

Reunion of Bemis Heights Battalion

77th FOOT REGIMENT

N. Y. S. Vols. at Schuylerville, Sept. 17

The pleasant day of September 17 was appreciated by none more than by the veterans of the Seventy-seventh and their friends who were going to Schuylerville to the thirtieth annual reunion of the survivors association of the "Bemis Heights Battalion," the Seventy-seventh Foot Regiment, New York State Volunteers of 1861-65. The morning trains from Saratoga Springs carried one hundred and six persons who availed themselves of this opportunity to visit this historic place. Most of the veterans went by the 8.45 train arriving in Schuylerville thirty-five minutes later. As they entered the village, a few minutes after passing through Victory Mills, the tall shapely Saratoga Monument was seen looming up on the hill to the left. Comrades McNaughton and Welch, who were at the Burgoyne street station with three arms (for be it known that McNaughton at the age of twenty was deprived of his good right arm in the charge of Maryes Heights, Va., thirty-nine years ago and where the regiment lost eighty-three men by some inconsiderate confederates) to receive, marshalled the host and marched down Burgoyne street to Broadway to the rooms of Frank Norton Post, No. 116, G. A. R. Flags were flying in many places which are always a pleasant sight to the grizzled veteran. A short distance from Burgoyne street up on the south side of a building on the east side of Broadway is this inscription:

Near this spot October 16, 1777, American and British officers met, and consummated articles of capitulation of Gen. Burgoyne to Gen. Gates; and on this ground the British army laid down their arms, thus securing American Independence.

About three hundred feet further up Broadway is the G. A. R. hall of Post Frank Norton. Frank Norton at the age of twenty-seven entered the service, October 16, 1861 as Captain of I Company. He resigned in February 1862, to become lieutenant-colonel of the 123d New York and was killed in battle. Further up Broadway on the northwest corner of Spring street is a tablet bearing these words:

CAMP GROUND OF THE BRITISH ARMY OCTOBER 15, 1777.

The interval before the meeting was devoted to renewing old comradeship for be it known to the laymen the 'old boys' never tire of spinning yarns of the time when war, grim, cruel war was their business, and if any layman is skeptical interview the armless, the legless, the eyeless, the impaired hearing, the crippled, the invalid 'old boy' as he for only a little while longer appears in your midst. And then remember the ones who are unable to leave their homes; some not even their beds.

Business Session.

At 11.30 o'clock the business meeting was called to order by Comrade McNaughton of the local committee and prayer was offered by the Rev. W. H. Randall who also welcomed the old soldiers to the historic place where the British army laid down its arms to the exulting colonists. During his address he alluded to the fact that he was too young to be a soldier in 1861-65 and that a few years since while visiting his uncle, Dr. Thomas B. Hood, of the Pension Bureau, in Washington Dr. Hood told him of Early's call in 1864. That General Early claimed that it "is not the sixth corps in our front," though Early's chief of staff insisted that it was. And Early knew the next morning that it was the Sixth corps, the wearers of the Greek cross, with which he had to contend. "You were there and your fight at Fort Stevens, under the eyes of President Lincoln—the only fight during the long four years of the civil war that the President witnessed. And in the cemetery near there a few of your comrades are buried, having been killed on that 12th day of July, 1864, when your valor helped to save the National capital. Washington felt relieved when the Sixth corps marched up Seventh street that day."

President French in responding said that the late Thad Stevens who had to be trundled in a chair in and out the Halls of Congress one day remarked to his two colored attendants: "Who will carry me when you are gone?" So I have to ask—who will I have to talk to when you are gone? Referring to anniversaries he said these soldier anniversaries gave him a chance to talk over old times, while the departing hour left him happier in that once again he was by the grace of God permitted to take his comrades by the hand and hear their voices.

During the roll call of survivors by the secretary, E. H. Fuller, which followed and which is always listened to with the greatest attention, the deaths of Comrades were reported. The following were present: Dudley Avery, of Pittsfield, Mass.; Nathan Brown, William R. Britton, Clarence Bruso, Henry Bradt, George H. Brown, Benjamin B. Bennett, John P.

