and on attempting to regain our lines, was taken prisoner.