Burns, John E. Brainard, John M. Clute, Otis Conklin, John Conklin, Charles Chapman, William G. Caw, John M. Connors, Albert H. Clements, Edward B. Deuell, John H. Downen, Emory Doolittle, Edward Evans, of New York City; George H. Ellison, Winsor B. French, Edward H. Fuller, William W. Finch, T. Scott Fuller, Walter G. Gifford, Cornelius S. Huyck, Charles H. Hodges, Charles E. Houghtaling, Edwin Ham, Alonzo Hammond, James H. Hudson, A. De Loss Hammond, Alonzo Howland, John P. Hudson, Hiram W. Hays, Sidney B. King, Samuel E. Kidd, George E. Lane, Oscar F. Lockwood, Andrew V. Leonard, Warren E. Miller, Michael McGuire, John Moore, Nathan Munn, Charles H. McNaughton, James M. Myers, Michael Nolan, Gardner Perry, George N. Peacock, George E. Pulling, William A. Rose, John N. Rose, Cornelius Rose, Henry C. Rowland, George K. Reno, Carlos W. Rowe of Keeseville, N. Y.; John D. Riley, William Relyea, John R. Rockwell, George H. Scidmore, Edmund Seirack, of Cochtuate, Mass. The first time in forty years since he was in Schuylerville, Lewis Shonts, George Scott, Henry A. Smith, Frank Short, John G. Strong, Samuel S. Squires, Jesse B. Thorn, Charles D. Thurber, Oscar Tefft, William W. Velie, Henry Warner, James M. Wood, William G. Watson, George L. Wandell, David N. Weatherwax, James H. Whaley and John B. Welch.

The dinner call being sounded, the meeting adjourned until 2.30 p. m. at which hour the meeting was resumed by the payment of dues, (which are used for the postal card notices of reunion, the printing of reunion report, including the envelopes and postage therefore,) and Treasurer Thurber's report thereafter, showing a balance on hand of \$14.29.

There are nearly four hundred names on the list of survivors to whom notices were sent. Of these only fifty replied. Those not replying next year will be regarded as having departed from this mundane sphere..

With pleasant remembrances to all the comrades regrets (most of which are because of ill health and infirmities resulting from service) for inability to be present were received from Hector E. Bentley, Edward M. Bauey, William Brooks, Nelson Bootier (had a stroke in February last) Lawrence Christman, Henry Craig Daniel H. Cole, John Chapman, William Downen, John H. Davenport, Dr. William A. DeLong, John E. Evans, the Rev. Dr. Norman Fox, Benjamin M. Harrington, James R. Hinds, Julius Jerome, Altus H. Jewell, Franklin H. Juckett, Benjamin F. Judson, Thomas F. King, Samuel C. Miller, Newton S. Noyes, Horace A. Post, Charles Palmatier, William H. Quivey, Cornelius Quinn, Charles E. Stevens, David Stringham, Lewis Shonts, Dennis B. Smith, Albert A. Snyder, Daniel C. Simonas, Benjamin T. Simons, George L. Tucker, Benjamin Van Steenberg, Frank Whitney, George F. Will, William H. Zeinstein.

Ben Harrington writes, "Daily I am reminded of the 17th of September, 1862, on which day was fought the battle of Antietam in Maryland, because of wound received in my forearm then."

James R. Hinds, writes: "I am now seventy-two years of age and very feeble, seldom getting out, so it is doubtful if I can get to the reunion much as I would like to see the boys again."

Altus H. Jewell, writes: "My disability confines me to my room so can be with you only in heart."

F. H. Juckett, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, writes: "I know it would give me pleasure to meet old comrades who were so ready to defend the flag whom I have not been with since the war, but the reunions are held at my busy season of the year, preventing my attendance. Should any of them drop down in this section the latch string hangs out to welcome them. (As Comrade Juckett is a miner, a dealer and shipper of coal, unless the coal (cold) strike is called off soon, we uns may forage on him.)"

B. F. Judson, writes: "I am an old man now having passed the seventy-fifth mile stone. I am living quietly on the shore of New Haven Harbor, within hearing distance of the Yale college boys' yell. Most of my best years were passed in an active life in Saratoga Springs and nearly all of my old friends and active business associates have travelled away from it further than I, to that world of which we know so little, as no one has ever returned from it to tell us of. I hope to be with you to whom I send most kind remembrances at least once more for it would be a great pleasure to meet old comrades for whom my latch string is out should any pass this way."

Tom King, writes: "It is doubtful if I will ever be able to attend a reunion. December last I had a stroke. One side is entirely paralyzed. I have not been out of the house since that fatal day."

Dennis B. Smith, writes: "My health is not good enough to stand the journey, much as I would enjoy being with you. My prayer is that God in heaven will bless you all and if we never meet again on this earth that we may meet in a better home where there will be no war."

Remarks of Secretary Fuller.

"Forty years ago. How different this beautiful September morning as we stand beside the monument commemorating the battle of Saratoga fought one hundred and twenty-five years ago, September 19, 1777 and the surrender of General Burgoyne and his army twenty-seven days later to General Gates of the Continental army. This was undoubtedly the turning point in the war of the Colonists for independence for what has become a nation second to none, and perhaps all things considered the greatest nation on this mundane sphere—the Yankee nation, the United States.

"Forty years ago we were in the throes of Civil War. At Antietam, Maryland, forty years ago this 17th day of September was fought a battle which with no uncertainty resulted in favor of the boys who wore the blue. Into that fight the Bemis Heights Battalion, the 77th foot regiment New York State Volunteers, which only nine months and nineteen days prior marched from Saratoga Springs nine hundred men strong, went with less than three hundred men present for duty; with no officer higher in rank present than captain—Captain N. S. Babcock, now living in Exeter, Nebraska—to command. The 77th lost thirty-two; six killed, twenty-six wounded, of whom seven died.

"Forty years ago new Company K, the Schuylerville company, was mustered into the United States service at Albany with three commissioned officers, thirteen non-commissioned officers and eighty-two privates—total ninety-eight. Where are they now? Captain John R. Rockwell, present; First Lieutenant William H. Fursman, dead; Second Lieutenant Cyrus F. Rich, dead; First Sergeant Charles M. Osborn, dead; Second Sergeant Kenyon Tefft, dead; Third Sergeant Albert S. Green, dead; Fourth Sergeant Summer Oakley—promoted to captain; fifteen days before the war ended, was killed on March 25, 1865; Fifth Sergeant Dennis Aley, taken prisoner May 3, '63, dead; First Corporal Alonzo Carpenter, dead; Second Corporal Joseph A. Green, dead; Third Corporal Alonzo B. Clark, don't know; Fourth Corporal William Pike, dead; Fifth Corporal William H. Smith, lives in South Glens Falls; Sixth Corporal, John G. Strang, present; Seventh Corporal Manfred H. Harrington, promoted to sergeant, dead; Musician James H. McLane, don't know; Private Jacob Aley, don't know; Madison Aley, dead; William Armstrong, supposed to be living in New York City; Alonzo D. Bump, living in Cohoes, N. Y.; Frederick Burdick, supposed to be living in Lansing, Mich; John E. Brainard, present; Lorin Brown, supposed to be living in Cooperstown, N. Y.; Nelson Bootier, alive; Abraham Brewer, dead; William Brewer, dead; John P. Burns, present; James Burns, alive; Timothy Ballet, supposed to have returned to France; Albert H. Clement, present; John J. Clement, dead; Volne, J. Craw supposed to be in New York City; Edward Connors, dead; John M. Connors, present; John Chapman, alive; Francis Cooney, dead; John Cooney, dead; Thomas Cooney, dead; John M. Davenport, alive; Harrison Davenport, dead; David Davenport, dead; George Davenport, supposed to be in Cohoes; Geo. Delevargue, dead; Seneca Delevargue, dead; Emory Doolittle, present; Chas. S. Dudley, don't know; Patrick Dudley, don't know; James Fairchild, dead; Stephen R. Frost, dead; John H. Forester, don't know; Earl Green, dead; Sylvester S. Haight, alive; George Hammond, dead; William H. Harrington, don't know; Thomas Halligan, dead; Joseph H. Hays, don't know; Charles M. Hart, dead; William Ingham, alive; Ebenezer Jacquith, dead; William Kelly, dead; Andrew Leonard, present; James Lynch, dead; Charles H. McNaughton, present; John McLarnon, supposed to be in New York City; John Moore, present; Michael Munster, dead; Walter Mead, don't know; Timothy Madigan, dead; Nathan Munn, present; James H. Myers, present; John A. Myers, don't know; Wesley Mott, dead; Benjamin Orton, dead; Charles E. Phillips, don't know; Patrick Quigley, supposed to be in Glens Falls; Thomas Ryan, present; John Radley, dead; William Richards, dead; Samuel S. Squires, present; Henry Simpson, don't know; C. F. A. Schmidt, dead; Nathaniel Safford, dead; George R. Smith, don't know; Frank Short, present; Israel F. Tanner, dead; Levi Van Schaick, dead; Benjamin R. Velie, dead; James H. Whaley, present; George H. Welch, dead; John B. Welch, present; William Wyatt, don't

know; Washington Wood, don't know; Thomas Whitman, dead; William H. Wildey, alive; Hiram H. Weaver, alive; Hamilton White, dead.

"Of the original ninety-eight members of the company who marched from your midst forty years ago today in the bloom of youth the whereabouts of twenty-two are unknown; eleven alive; eighteen present and forty-seven are dead.

Comrade Rockwell said: "The reading of the names of the Schuylerville company by Secretary Fuller which is very complete and which I heard with intense interest as undoubtedly did the other comrades, especially of K company, present, recalled to me the raising of the company in 1862. Bill Fursman and I were out on the river fishing when it was suggested that 'we raise a company.' We returned to the village, hired a room opened a recruiting station, had posters printed and circulated calling for recruits and in ten days raised the company the names of which Secretary Fuller has read. Fursman became first lieutenant and I captain. The 115th regiment then being raised wanted the company to enter it. Fursman and I called on Major French, of the Seventh-seventh New York, who was then on recruiting service in Saratoga Springs and tendered him the company for the Seventy-seventh provided it could enter said regiment intact. With Major French, Fursman and I went to Albany, called on the Governor to whom we stated the raising of the company the wish of the boys thereof to enter the Bemis Heights Battalion and as a company. The Governor issued the necessary order whereby it entered the Seventy seventh as new company K, and I believe that there had never been any regret therefor for the Seventy-seventh New York won an excellent record during the war of the rebellion."

President French made a brief address in which he referred to our Saratoga monument and said that he had never heard of another monument put up as was this. At the end of the war there was due the regiment company rations; said rations computed into money amounted to \$500 which the government paid. It was voted to erect a monument and use said \$500 for it which was put at interest as a Monument Fund and in ten years amounted to \$1,000 to which subscriptions were made by friends of the cause and the monument put up. A few years since it was decided that a tablet ought to be placed on one of its sides whereby the rising generation would know what it represented. Comrades subscribed the money and the tablet of bronze was secured and placed on the north side. It is now desirable to substitute for the zinc soldier statue, one of bronze, which would cost something a little over \$1,000 and he hoped that ere long one might be obtained.

In Memory of Departed Comrades.

The committee to draft a minute on the death of members submitted the following which was adopted:

Whereas, Comrades Charles Andrews, Charles H. Bartlett, James E. Couse, Albert Carp, Sidney O. Cromack, Philip S. Coonrad, John E. L. Deuel, Samuel E. Davis, Michael Danby, John Dyer, Seneca Delevargue, Nathan Eldridge, William J. Hammond, Charles M. Hart, Thomas Jones, Terrence McGovern, Thomas Morrison, William McNeal, Oliver A. Lansing, Joseph Putnam, Jerome Purdy, Jarvis W. Russell, Lafayette Snow, Hubert Schmidt, Bradley Van Denberg, Thomas Whitman have been called to the majority on the other shore.

Resolved, That in the death of our late comrades we mourn the companionship of brave men, faithful soldiers and good citizens. That the country owed them—as also their survivors—a debt of gratitude which has not been paid, nor can be paid. That the sympathy of this association of their surviving comrades be extended to the families of our deceased comrades. And that the fact of their death brings to us a realizing sense that it is only a short time ere we will again be with them.

EDWARD H. FULLER,
OSCAR TEFFT,
WILLIAM G. CAW,
JOHN M. CLUTE,
HENRY BRADT.

The comrades voted to have the reunion dinners hereafter as this one, which was a good one, whereby the labor of the local committee is abridged and they are not kept from visiting with their comrades.

After selecting Schenectady and September 22, 1903, for the next reunion, with a hearty vote of thanks to the local committee and for the fair ladies who tendered so attentively and promptly to the grizzled veterans of whom they seemed not to be in awe, the reunion of 1902 ended with singing one verse of

Our Country 'tis of thee
Sweet land of Liberty.